



# Wisconsin Freedom of Information Council

DEVOTED TO PROTECTING WISCONSIN'S TRADITION OF OPEN GOVERNMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: OCT. 18, 2018

## Wisconsin Freedom of Information Council releases 2018 candidate survey results

Contact: Bill Lueders, president, Wisconsin Freedom of Information Council, [blueders@gmail.com](mailto:blueders@gmail.com), 608-669-4712

Dear Editors:

The Wisconsin Freedom of Information Council is pleased to make available the results of its survey of Wisconsin legislative candidates in the Nov. 6 election.

We surveyed 204 candidates: 106 Democrats, 84 Republicans and 14 third-party contenders. The council received 75 responses from 60 Democrats, eight Republicans and seven third-party candidates, for a 37 percent response rate.

“We are disappointed that so many lawmakers decided not to respond to perfectly reasonable questions about how to improve government transparency,” said Bill Lueders, the group’s president. “We assume that those who didn’t respond feel their positions on these matters would make them look bad to the people they seek to represent.”

The survey provides local news outlets the ability to compare candidates’ answers — or lack of answers — to gauge their positions on open government issues. Full responses, including comments by the candidates, are available at [wisfoic.org/candidate-survey-2018](http://wisfoic.org/candidate-survey-2018).

Here are the questions and the aggregate results:

WISCONSIN ASSOCIATED PRESS • WISCONSIN BROADCASTERS ASSOCIATION • WISCONSIN NEWSPAPER ASSOCIATION • WISCONSIN NEWS PHOTOGRAPHERS • SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS  
Bill Lueders, President • 608-669-4712 • [blueders@gmail.com](mailto:blueders@gmail.com) • Mail: c/o WNA, 34 Schroeder Ct., Madison, WI 53713

**1. Do you support ending the exemption in the state's records retention law for members of the Legislature, which would make lawmakers subject to the same retention rules as all other state and local government officials?**

Yes: 60 Democrats, 6 Republicans, 7 third-party

No: 0 Democrats, 2 Republicans, 0 third-party

**2. Do you think that records requested in electronic form, when they exist as such, should be provided in electronic form?**

Yes: 57 Democrats, 8 Republicans, 7 third-party

No: 3 Democrats, 0 Republicans, 0 third-party

**3. Proposed legislation would require public bodies that go into closed session to make a recording of what is said. This could then be available for judicial review if the legality of the decision to go into closed session is challenged. Would you support such a bill?**

Yes: 58 Democrats, 2 Republicans, 7 third-party

No: 2 Democrats, 6 Republicans, 0 third-party

**4. In a 2011 ruling, *Ozanne v. Fitzgerald*, the Wisconsin Supreme Court held that the Legislature's adherence to the Open Meetings Law is not subject to judicial review, effectively exempting lawmakers from the law. Do you support making the Legislature expressly subject to the law, like all other state and local government agencies?**

Yes: 59 Democrats, 6 Republicans, 7 third-party

No: 1 Democrat, 2 Republicans, 0 third-party

**5. Do you support ending the ability of legislators to meet as a caucus in secret?**

Yes: 44 Democrats, 2 Republicans, 6 third-party

No: 16 Democrats, 6 Republicans, 1 third-party

**6. Would you support legislation to require that all bills, amendments and motions have an identified sponsor, ending the ability of lawmakers to introduce legislation anonymously?**

Yes: 60 Democrats, 7 Republicans, 7 third-party

No: 0 Democrats, 1 Republican, 0 third-party