September 24, 2014

The Honorable J.B. Van Hollen
Attorney General of Wisconsin
Wisconsin Department of Justice
P.O. Box 7857
Madison, WI 53707-7857

Dear Mr. Attorney General:

We are writing on behalf of the League of Women Voters of Wisconsin and Common Cause in Wisconsin to urge you to investigate a self-described militia group claiming to have plans to confront certain voters at the polls on November 4. The group, called Wisconsin Poll Watcher Militia, claims on its Facebook page to have poll watchers who are being directed to carry concealed weapons. The group’s Facebook page indicates that the group will target, in particular, individuals in Milwaukee, Racine and Beloit who the group deems are likely to vote for Democratic candidates.

What the group says it plans to do is clearly a violation of Section 12.09 (1) of the Wisconsin Statutes: No person may personally or through an agent make use of or threaten to make use of force, violence, or restraint in order to induce or compel any person to vote or refrain from voting at an election.

They are already in violation of Section 939.31 dealing with Conspiracy: Except as provided in ss. 940.43 (4), 940.45 (4) and 961.41 (1x), whoever, with intent that a crime be committed, agrees or combines with another for the purpose of committing that crime may, if one or more of the parties to the conspiracy does an act to effect its object, be fined or imprisoned or both not to exceed the maximum provided for the completed crime; except that for a conspiracy to commit a crime for which the penalty is life imprisonment, the actor is guilty of a Class B felony.

Voter intimidation damages the integrity of an election, in which every qualified citizen should feel free to vote. To protect election integrity, we call on you to investigate this matter immediately and work with the U.S. Attorneys in the Eastern and Western Districts and the District Attorneys in counties where threats are being targeted.

Sincerely,

Andrea Kaminski
Executive Director, League of Women Voters of Wisconsin

Jay Heck
Executive Director, Common Cause in Wisconsin