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February 26, 2025

Ms. Nikki Elsen  
La Crosse City Clerk  
400 La Crosse St.  
City Hall, 2nd Floor  
La Crosse, WI 54601  
*via E-mail: (elsenn@cityoflacrosse.org)*

***RE: Compliance with Wis. Stat. § 6.855***

Dear Madame Clerk,

This letter is to inform you that current practices surrounding the selection of locations for alternate absentee ballot sites in La Crosse have provided an unfair advantage to Democrat candidates, contrary to Wisconsin law. Wis. Stat. § 6.855 states:

*The governing body of a municipality may elect to designate a site other than the office of the municipal clerk or board of election commissioners as the location from which electors of the municipality may request and vote absentee ballots and to which voted absentee ballots shall be returned by electors for any election. The designated site shall be located as near as practicable to the office of the municipal clerk or board of election commissioners and no site may be designated that affords an advantage to any political party.*

*(emphasis added)*. Accordingly, under Wisconsin law, it is your duty to ensure that any site selected for alternate absentee balloting provides fair and equal access to all voters.

The America First Policy Institute has reviewed historical voting data and concluded that the City of La Crosse's placement of its designated alternate absentee balloting sites disproportionately benefits Democrat candidates.

The City of La Crosse presently plans to designate three alternate absentee balloting sites located at the Southside Neighborhood Center, the HMOOB Cultural & Community Agency, and the Cleary Alumni & Friends Center at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse campus.

Notably, the City of La Crosse also plans to utilize City Hall contemporaneously with these other locations.

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Of the four voting wards with designated early voting locations, two wards significantly overrepresented Democrat voters in the elections of April 4, 2023, and November 5, 2024.

Additionally, the 12th ward, one of the wards where the City intends to hold early voting, was the single most Democratic ward in the City during the April 4, 2023 election.

During the November 5, 2024, election, voters in the four wards represented by these designated alternate absentee balloting sites voted Democrat by more than three points more than the rest of the City.

This strategic placement provides a distinct electoral “advantage” to the Democratic Party, a practice that is inconsistent with the impartiality required under Wisconsin law.

It is clear that the City of La Crosse intends to continue using sites that afford an “advantage” to the Democratic Party. Because the City of La Crosse’s alternate absentee balloting sites are in locations that have consistently and demonstrably favored Democrat voters and candidates, the City of La Crosse is in violation of Wisconsin law. It is your duty as the responsible elections official to remedy these issues and provide alternate absentee balloting sites in locations that do not afford an “advantage” to either political party. Failure to designate new locations for alternate absentee balloting, consistent with Wis. Stat. § 6.855(1)-(2), prior to the April 1, 2025, election, is a violation of Wisconsin law and may be subject to the penalties and remedies prescribed under Chapter 5 of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Respectfully,

*s/ Nicholas J. Wanic*

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