



MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 16, 2008

Contact: Chris Ahmuty, ACLU/WI
(414) 272-4032 ext. 13

UW Milwaukee Student Election Resembles a Sham

ACLU Student Alliance to send Poll Watchers

MILWAUKEE – Today, the American Civil Liberties Union Student Alliance (ACLUSA) at the University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee (UWM) announced that it will continue to advocate for meaningful student elections at UWM. It will send student poll watchers to monitor the elections being held April 17th and 18th. The ACLUSA believes this is an appropriate response to the controversial decision of the “Independent Election Commissioner” to remove one party from the ballot. The commissioner’s decision was based apparently on a nonsensical interpretation of flawed election rules. Without proof the commissioner presumed that some anonymous statements should be held against the competing parties. Furthermore, the IEC in an email to the ACLUSA threatened to have university police remove its poll watchers.

ACLUSA President, Angela Lang, a Global Studies major, made the following statement:

“Students deserve a better introduction to democracy than what we’re seeing at UWM. The ACLU Student Alliance is non-partisan and doesn’t endorse or work for any candidates. We look upon our mission as raising awareness of civil liberties and civil rights on campus. Free speech, particularly political speech is fundamental. Due process, or the right to a fair hearing, is essential. The Independent Election Commissioner apparently doesn’t appreciate either free speech or due process. We will be at the polls to watchdog the balloting in order to record allegations of fraud or other irregularities.”

ACLU of Wisconsin’s Executive Director, Chris Ahmuty, made the following statement of support:

“The UWM Independent Election Commission rules, Article VI Section 8 (a), anticipate that students have a legitimate role in witnessing and reporting voter fraud. The

ACLUSA's trained observers are especially able to fulfill that role because they are non-partisan. Therefore, the ACLU of Wisconsin is providing support to the ACLUSA's efforts."

In 2007 a diverse group of UWM students formed the ACLU Student Alliance, which has become a recognized student Club. Its primary goal is to raise awareness of civil liberties issues, and to safeguard those civil liberties both on and off campus.

The ACLU of Wisconsin is a membership organization that defends the civil liberties and civil rights of all Wisconsin residents. There are nearly 8,500 ACLU members in Wisconsin. For more information, please visit www.aclu-wi.org.

-- 30 --

NOTE TO ASSIGNMENT EDITORS:

To meet the ACLUSA's poll watchers at a polling place,
Please contact Emilio DeTorre via his mobile at 414.305.8569.