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## **Assembly Committee on Campaigns and Elections Senate Bill 264 Testimony January 22, 2014**

Senate Bill 264 (SB 264) ensures precautions are taken to protect ballots from being separated or tampered with prior to a recount, and ensures accountability and responsibility for securing ballot containers.

Under current law, election inspectors take all ballots counted by them and secure the ballots together so that they cannot be separated or tampered with without breaking a seal. The inspectors then are supposed to put the ballots into secure, tamper evident containers that cannot be opened without breaking a seal or lock or without destroying the container.

Unfortunately, the recent Racine recount demonstrated that this does not always occur. Many ballot bags were received at the recount opened and without a documented explanation. Other ballot bags were not properly sealed, some with large openings. When confronted the managers at each polling place often did not have an explanation because bags were handled by others, including temporary workers.

The job of securing ballot containers is important enough that it should be done only by the chief inspector and a poll worker of the opposite party. If there are problems, there will be clear accountability.

Under this bill, only the chief inspector and one other inspector with party affiliation different than the chief inspector's party affiliation may secure the ballot container.

Thank you for your attention to SB 264.