



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Rep. Mark Spreitzer, Fellow Democrats, Introduce Non-Partisan Redistricting Reform Legislation

MADISON – Today Rep. Mark Spreitzer (D-Beloit) and fellow freshman Democratic representatives introduced Assembly Bill 328, which would remove redistricting authority from politicians and assign it to a non-partisan body. Joined by Democratic legislators and open government advocates, Spreitzer called for a public hearing on the bill and its Senate companion, Senate Bill 58. Rep. Spreitzer is the lead author of AB 328.

“Non-partisan studies show that Wisconsin has some of the most gerrymandered maps in history,” Rep. Spreitzer said. “These maps were drawn by the majority party so that they could choose their voters and assure their reelection and a continued majority. The disproportionate representation and divisive legislation we have seen over the past few years is a direct byproduct of heavily gerrymandered districts that discourage competition. Rather than politicians choosing their voters, this legislation ensures that voters choose their representatives through competitive elections.”

State law mandates that the legislature adopt new district borders every 10 years. AB 328 assigns the authority to draw these borders to the non-partisan Legislative Reference Bureau and a to-be-created Redistricting Advisory Commission. This will help ensure fair borders even if one party controls all of state government. This redistricting model has been used successfully in Iowa for more than 30 years. AB 328 has gained significant support from other representatives and senators, and voters across the state.

“Over the past several months, Wisconsin has faced an unprecedented attack on democracy and open, transparent government,” Spreitzer continued. “Republican leaders attempted to dismantle our open records laws and are currently planning an attack on the non-partisan Government Accountability Board, our independent elections and ethics watchdog. It is more important than ever to promote clean government and a healthy democracy by passing non-partisan redistricting reform and making elected officials more accountable to voters.”

“Gerrymandered districts divide communities,” Rep. Spreitzer added. “Beloit, which I represent, had always been represented by one senator and one representative, but is now divided into two senate districts and two assembly districts. Green County, also previously in one district, now has three representatives and three senators. Drawing lines for political purposes divides and dilutes the voice of these communities and others across Wisconsin. This bill will make certain that whichever party controls Wisconsin at the time of the next redistricting, communities will be kept together and politicians won’t be in charge of drawing their own district lines to keep themselves in office.”

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