



Assembly Republicans Manipulate Boundaries to Avoid Accountability for Extreme Agenda

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Madison – In what has become a regular exercise for the 2011-12 State Assembly, the Republican majority jammed through its extremely partisan legislative redistricting maps under a cloud of secrecy, legal challenges, and criticism from local governments, editorial boards and citizens around the state. The bill passed on a 57-40 vote as Republicans responded to the overwhelming public backlash to their extreme decisions by rushing through yet another divisive bill aimed at protecting their power.

“Just when everyone in Wisconsin is looking for a sign from the Republican Legislature and Governor that they are willing to work together to serve the best interests of our state, they drop yet another self-serving and unaccountable proposal on redistricting,” said Rep. Hintz (D-Oshkosh), **“The Republicans in charge have spent hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars drawing legislative boundaries in private for purely partisan benefit.”**

“While the redistricting process was not transparent, the Republicans desperate power grab is. Clearly today’s action is an admission by the Republicans who don’t want to be held accountable for their extreme decisions of the past seven months. The Governor may say he doesn’t care about public opinion, but the legislature’s actions are a cynical response to the overwhelmingly negative polls and are aimed at keeping Republicans in office who otherwise would be thrown out for their actions.”

The purpose of the two-year term in the House of Representatives or the State Assembly is to ensure responsiveness and accountability to the voters. Wisconsin has demonstrated its changing opinions over the years by voting for candidates and majorities of both parties. Instead of drawing new districts that retain the state's competitive swing districts, Republican leaders have decided the only way to survive public opposition to their agenda is to decrease the number of competitive districts.

The partisan map drawn by the Republicans with no public input will result in the majority of districts being either very safe Republican or Democratic seats, leaving voters with very little choice. This 10-year map for the Legislature will preserve partisan control, even in elections that Republicans win far fewer votes than Democrats statewide.

“The same public that has been on the losing end of so many decisions this session is now being dealt their biggest loss yet. I think the public has had more than enough of these cynical attempts for political advantage at the expense of the good government.”

“In addition to the most restrictive voter I.D. law in the U.S. and the crippling of workers’ right to organize, the Republicans can now add gerrymandered redistricting to list of efforts to suppress voter turnout.”

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