



JOEL KITCHENS

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 1ST ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Testimony for the Senate Committee on Shared Revenue, Elections and Consumer Protection 411 South October 19, 2023

Thank you Chairperson Knodl and committee members.

Wisconsin is at a crossroads. Should we look to Illinois' extreme partisan redistricting or look to Iowa's non-partisan method? While we can debate the degree of gerrymandering in our state, there is no doubt that partisan redistricting has undermined the public's faith in representative government. Since I first ran for office in 2014, I have consistently heard that Wisconsin should follow the Iowa model in implementing a nonpartisan redistricting process.

About two-thirds of counties have passed resolutions supporting such a process but, unfortunately, history has shown that whichever party believes they will draw the next map is reluctant to give up that power. In 2010, Democrats controlled all branches of government and ignored legislation proposed by Republicans. Since that time, Republicans have blocked similar attempts by Democrats.

With a court case pending, we now are in a once-in-a-lifetime situation where neither party should be sure they will draw the next map. With that in mind, I authored Assembly Bill 415 and Senate Bill 488 with four other Republican assemblymen who have always supported nonpartisan redistricting. This bill would implement a process that mirrors that in Iowa in time for the November election.

For several months, we talked to Democratic members about making it a bipartisan bill that would have gone through the normal committee hearing process. While several Democrats privately voiced their support, their leaders prevented them from signing on, believing that the Supreme Court would deliver maps that were rigged in their favor. In the end, the bill was put out on an abbreviated timeline with the court case looming.

AB 415 creates a commission comprised of equal members of Democrats and Republicans, and the actual drawing of the maps will be done by the nonpartisan and universally respected Legislative Reference Bureau (LRB). Districts will have nearly equal populations and will be drawn to preserve municipal and county boundaries. No regard will be given to historical voting patterns or the addresses of incumbents.

Following our constitution, the legislature will vote on the passage of the maps as drawn. There is no opportunity to change them. If it passes the legislature with votes from both parties, it moves on to the governor for his signature. If it fails, we will voice

our reasons for rejection and it goes back to the LRB. We have until January 31st to enact the maps into law.

In Iowa, the Supreme Court is constitutionally a part of the redistricting process and, if there is an impasse, the process goes directly to them. Our Wisconsin constitution puts the process entirely in the hands of the legislature, so our bill cannot explicitly refer to the court. In practice, however, it will work exactly the same and the maps will go to the Supreme Court.

According to an LRB legal memo, the process created in AB 415 and that used by Iowa are “virtually identical.” It goes on to say that “the very few differences reflect matters unique to Wisconsin law, such as the constitutional power of the Supreme Court.” Despite what you may hear, there is no scenario whereby either party could draw a partisan map in the event of an impasse. In the words of John D. Johnson, a redistricting authority at Marquette Law School, the amended bill would “establish truly nonpartisan, independent redistricting in Wisconsin.”

The time is long past for nonpartisan redistricting in Wisconsin. We know that our state is a deeply purple state and that majorities come and go. We must take the long view and do what is right for the future of Wisconsin. This plan, if adopted will forever end the bitter haggling and expensive court cases. I sincerely believe that if we miss this opportunity, there will not be another in our lifetimes.

Thank you for listening to my testimony. If you have any questions, I would gladly answer them now.



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU

MEMORANDUM

TO: Speaker Robin Vos
FROM: Richard Loeza, senior legislative analyst; Joseph Kreye, chief counsel
DATE: September 12, 2023
SUBJECT: Nonpartisan redistricting in Iowa and under LRB-4349

Per your request, the following memorandum compares the nonpartisan redistricting process employed in Iowa and the similar process proposed by LRB-4349.

Iowa and LRB-4349: overview

Iowa's nonpartisan redistricting process assigns the duty of drawing initial congressional and legislative district maps to Iowa's nonpartisan Legislative Service Agency (LSA).¹ The LSA must submit a map proposal to the legislature by a specific deadline. A bipartisan advisory committee provides guidance to LSA when requested and must hold hearings on the LSA map proposal across the state and issue a report to the legislature on the testimony received in those meetings. Once submitted to the legislature, the LSA's map proposal cannot be substantively amended, and both houses must promptly vote on it. If the first map proposal is not enacted, the LSA must submit a second map proposal, and if that one is not enacted, a third map proposal.²

LRB-4349 proposes a nonpartisan legislative redistricting process almost identical to Iowa's process.³ LRB-4349 would charge the Legislative Reference Bureau (LRB) with drawing legislative redistricting plans but does not create any new requirements or processes related to congressional redistricting. The legislative redistricting process proposed in LRB-4349 is largely the same as that in Iowa, with exceptions described in the remainder of this memo.

¹ Iowa Code Ch. 42. The Legislative Service Bureau originally had this responsibility. Over the years as other nonpartisan agencies of the General Assembly have been combined, the Legislative Services Agency has assumed responsibility, see 2003 Iowa Laws Ch. 35.

² Since 1980, when Iowa first used this redistricting process, each redistricting cycle in Iowa has seen the enactment of a map proposal submitted by the LSA: the LSA's third map proposal was enacted in 1981 without amendment; its first map proposal was enacted in 1991 and 2011; and its second map proposal was enacted in 2001 and 2021.

³ Several similar proposals have been issued over the last twenty years, starting with 2003 Senate Bill 545.

Iowa and LRB-4349: comparison of details

Standards for map drawing

The Iowa process and LRB-4349 all require district maps to be drawn according to certain standards, including traditional redistricting standards, such as drawing districts as near to the ideal of equal population as possible, setting maximum allowable deviations from that ideal population, requiring contiguous districts, and avoiding the division of political subdivisions.⁴

The specific standards required under the Iowa process and LRB-4349 are:

Table 1: Comparison of redistricting standards

Iowa Redistricting Standards	LRB-4349 Redistricting Standards
<p>The total deviations among all districts from the ideal population cannot exceed one percent of the state’s population.</p> <p>The populations of senate districts and the populations of assembly districts, respectively, can differ by up to 5 percent.⁵</p> <p>The legislature has the burden of justifying differences between the population of a district and the ideal district population greater than 1 percent.⁶</p>	<p>The total deviations among all districts from the ideal population cannot exceed one percent of the state’s population.</p> <p>The legislature has the burden of justifying differences between the population of a district and the ideal district population greater than 1 percent.</p>
<p>Districts must be composed of “convenient contiguous territory.”⁷</p>	<p>Districts must be composed of “convenient contiguous territory.”</p>
<p>District boundaries must, to the extent allowed by the population equality requirements and the Iowa Constitution, coincide with political subdivision boundaries.⁸</p>	<p>District boundaries must coincide with ward boundaries and must, to the extent allowed by the population equality requirements and federal law, coincide with political subdivision boundaries.</p>

⁴ Iowa Code § 42.4 1. a.

⁵ Iowa Code § 42.4 1. a.

⁶ Iowa Code § 42.4 1. c.

⁷ Iowa Code § 42.4 3.

⁸ Iowa’s law does not mention that the districts must comply with federal laws like the Voting Rights Act, but federal law still applies to Iowa redistricting even in the absence of a state statutory requirement.

When there is a choice between dividing political subdivisions, the more populous subdivisions should be divided before the less populous. ⁹	The number of divided political subdivisions should be “as small as possible” and all such divisions must “preserve communities of interest.”
Compactness is measured with length/width ratio and “perimeter” measures of compactness. ¹⁰	Compactness is measured with the Reock score, measured as the area of a district divided by the area of the smallest circumscribing circle of the district.

In addition to the above standards, both Iowa and LRB-4349 prohibit the drawing agency from using data on incumbent legislator addresses, voter’s political affiliations, previous election results and demographic information, except that both states allow demographic information to be used to ensure consistency with federal law.¹¹

Advisory commissions

Both Iowa law and LRB-4349 create a redistricting advisory commission to hold public hearings, report on map proposals, and perform other duties. The composition of the five-person commission is the same in both cases: four appointees designated respectively by the minority and majority leaders of each house of the legislature, and a chairperson selected by the four appointees. The chairperson must be selected by February 15 of each year ending in 1. A person is ineligible to serve as a commissioner if the person is not a resident of the state, holds a partisan public office or a political party office, or is related to or employed by a Congressperson or legislator. If a vacancy occurs, the appointing authority that appointed the vacating person appoints that person’s replacement.¹²

Table 2: Comparison of redistricting advisory commission duties

Commission’s duties in Iowa	Commission’s duties under LRB-4349
Provide guidance to LSA, when requested, on decisions for which no clearly applicable statutory guideline is available.	Provide guidance to LRB, when requested, on decisions for which no clearly applicable statutory guideline is available.

⁹ Iowa Code § 42.4 2.

¹⁰ For a description of length/width ratio and perimeter test, see H.P. Young, “Measuring the Compactness of Legislative Districts,” *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 13, no. 1 (Feb 1988): 109 and 111.

¹¹ That is, compliance with the Voting Rights Act.

¹² Iowa Code § 42.5 1. c. and Wis. Stat. § 17.20 (1).

<p>Conduct at least three hearings on proposal.</p> <p>Hearings must be held in different parts of the state.</p> <p>Information from hearings must be presented to legislature.</p>	<p>Conduct at least three hearings on proposal.</p> <p>Only one hearing may be held in Madison, and at least one must be held in the northern half of the state.</p> <p>Information from hearings must be presented to legislature.</p>
<p>Issue report compiling information gathered at public hearings on LSA proposals, as well as comments and conclusions of the commission members.</p>	<p>Issue report compiling information gathered at public hearings on LRB proposals, as well as comments and conclusions of the commission members.</p>
<p>Establish policies limiting what information LSA can provide regarding any redistricting plan.</p>	<p>Establish policies limiting what information LRB can provide regarding any redistricting plan.</p>

In Iowa, the commissioners receive a per diem and reimbursement for certain expenses.¹³ Under LRB-4349, the commissioners are reimbursed only for expenses, paid out of the general program operations appropriations for each legislative house.¹⁴

Process and deadlines

Iowa law and LRB-4349 set deadlines for key events in the redistricting process. LRB-4349 starts the redistricting process later in the year and sets out a longer timeline.¹⁵ In the event that the legislature fails to pass the initial map proposal, Iowa law requires LSA to produce up to two more proposals; in contrast, LRB-4349 does the same.

The Iowa legislature’s feedback must, to the extent allowed by Iowa’s statutes and the Constitution, be incorporated into the second or third map proposal. If a map proposal is vetoed by the governor, the governor’s feedback must be incorporated into the second or third map proposal. LRB-4349 has similar requirements for incorporating the legislature and governor’s feedback between map proposals.

¹³ Iowa Code § 42.5 1. d.

¹⁴ Wis. Stat. § 20.765 (1) (a) and (b). Cost reimbursement without a per-diem is standard for part-time bodies in Wisconsin.

¹⁵ This may be because of the Iowa Legislature’s shorter session schedule as compared to Wisconsin. For example, see Iowa Legislative Services Agency, “2023 Iowa Legislative Session Timetable” March 30, 2023, <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/>.

Table 3: Comparison of redistricting process deadlines

Event	Iowa Deadline	LRB-4349 Deadline
First map proposal due at legislature	April 1 of each year ending in 1	January 1 of year ending in 2
Vote on first map proposal	At least 3 days after submission and release of advisory commission report	At least 7 days after submission of advisory commission report
Second map proposal due at legislature (if needed)	35 days after a house of legislature or governor fails to approve	21 days after a house of legislature fails to approve
Vote on second map proposal (if needed)	At least 7 days after submission of map proposal	At least 7 days after submission of map proposal
Third map proposal due at legislature (if needed)	35 days after a house of legislature or governor fails to approve, but sufficiently in advance of September 1 to allow full consideration	21 days after a house of legislature fails to approve
Vote on third map proposal (if needed)	At least 7 days after submission of map proposal	At least 7 days after submission of map proposal
Court must intervene	If no map proposal is enacted by September 15 of the year ending in 1	No deadline specified

This schedule may change in certain circumstances. In Iowa, the April 1 deadline to submit a map proposal is pushed forward by one day for every day after February 15 of a year ending in 1 that the U.S. Census Bureau’s redistricting data is not released. Under LRB-4349, the January deadline to submit a map proposal is extended by one day for every day after April 1 that census redistricting data is not released.¹⁶

¹⁶ LRB-4349 allows the redistricting advisory commission to be established after the effective date of the bill. LRB-4349 also directs the LRB to create and deliver redistricting plans by January 1, 2024, notwithstanding the bill’s normal deadlines.

In Iowa, the legislature is permitted to make “corrective” amendments to the first and second map proposals,¹⁷ but can amend the third map proposal in the same manner as it amends other legislation.¹⁸ Under LRB-4349, the Wisconsin legislature can also make corrective amendments to the first and second map proposals and amend the third map proposal in the same manner as it amends other legislation.

In Iowa, if no map proposal is enacted by September 15, the Iowa Constitution (Art. III, § 35) directs the Iowa Supreme Court to adopt, or cause to be adopted, a redistricting plan for legislative districts.¹⁹ LRB-4349 does not specify a deadline by which a map proposal must be adopted. In addition, the Wisconsin Constitution does not require the Wisconsin Supreme Court to adopt, or cause to be adopted, a redistricting plan.

Conclusion

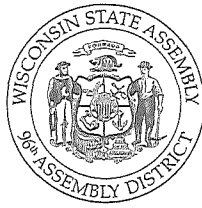
The nonpartisan redistricting process used by Iowa and the process created under LRB-4349 are virtually identical. The very few differences reflect matters unique to Wisconsin law, such as the timing of the steps in the process and the constitutional power of the Wisconsin Supreme Court. Aside from accommodating these unique features of Wisconsin law, LRB-4349 adopts the Iowa redistricting process for Wisconsin.

Please let us know if you have any questions or require additional information.

¹⁷ Iowa Code § 42.3 1. a. and 2.

¹⁸ Iowa Code § 42.3 3.

¹⁹ In 2021, the census data for redistricting was not made available until August. LSA’s announced timeline indicated that new districts would not be in place by the September 1 deadline. The Iowa Supreme Court chose to use its authority to “cause the state to be apportioned” to extend the redistricting deadline for the LSA and legislature to December 1, 2021. In the Matter of Reapportionment of State Senatorial and Representative Districts, Order No. 21-1281 (Iowa, September 14, 2021).



LOREN OLDENBURG

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 96th ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Testimony on Assembly Bill 415 & Senate Bill 488

Relating to: legislative redistricting

Senate Committee on Shared Revenue, Elections and Consumer Protection

October 19th, 2023

Good morning Chairman Knodl, and committee members. Thank you for holding a public hearing on Assembly Bill 415 & Senate Bill 488 today.

Redistricting reform has gained steam across the country from Republican led states to Democratic led states. One state however, lead this effort before it was popular. Iowa adopted a new non-partisan way of drawing maps in 1980, after the Iowa Supreme Court struck down the legislatures proposal in the 1970's and drew the maps. House file 707 created a statutory nonpartisan process for drawing legislative maps starting with the 1980 census.

Iowa's model instructs the nonpartisan Legislative Services Agency to draw the maps. The legislature has three tries to approve the maps, with a simple up or down vote. In the event that the legislature fails to adopt a proposal through their statutory process, Iowa's constitution directs the Supreme Court to intervene. Iowa has used this model ever since without failure, court challenges on adopted maps, or intervention by the Iowa Supreme Court. Assembly Bill 415 & Senate Bill 488 would establish this same nonpartisan process in Wisconsin with some slight differences through this amended version.

Assembly Bill 415 would establish a nonpartisan method of redistricting where the Legislative Reference Bureau, Wisconsin's bill drafting agency, would draw legislative map proposals. AB 415 would also establish an advisory commission where the legislative leaders from both parties would appoint four members to the advisory commission. These members then choose their fifth member. The commission would hold at least eight public hearings across the state to hear input from Wisconsin residents on the first proposal. The commission would then submit this information and testimony to the Legislative Reference Bureau (LRB).

Upon the submission of the commission's report by the LRB to the legislature, the legislature has seven days to look over the proposal and approve it. If either chamber does not approve of this proposal, the chamber that did not approve must submit to LRB why they did not approve of the map proposal. LRB will have 21 days to use this information to draw a second proposal. Once this is submitted to the legislature (no later than 21 days), the process continues with the legislature receiving seven more days to approve the proposal. If the legislature once

again does not approve of the second proposal, the process repeats for a third time or more if a third proposal is not approved.

Under this legislation, political or election data is illegal for the LRB to use in any capacity, as is the case in Iowa. No district may be drawn for the purpose of favoring a political party, incumbent legislator, or other person or group. No use shall be made of any of the following data for the purpose of augmenting or diluting the voting strength of a language or racial minority group, except to the extent required under sub. (1):

- (a) The residence addresses of incumbent legislators.
- (b) Political affiliations of registered voters.
- (c) Previous election results.
- (d) Demographic information.

The seven amendments the Assembly adopted are as follows:

- **AA1:** Specifies that LRB shall provide assistance regarding the operations of the redistricting commission. This is not specified in Iowa's statutes but how the process works as a practical matter in Iowa
- **AA2:** Specifies that the plan approved must be passed by a bipartisan vote. This is not a requirement in Iowa.
- **AA3:** No commission member may abstain from a vote and no vote of the commission may take place without all five members present and voting. This simply ensures participation from all commissioners and that votes only take place when all commissioners are available
- **AA4:** Upon LRB's recommendation, the commission members shall appoint a person with expertise in the federal Voting Rights Act (VRA) to provide guidance regarding VRA compliance.
- **AA5:** There is no limit on the number of plans that may be considered if the legislature or Governor reject the first two. Plans may continue to be submitted by LRB in the same manner as the first and second and the legislature and Governor are allowed to provide feedback to LRB if rejected by one or the other. The legislature is only allowed to make corrective changes
- **AA6:** Requires at least eight public hearings to be held around the state with at least one occurring in Milwaukee. Iowa requires three public hearings. AB 415 now requires eight with at least one in Milwaukee, Madison, and the northern half of the state.
- **AA7:** Ensure that no information relating to the plan may be made available for public inspection until the plan's introduction. This is similar to Iowa and to how we draft legislation in Wisconsin now.

All proposals are subject to gubernatorial approval as all legislative bills are. The governor's veto message can be used by LRB in the drafting of a new proposal just as the legislature must provide LRB with information as to why either chamber did not approve. Under the amended versions, AB 415 and SB 488, amending any proposal is prohibited. This is a major difference between this bill and Iowa's process. If a third proposal does not pass, the legislature does not have the ability to amend this version unlike in Iowa. If a third plan fails, LRB would

continue the process again. It is important to note Iowa has only ever adopted the third plan once, in 1981, and they did not amend it.

• For reference on Iowa's adopted plans:

- 1981: The third proposal was adopted- without amendment
- 1991: The first proposal was adopted
- 2001: The second proposal was adopted
- 2011: The first proposal was adopted- (48-1 in the senate: 90-7 in the house)
- 2021: The second proposal was adopted (48-1 in the senate: 93-2 in the house)

Over the past 20 years, both Democrats and Republicans in Wisconsin have offered this bipartisan solution to this contentious issue. The amendments to the bill address some structural changes that will help this system operate more effectively in Wisconsin while keeping the main statutory principles Iowa has. Adopting this process would preserve Wisconsin's constitutional requirement by those directly accountable to voters having a say in the process, but ensuring the maps are drawn entirely in a nonpartisan manner. The legislature would not get to change the proposals, and the Governor would be able to offer input if the executive branch vetoes a proposal. Upon LRB's recommendation, the commission members shall appoint a person with expertise in the federal Voting Rights Act (VRA) to provide guidance regarding VRA compliance is a substantial but structurally important addition to the bill.

One of the main reasons I have long supported the Iowa model redistricting method, is not just because its nonpartisan, but the Wisconsin's legislature has frequently drawn maps legislative maps that were not used. There is a long history of more maps being chosen or drawn by the judicial system despite the legislature's constitutional duty. To quote the Legislative Reference Bureau's redistricting guide:

"However, after the establishment of the principle of one person, one vote, courts established state legislative district maps for Wisconsin in the 1960, 1980, 1990, and 2000 redistricting cycles, although in the 1980 cycle, the legislature ended up enacting a plan that superseded but did not deviate substantially from the court's plan. So, when in 2011, the legislature and the governor succeeded in adopting a legislative redistricting plan, it turned out to be somewhat the exception despite the fact that the state constitution contemplates that process as the rule." (Redistricting in Wisconsin 2020: The LRB Guidebook. Page 37)

This would also include the 2021 cycle in "Johnson v Wisconsin Elections Commission" where the Wisconsin Supreme Court adopted a legislative map

Over the past 70 years, due to split political control of Wisconsin's branches of government, the legislature has often failed to produce maps signed into law by Democrats and Republicans. Other common reforms adopted across the country just haven't been able to truly operate the way they were intended and continue to face allegations of partisan gerrymandering and potential voting rights act violations, unlike the Iowa model.

Virginia's commission stalemated in 2021 and a Special Master drew the maps. New York voters created their own Independent Redistricting Commission in 2014 only for Albany Democrats to draw the congressional maps themselves and both parties on the commission drew a status quo change in the legislative maps. These maps were all found to violate the New York Constitution by the New York Court of Appeals as partisan gerrymanders. Michigan's commission drew zero majority African American State Senate districts and four less African American majority State House districts in Detroit. Due to this, Detroit residents filed a lawsuit

alleging the commission's maps violate the voting rights acts. This case, *Agee v Benson*, was ordered to trial in August and is currently ongoing.

The New Jersey's commissions' tie breaker in 2021 (a former Democratic NJ Supreme Court Justice) chose the map proposed by the Democratic commission members because the Republican map was chosen in 2011. Arizona's single independent on its commission comes under heavy scrutiny as the quote on quote "tie breaker." These are just recent examples in the past few years alone. Washington's state house map drawn by another commission is facing a voting rights act lawsuit as well in *Palmer v Hobbs*. All of these commission methods continue to have flaws, trouble functioning, and overall fail to achieve nonpartisan results. Their members are often free to do what they want and face no accountability to voters. Iowa's model avoids all these issues and achieved this success decades before these other methods ever existed.

This legislation would ensure maps are drawn in a nonpartisan way and allow the legislature to fulfill its constitutional duty for the foreseeable future. Iowa has succeeded in drawing nonpartisan maps creating this gold standard for the past 43 years. It's time Wisconsin followed suit. Thank you again Chairman Knodl for introducing this legislation in the senate and holding a public hearing on AB 415 & SB 488.

Public Hearing SB 488

Testimony to members of the State Senate Committee on Shared Revenue, Elections, and Consumer Protection

Thursday, October 19, 2023

9:00am

Room 411 South of the Wisconsin State Capitol

FLAG ON THE FIELD

Vicki Aro-Schackmuth

920 S. Imperial Dr.

Hartland, WI 53029

Hello, my name is Vicki Aro-Schackmuth and I live in Hartland, WI.

I am here to register opposition to SB488.

Which leads me to use a sports analogy – red flag or red card on the field.

A Red Flag signifies a reason to stop.

Red Flags are thrown in sports when a game is halted because of a foul.

A Red Card is handed to players in soccer for serious foul play.

Senate Bill 488 represents a Legislative Red Flag.

From the inception of this Bill there were Red Flags:

1. Red Flag when the Bill was conceived as a method to head off a politically unfavorable decision by the Wisconsin Supreme Court on our current gerrymandered maps.
2. Red Flag when there was no input from stakeholders like the voters.
3. Red Flag when there was no input from well-known experts on Fair Maps.
4. Red Flag when there was no input from concerned interest groups such as the Wisconsin Fair Maps Coalition.
5. Red Flag in Committee when the bill was introduced without discussion or a hearing.
6. Red Flag when the bill painstakingly sets out nonpartisan rules to follow for the Legislative Reference Bureau when drawing maps but is silent on rules for the Legislature when they draw maps.

Public Hearing SB 488

Testimony to members of the State Senate Committee on Shared Revenue, Elections, and Consumer Protection

Thursday, October 19, 2023

9:00am

Room 411 South of the Wisconsin State Capitol

FLAG ON THE FIELD

Vicki Aro-Schackmuth

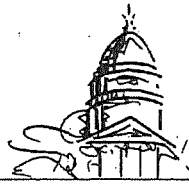
920 S. Imperial Dr.

Hartland, WI 53029

7. Red Flag when the legislature is allowed to draw partisan maps with only a simple majority.
8. Red Flag when naming the Bill after the Iowa Model which completely misrepresents the Bill's content. According to Iowa State Auditor Rob Sand: "This is not the Iowa Model. It's also just impossible to expect Iowa-style fair results when you still have the capacity to gerrymander at the end of the day, which is what this bill allows for. They can reject, and reject, and draw their own maps."

AND FINALLY, as an independent voter who does not have party allegiances,
I throw a Red Flag because this Bill allows extreme partisan gerrymandering that ends up not only hurting the minority party it also damages the ability to function in the majority.
I'm urging you to *STOP* going down this dangerous road and vote *NO* on Senate Bill 488.

Thank you for listening.



WISCONSIN STATE SENATE

DAN KNODL

STATE SENATOR • 8TH DISTRICT

Senate Bill 488 & Assembly Bill 415

Public Testimony

Senate Committee on Shared Revenue, Elections and Consumer Protection

October 19, 2023

Thank you members of the committee for holding a public hearing on Senate Bill 488 and Assembly Bill 415. I would like to begin with a couple of quotes:

“I believe everyone should have the opportunity to participate in our democracy. People should get to choose their elected officials, not the other way around. So, earlier this week, we announced that we're creating a nonpartisan redistricting commission. And, as it turns out, the people of Wisconsin agree.” – Governor Tony Evers, Biennial Budget Address, February 28, 2019.

“We are introducing legislation to create a nonpartisan legislative redistricting process based on the successful model used in Iowa. Passing nonpartisan redistricting reform is the right thing to do so Wisconsin's lawmakers can properly reflect the will of the voters.” – Sen. Smith cosponsorship memo from 2021 regarding SB389.

“The Iowa model works... our neighbor Iowa has already adopted maps on a bipartisan basis using the process we are proposing. It is past time for fair maps in Wisconsin.” – then-Rep. Spreitzer, press release, March 3, 2022.

“Want to end gerrymandering in Wisconsin? Tony Evers says look to Iowa.” – David Haynes, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, March 22, 2019.

“Republicans' redistricting plan is nearly identical to Democrats' bill from four past sessions.” – Hope Karnopp, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, September 22, 2023.

SB 488 is the compromise the Democratic legislators are fighting for in the Capitol. The legislation is the engrossed version of AB 415 with the seven bipartisan amendments passed in the Assembly last month.

The Wisconsin Constitution, Article 3, Section 3, “requires the legislature-a political body-to establish the legislative districts in this state.” We have the ultimate authority and we will continue to perform our constitutional duty and not cede this authority to the courts to draw our legislative maps.

This bill ensures a nonpartisan commission, the Legislative Reference Bureau, will draw the maps. Our state is continually bogged down with litigation and uncertainty regarding legislative redistricting in the courts. This bill will eliminate these burdensome costs and dilatory actions.

I have served in the legislature since 2008. I started in the minority. I am very aware of how the political winds can change and I think this is the moment that we, Democrats and Republicans, should come together to take this divisive issue off the table and prove to the people of Wisconsin that we can govern effectively together.

I urge this committee to support this proposed legislation. Thank you for your time, and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

This bill does not address my concern.
It seems to me that this is a veiled power
grab to continue unfair district

Voters must be able to choose
their representatives NOT the
other way around. WI is #1 in
gerrymandering. Lets be #1 in
fair elections.

Kathy Shurtz
Madison District 2

Testimony Opposing Senate Bill 488

I am Janine Edwards, a resident of Middleton, Wisconsin.

Thank you for holding this public hearing.

I oppose Senate Bill 488 because it is not honest legislation to end gerrymandering.

This bill is a trick to continue for ten more years, through 2030, the ill-gotten power of the Republicans in both houses of the Wisconsin legislature. It is on record that this bill is an attempt to end the lawsuit about redistricting that the state Supreme Court has accepted.

The partisan process of writing and passing this bill gives Wisconsin citizens a clear signal that this bill is not in our common interest. The process does not in any way follow the usual path of legislation. We, the voters, want legislation that has been crafted by members of both political parties with input from the voters of Wisconsin.

The bill fails in two significant ways to ensure fair maps for Wisconsin. The bill fails to require a supermajority vote of both political parties to pass voting maps. It also fails to require state court intervention if the legislature and governor do not reach accord on the maps.

I believe I am speaking on behalf of many thousands of Wisconsin voters who cannot be here today. We want fair voting maps for the 2024 election. We want an amendment to the state constitution to ensure that our voting districts are drawn fairly for years in the future. We want legislators who will vote for the bills the majority of Wisconsinites want: *safe drinking water, living wages, gun control, well funded public schools, legal medical marijuana.* We do not want elected officials who follow a national agenda set by a secret club of billionaires. We want to end the tricks. We urge you to vote against SB 488. End gerrymandering.

Testimony on SB288/ October 19,2023

The district maps produced by the Republican legislature since 2011 have produced dysfunction, ill will and a silencing of voices that are not strictly conservative. Republican representatives and senators elected under these maps haven't even allowed Democratic bills to reach the floor for a vote. I find it highly suspicious that all of a sudden, this legislature wants a bipartisan solution to the maps question after years fighting it.

I have been involved with non-partisan redistricting for over ten years and I can honestly say that we activists do not want to just elect Democrats at the expense of Republicans – we want a truly nonpartisan way to draw lines that reflect the will of all Wisconsinites. We want competitive districts as much as possible so ideas are challenged and the winner's ideas are made into law. We value compromise over power struggles. We want an end to the dysfunction in government when political party stalwarts pick their most radical members because they know if they win a party primary in their gerrymandered district, then they will win the general election.

Why Am I distrustful of SB288?

I oppose Senate Bill 488 because there are no safeguards in it to prevent the existing legislature to just ride out the votes and then impose their will on the final product as the deadline nears -- just as they have done in the past. There is no definition of bipartisan in the bill, so does this mean that if even just one member of the other party-- in just one of the houses of the legislature--votes for a map, this is sufficient to pass a map?

I was at a redistricting hearing before the 2021 maps were decided on. Right here in this Capitol before some of you here now. Over 100 people from every corner of Wisconsin came to give voice to why we must end gerrymandered maps. They spoke of their vote not counting anymore because they were in packed or cracked districts; they spoke of actions that large majorities of Wisconsinites want such as voting rights, background checks, and money for education that will never see the light of day because of partisan gerrymandering. By the way, absolutely no one showed up to ask for keeping gerrymandered maps.

We came early in the morning and stayed late into the evening and what did Robin Vos say to us before we left? Thank you for coming, but I just want you to know that we will be political in drawing the maps because the Supreme Court said we could be political and we will be political. I have heard Speaker Vos say the same thing countless times in subsequent interviews. Why am I distrustful of SB488/AB415? Because I believe Robin Vos when he says he will be political and I consider SB288 and AB415 to be a Hail Mary attempt to hang on to power no matter the cost to the people of Wisconsin. Please don't rush this legislation through before it can be fully vetted.

SB 488:

- Fast tracking his redistribution bill is unfair to Wisconsin residents and blatant power-grab that could permanently change the process for drawing our state maps and would be detrimental to our communities.
- There should be public hearings all around the State of Wisconsin on a bill that has the potential to permanently change the redistricting process.
- There needs to be plenty of time to listen to ALL stakeholders - pro-democracy organizations, Wisconsin voters.
- Redistricting should be conducted by a nonpartisan commission. Voters in 32 counties have passed advisory referendums calling on legislators to create a nonpartisan process for redistricting.
- Wisconsinites know what we want and should be part of the decisions made about our communities. We want fair maps that accurately represent our communities and allow us to make our voices heard.
- We should have the freedom to make our voices heard and be fairly represented when casting our ballot.

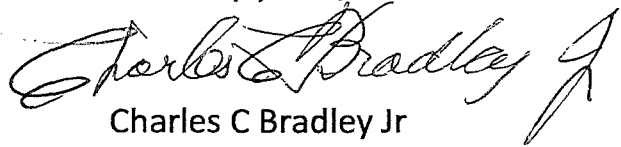
Vivian Norton
630 Military Ridge Drive
Verona, WI 53593

Charles C Bradley Jr
5538 Century Av, 4
Middleton, Wi 53562

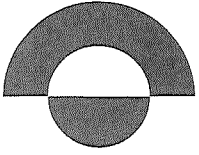
Wisconsin State Senate Committee on Redistricting

I used to live in Columbia County in which 65% of the people voted Democrat. Since 2011 it has been divided into 4 Assembly districts. The Democrats are only represented in one of those districts. I would like to see an end to taxation without representation in the other districts. *The Columbia County districts show why we need a fully nonpartisan system of boundaries*

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Charles C Bradley Jr". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Charles C Bradley Jr



Wisconsin Conservation Voters

Testimony in Opposition to Assembly Bill 415 & Senate Bill 488 Anjali Bhasin and Peter Burress, Wisconsin Conservation Voters October 19, 2023

Good afternoon Chair Knodl and members of the committee. We are Anjali Bhasin and Peter Burress, and we work with Wisconsin Conservation Voters. We have offices in Madison, Milwaukee, and Green Bay, where we work with our network of over 40,000 members and supporters to engage voters to protect our environment. We appreciate the opportunity to testify in opposition to AB 415 & SB 488, which would entrench legislative control over our redistricting process and undermine widespread support for establishing fair maps.

To build a healthy democracy where we can protect our health and the health of our planet, we must end legislative control over redistricting. That's why we've long-advocated for an independent, nonpartisan process that moves redistricting outside the hands of our legislature. This aligns with public opinion on the issue. During the last redistricting process, the Marquette University Law School Poll found that 63 percent of Wisconsin voters said redistricting should be conducted by a nonpartisan commission. Only 25 percent said it should be done by the legislature.

AB 415 & SB 488 work against the will of Wisconsin voters by entrenching legislative control over the redistricting process. The bill would establish a process that begins with the nonpartisan Legislative Reference Bureau (LRB), but it includes loopholes that ensure the legislature has control over final decisions. Those include the absence of a provision that would prevent legislative leadership from hiring someone to work within the LRB on redistricting and the absence of a provision that would require the final stage of the process to be approved by a three-fourths majority of the Assembly and Senate. While Wisconsin Conservation Voters has in the past supported a process that begins with the LRB, we are firmly opposed to these loopholes included in AB 415 & SB 488.

Additionally, in recent years, several states have re-envisioned the process for independent, nonpartisan redistricting. We now understand that there is more than one way to navigate redistricting. The general principle we support is a commission made up of independent actors who are not holding elected office, or planning to hold elected office. The commission should also exclude individuals who are easily influenced by individuals holding elected office (e.g., political party officers, paid political consultants, employees of the legislature, and lobbyists). Any Wisconsin model for redistricting must reflect the importance of an independent commission.

We urge you to oppose AB 415 & SB 488, and thank you for your time.

For more information, contact Peter Burress at peter@conservationvoters.org or 920-421-3601.

To: Senate Committee on Elections

Date: October 19, 2023

From: Paul Malischke, Platteville WI, malischke@yahoo.com

Subject: AB 415, Nonpartisan redistricting

When AB 415 was first introduced, there were several major weaknesses. Fortunately, some of these were solved by the amendments that were passed by the Assembly.

As initially written, the legislature could not amend the first two sets of plans. If they rejected the first two plans, the legislature would be able to amend and approve the third set of plans by a simple majority vote. This ability to amend would have defeated the main purpose of the bill, which is to implement maps drawn by a nonpartisan agency.

The adoption of amendment 5 addressed this critical issue by eliminating the legislature's authority to amend any plans presented to them. This is stricter than other proposals. It is essential that you keep amendment 5 in the bill.

Two other significant amendments were amendments 6 and 7 which focus on enhancing transparency. Amendment 6 requires eight public hearings. Amendment 7 provides that the drafting file becomes public when a plan is introduced.

During the debate in the Assembly, the authors of AB 415 stated that they were open to considering amendments, and they demonstrated their sincerity by accepting and approving 7 amendments. I hope that attitude continues as AB 415 moves through the process.

There is still work to be done. Here are two remaining issues with AB 415.

- 1) AB 415 should be further amended to prohibit legislative leaders from assigning or hiring individuals to assist the Legislative Reference Bureau with redistricting preparation, planning, or oversight. This clause was in Senator Smith's 2021 bill, and it will prevent undue partisan influence.
- 2) An important issue is what happens if no LRB plan is approved by January 31. Currently AB 415 provides that no redistricting plan delivered by the LRB may be considered and voted on after January 31. At that point, is it submitted to the courts, or can the legislature create a plan of their choosing? The ambiguity needs to be cleared up, so that partisan bias is removed from Wisconsin's legislative maps. Mr. John Johnson of the Marquette University Lubar Center blogged about this on September 15, and suggested that if the January 31st deadline passes unmet, "One option would be specifying that the Wisconsin Supreme Court chooses from among the LRB plans."

We are now closer than ever to getting nonpartisan redistricting. This has been called historic legislation. AB 415 has already been significantly improved, and with more thoughtful changes we can get over the finish line.

SB 488 Public Hearing Testimony
October 19,2023

I'd like to thank you for this opportunity. My name is Barb Brown from Mayville, WI and I'm here to represent myself.

I'm concerned about AB 415/SB 488, which was advanced by the Wisconsin General Assembly in September and allows politicians to continue gerrymandering. The process has lacked public input, has been rushed through, and keeps map drawing in the hands of those in power, causing extremism and further divisions in our already divided state.

First, what was the hurry, as the next redistricting isn't until after the 2030 census? Is it because there is so much going on right now in this state, country, and world, our representatives think no one is paying attention?

Second, there is a lack of transparency in the WI house of representatives as there were no public hearings on this matter, which mirrors the gaveling in/gaveling out instances on other major issues in this state. Again, thank you to this committee for holding a public hearing, or did this opportunity come about because our representatives realized that people are really concerned about any political party using loopholes to abuse the redistricting process?

Third, the outright misinformation concerning this bill is disturbing, as it is NOT "just like Iowa's" bill- as current majority legislators pick members of the commission, and then they are able to tell them what they want changed if they don't like it.

I implore our state legislators to vote against this bill, end map manipulation and work towards an independent redistricting commission that can bring real reform to produce maps that are responsive to the will of the people instead of the will of politicians.

Barb Brown
121 Muzzy St
Mayville Wi 53050
920-382-4158
Brown121@charter.net

SB488 Public Hearing Testimony, October 19, 2023
Carlene Bechen
Retired Organizing Director, WI Fair Maps Coalition

My name is Carlene Bechen. I am the recently retired Grassroots Organizing Director for the Wisconsin Fair Maps Coalition, a collaborative effort of dozens of pro-democracy, nonprofit organizations working together to bring an end to partisan gerrymandering in Wisconsin and create an independent, transparent, and inclusive process for constructing voting district maps that fairly represent all Wisconsin's residents.

During my three years working with activists and volunteers statewide on behalf of these organizations, I learned that people in our state – no matter their political leaning – do not feel seen or heard by their state legislators. Issues they care about, from clean air and water and access to affordable healthcare care, including mental health to adequately funded public schools and common-sense gun violence prevention regulation, are not being addressed by our state legislature.

And they know why! Wisconsin's gerrymandered legislative maps make legislators unaccountable to them – their constituents.

The current redistricting bill – even with amendments – that the Speaker rushed through the Assembly is NOT the solution to the problem. The backdoors and holes in the bill that allow legislators to continue to control the process are buried in the details.

Wisconsin voters do not want legislators creating voting maps. According to a 2021 Marquette Law School Poll, 63% of voters said redistricting should be conducted by a nonpartisan commission. Similarly, voters in 32 counties passed advisory referendums by overwhelming majorities calling on the legislature to create a nonpartisan process, and 66% of those counties were won by Trump in 2020 demonstrating the bipartisan support for this issue.

What's the rush? The next census takes place in 2030 and voting district maps will be created in 2031.

That gives the legislature plenty of time to listen to the people of Wisconsin. Hold hearings around the state and get input from Wisconsinites on what the redistricting process should look like.

Take the time to learn from other states that have implemented independent redistricting commissions since 2011, like Colorado and Michigan, and others that have long had a nonpartisan redistricting process, such as California and Iowa.

Wisconsinites want the legislative map drawing process out of the hands of legislators of either party. The people of Wisconsin want fair maps that accurately represent our communities and allow us to make our voices heard. Let's create the best 'Wisconsin Model' possible to meet the needs of the Wisconsinites.

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,
Carlene Bechen

iuscely flores villarreal
Co-Chair Wisconsin Fair Maps Coalition
Racial Equity and Economic Justice Advocate
414-364-2933
2225 W. Mineral Street
Milwaukee WI 53204

Hello my name's iuscely flores. I am the co-chair for the Wisconsin Fair Maps Coalition and I work for the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign.

I'll be honest with you, the first time I remember reading anything about redistricting was on a political science exam my sophomore year of college. It was an extra credit multiple choice question that asked, "when does redistricting happen?" The correct answer is every ten years after the census, and I didn't have that on my study notes.

I got the answer wrong because redistricting was only one or two paragraphs in a book. MAYBE if I would have pulled a longer all nighter I MIGHT have read that paragraph and gotten the correct answer. I've learned a lot since then.

As you know, this public hearing was announced less than a week ago. It gave some of us little to no notice in order to get off work and be present to let our voices heard. I wish more people who look like me, have similar lived experiences and share spaces in communities of interest could present here today.

This bill contains a number of map drawing rules that could make it harder to ensure effective representation for Black, Indigenous, and Communities of Color. There are no state-level protections for us, and - according to the most recent census - that's 39% of Wisconsin's population.

This bill would also not take into account the growth of communities of color and does not provide the mechanisms to determine whether voters of color are packed or cracked into districts and no analysis done to assess whether communities of color are able to elect their preferred candidates. Are you trying to exclude us from the conversation?

Unlike me in college, you don't have to pull an all-nighter to understand how very important redistricting is. You don't have to cram for answers right now, and we don't have to risk getting it wrong for our entire State.

I want to ask that you vote no on SB488, and ask that you take your time studying, surveying and learning more about the best practices in redistricting to create a process that works for Wisconsin. We have until the next census to reframe the future of our state, and to ensure we have a fair transparent redistricting process for decades to come.

Thank you.

Good morning

My name is Hans Breitenmoser. I'm a dairy farmer from Lincoln County and I should be at home helping with the corn combining but instead I'm here with two of my kids to as they say, "speak truth to power".

Way back in 2017 while I was on the county board, I introduced an advisory resolution insisting on a nonpartisan procedure for drawing our state's legislative and congressional district lines. It passed with overwhelming support from Republicans, Democrats and Independents.

Then, representing Lincoln County at the WI Counties Association annual convention, I introduced the resolution for adoption. Again, it passed with flying colors as county board supervisors from all over the state and of all political stripes understand that for a government to work well it cannot be a one-party system which is exactly what we creep toward when we don't have a **legitimately** nonpartisan procedure for this work.

In 2018 I introduced a resolution in Lincoln County to get an advisory referendum on the ballot. The voters in my county voted overwhelmingly in favor of a **real** nonpartisan procedure for creating the district in which they live because we believe we should pick our representatives rather than letting our politicians pick us. And of course, it's not just Lincoln County. . Everywhere voters have been allowed to weigh in via referendum the vote in favor of an actual nonpartisan procedure passes handily.

My point here is that I and so many others have been working on this for so many years and we can tell the difference between an honest attempt at creating a nonpartisan procedure and something that merely claims to be. Today my kids and I are pulled away from a very busy day on our farm because we don't want partisan politics to make a mockery of the work so many have been doing for so long.



October 19, 2023

Testimony of Nick Ramos

Executive Director, Wisconsin Democracy Campaign

Joint Public Hearing Before the State Senate Committee on Shared Revenue, Elections and Consumer Protection

In opposition to SB 488/AB 415

Mister Chairmen and other distinguished members of the Committee,

My name is Nick Ramos, and I am the proud executive director of the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign, which since 1995, has been tracking and exposing the money in Wisconsin politics and advocating for a full range of pro-democracy reforms, including banning gerrymandering.

We have fought for fair maps in this state for years and we will continue to do so until every Wisconsinite and every community across this great state has its voice heard on this extremely important issue.

That is why we oppose SB 488 and AB 415.

Wisconsinites were not provided an Assembly committee public hearing on AB 415. So, the Wisconsin Fair Maps Coalition felt obligated to create a space for Wisconsin residents to share their opinions about the proposal you are fast-tracking into law.

Your colleagues in the Assembly announced AB 415 and voted on it 48 hours later.

On October 9th, the Wisconsin Fair Maps Coalition held a "Public Telling" here in the Capitol and we had that room packed with Wisconsin residents from across the state yearning to share their thoughts and concerns on the proposed legislation before us.

From the hours of testimony I had the privilege to listen to -- positioned just like you are right now -- residents over and over again shared a common sentiment: They do not believe that you, our legislature, truly care about them.

And why should Wisconsinites think that you care about them?

Why should Wisconsinites think that you value their opinion or actually have their best interests in mind?

It's hard to trust anyone that does not engage you in good faith and takes a "my way or the highway" approach to creating public policy.

We need a legislature that creates laws by actually listening and engaging with the people that those laws will impact.

We need a legislature that takes the time, exerts the necessary due diligence, and works together to craft the best bills possible, especially when it comes to our legislative maps.

If the legislature is serious about achieving the fairest maps possible for this state. Great.

We can bring everyone to the table and discuss what exactly that looks like.

This can't be the only time we hear from you all on this process.

We can discuss the language and provisions that any true nonpartisan redistricting bill ought to have.

We can take the necessary time that will be needed to get this thing right and create a Wisconsin model that produces maps that Wisconsinites, from every corner of the state, can be proud of.

And as a Black and Latino Wisconsin resident, you better believe that Wisconsin desperately needs a redistricting process where voices from our BIPOC communities are heard and not silenced.

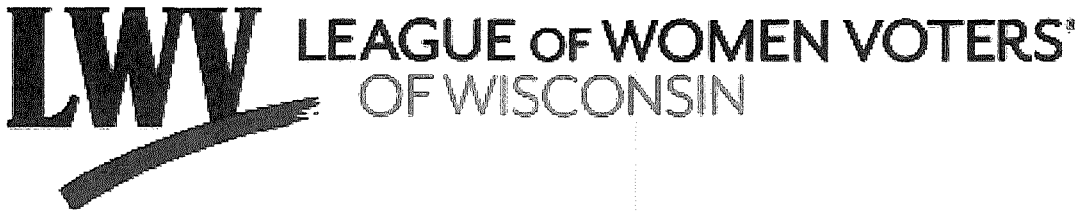
Everyone needs a seat at the table.

And you cannot rush this process if you want to do this right.

We appreciate this committee opening its doors to the people and our hope is that you all will listen deeply and consider the feedback that is shared with you today.

We hope that you take this issue and other pro-democracy issues seriously in the future. Because we want the opportunity to work alongside you in delivering real victories for the people of Wisconsin.

Thank you for considering our view on this crucial issue.



612 W. Main Street, #200
Madison, WI 53703

Phone: (608) 256-0827
www.lwvwi.org



Re: Opposition to SB488 and AB415, Legislative Redistricting

The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin has long supported a nonpartisan district map-drawing process. We thank you for holding this public hearing on this important issue after failing to do so for the past 13 years.

I hope you come to this public hearing to listen to us. Independent, nonpartisan redistricting is possible in Wisconsin. The solution for Wisconsin entails taking the map-drawing process out of the hands of partisan players and giving the responsibility to a nonpartisan independent commission. Anything lacking transparency and nonpartisan safeguards will lead us back to where we find ourselves now – politicians drawing themselves into power year after year.

It is time for this Legislature to govern. Because of the gerrymander, this Legislature has ignored voters, taken unpopular stances, and failed to do the very job you are elected to do. You have held up many appointments, rendering some committees and commissions without the quorums necessary to do their work. For example, we need a Natural Resources Board to promulgate important rules to establish a groundwater standard for PFAS in Wisconsin. Only the DNR can do this. Infants, young children, and adults throughout the state need these protections from these dangerous toxic chemicals. We need to authorize the funds budgeted for testing and remediation. We need to hold polluters accountable so Wisconsin's taxpayers do not pay the whole bill.

Additionally, due to the gerrymander, you have failed to support our future generations of Wisconsinites by refusing to fully fund public education systems.

You have failed to support Wisconsin's working families by providing the basic health care they need and access to affordable child care so they can be productive members of our community's workforce.

The current maps have undermined Wisconsin's long history of governing leadership. Now is the time to seriously consider nonpartisan maps that serve the people's needs and not just satisfy those greedy for more power.

The next Census is not until 2030. You have the time to hear from the voters, to work with

the many advocates of democracy in the room and to engage all elected officials from both sides of the aisle to secure the buy-in from Wisconsin's most rural communities and largest metropolitan areas.

Now is the time to ensure the needed guardrails are in place to prevent simple majority approvals. Years of bad practices have fueled the hyperpartisan governing paralysis we find ourselves in. The people of Wisconsin deserve better.

Now is the time to require a supermajority of Legislators to approve any proposed district map so Wisconsin can once again have a Legislature that governs for the people - all the people - not just the wealthy few.

Now is the time for fair maps.

-Debra Cronmiller, Executive Director of the League of Women Voters of Wisconsin

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The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin is a nonpartisan political organization that advocates for informed and active participation in government. There are 20 local Leagues throughout Wisconsin. More information at lwvwi.org.

Public Hearing Testimony on SB488 prepared for the Members of the Committee on Shared Revenue, Elections and Consumer Protection – October 19, 2023

I am Cheryl Maranto, co-chair North Shore Fair Maps. I'm also a member of a statewide citizens group, the Wisconsin Map Assessment Project (WIMAP). Over the last 2½ years we have reviewed and analyzed all the statewide redistricting maps submitted as part of the 2020 redistricting cycle. WE HAVE LEARNED SO MUCH. We will be releasing a final report on our work soon.

You think you can use the phrase "Iowa model" as a magic wand to change reality: 1) You claim that this bill really captures all the essential features of the Iowa model. It doesn't. 2) You claim that the Iowa model, now 40 years old, is still the "gold standard" for redistricting. It isn't. 3) You apparently believe that the people of Wisconsin are uninformed about redistricting. We are not. We have built an unprecedented statewide grassroots movement. We want an independent nonpartisan redistricting process.

- NONpartisan means ^{a Commission with} equal numbers of citizens affiliated with each major party and Independents, chosen through a nonpartisan process – not picked by politicians!
- The redistricting commission must have *actual power* - not the window dressing role this legislation gives it.
- The map-drawing process must be free from partisan manipulation – by either party - and contain checks that insure that our maps don't disadvantage either party, either intentionally or unintentionally.
- This bill lacks any resolution mechanism if the legislature and governor can't agree on maps. Given that agreement has only been reached twice since 1960 this is a gaping hole.

There are better models available! We have the successful model of Michigan's new redistricting process, as well as the proposed constitutional amendment in Ohio. These models will need to be tweaked to fit Wisconsin. But WE DON'T WANT a 1980 Ford Pinto when we can have a custom Ford Mustang Mach-E (high performance electric car).

Cheryl Maranto
6563 N. Crestwood Dr.
Glendale, WI 53209

Republicans have had control over the drawing of voting maps in Wisconsin for too long. This is like putting a fox in charge of the hen house. Politicians should not select us. We should select them. We deserve an independent, non-partisan process to draw our voting districts. Wisconsin voters have the right to a level playing field that allows all of us to be equally represented in our government. We are not asking for maps that give us an advantage. We are asking for maps that are fair and honest. We deserve fair voting maps, and our democracy demands them.

Susan Swoboda
Whitewater

Rm 411 South Side Capital

TO: Senate Committee on Shared Revenue, Elections & Consumer Protection

From: Doug Mering

Date: 10-19-23

On the night of the vote on AB415 my Representative Tony Kurtz who is a Republican implored the members from the other side of the aisle that be courageous and vote for the Assembly Bill for redistricting reform.

Courage in this case is defined as doing the right thing even if it is not politically advantageous. Politicians should be looking to be elected for doing the right thing, Short term they need to fix this bill so the voters get what they deserve which is a truly representative government.. The three-fourths of each legislative branch on the third map will ensure that fairness to the voters.

It is time this legislature becomes truly bipartisan. In 2009 the Democrats could have changed this process and did not. Just because you had the power to do the wrong this does not ethically give you the power to do so.

Long term the legislature should hand this over to a truly nonpartisan board. Bring this to a Constitutional vote of the people giving them a process the voters, not the politicians are in charge of.

In its present form, the legislature should vote no on SB488.

Kenneth Doug Mering

E8581 Hogsback Rd

Baraboo, Wi 53913

1-608-434-7968

Dear Senator Knodl,

My name is Karen Wilson. I am a fulltime resident of Fish Creek in Door County, Wisconsin.

At age 83, I have followed and participated in Wisconsin politics for many decades. Always I have been on the side of transparency, fairness and goodwill. Unfortunately, in regard to SB 488 and its companion AB 415, I cannot find any of these basic necessities for good governance.

I believe that your duty as an elected legislator in our state is to act first and foremost for the benefit of its citizens, not your political party. In the present case, we see an issue – nonpartisan voting maps – that demonstrably concerns large numbers of citizens (County Resolutions, Referendums, opinion polls). Yet your political party wants to push through a proposed answer to their concerns on a fast track, not allowing time for input and analysis that would safeguard the actual purpose.

There are many intelligent and sincerely motivated proponents of non-partisan voting maps, who have spent their time and effort over the past years trying to achieve the goal. Your goodwill and honest intent would be demonstrated by creating an inclusive process with a time frame that accommodates the importance of getting it right.

I strongly urge you to follow your duty first, even against the leadership of your party.

Sincerely,
Karen Wilson
8391 Islandview Rd
Fish Creek, WI 54212

Dear Senator Knodl, Senator Feyen, Senator Quinn, Senator Spreitzer, Senator Smith, and William Neville,

Please consider this written testimony on Senate Bill 488. It is my understanding that a public hearing will be held on Thursday, October 19th at 9:00 am. I live quite a distance from Madison, WI and cannot attend this hearing. This one date, time and location does not provide me with the access I would need to attend. This is true for hundreds of other Wisconsinites.

I am opposed to this redistricting bill for a number of reasons outlined below;

- Wisconsin already has highly gerrymandered district maps. One of the highest in the Country. This bill does not include ways to change this, only to perpetuate a significant issue that divides communities.
- This bill places the power for determining maps and how they are drawn in the hands of the State Legislature which as of late is highly politicized and polarized. Any political party in charge in the Legislature could determine the maps that best fit their narrative and objectives. This is true for either of the two political parties. The power needs to be in the hands of a broad, diverse group of Wisconsinites who are fairly selected to work with a nonpartisan group to develop fair and representative maps.
- This proposal has been fast tracked with little opportunity for Wisconsinites to comment. For being the first public hearing in 13 years, reasonable efforts to involve a broader group of stakeholders and to hear from those who have been affected by the community division have not been offered. One meeting on a work day, 250 miles from my home at 9:00 am does not provide me access to testify. This is true for most of the northern half of Wisconsin.
- The redistricting process needs to be non-partisan and independent outside of political party interests. The majority of Wisconsin voters want non-partisan drawn maps conducted by nonpartisan commissions.
- The folks in the communities within St. Croix County want cohesive districts. They want to elect the people that represent them and their values. The current maps do not. They want leaders who will get down to business working together to solve pressing issues that affect them everyday. Clean water, quality schools, safe communities, and infrastructure improvements are important issues. It's time to come together and resolve the issues of today without the political dramatics and posturing. This bill only perpetuates this issue and disenfranchises voters.

With hopes for change,
Sue Curtis
Hudson, WI

To Mr. Neville~

While I cannot be in person for the public hearing, as a citizen of Wisconsin I'd like to weigh in on SB488.

This public hearing, held in one place only, on the topic of redistricting is vitally important to the fair representation of ALL Wisconsin citizens. As such, I'd like to see public hearings in districts around the entire state. We've waited this long and can wait further until all citizens get to have a voice in the redistricting process. There's no need to push through a bill without full representation.

I'm flummoxed as to why our state can't utilize a non-partisan, independent, and transparent process for redistricting. This has been done in Iowa and they provide a built-in period for feedback before the Independent Legislative Services Agency makes its recommendations. This non-partisan process prevents the kind of gerrymandering that can be used to keep a given party in power, despite demographic changes. NO party should have the power to gerrymander districts as this is undemocratic. I don't the redistricting process in the hands of ANY legislature as that can be used for a power grab rather than facilitating the will of the voter citizens.

I'd ask you to consider the following questions about SB488:

1. Who benefits as a result of its passage?
2. Who pays as a result of its passage?
3. With its passage, who defines what makes for reasonable district lines, and is that democratic?

As it currently stands it seems to me that SB488 is a partisan attempt and anti-democratic. It would merely, but with great damage to citizens, enable legislative control over the redistricting process. As a citizen I want to see a transparent, inclusive, and independent process to redistricting.

Citizens should have their voices heard, regardless of political affiliation, throughout the state. This bill is in direct opposition to that.

Thank you for your time.
Patti Correll-Syring
La Crosse, WI

Public Hearing SB 488

Testimony to members of the State Senate Committee on Shared Revenue, Elections, and Consumer Protection

Thursday, October 19, 2023

9:00am

Room 411 South of the Wisconsin State Capitol

FLAG ON THE FIELD

Vicki Aro-Schackmuth

920 S. Imperial Dr.

Hartland, WI 53029

Hello, my name is Vicki Aro-Schackmuth and I live in Hartland, WI.

I am here to register opposition to SB488.

Which leads me to use a sports analogy – red flag or red card on the field.

A Red Flag signifies a reason to stop.

Red Flags are thrown in sports when a game is halted because of a foul.

A Red Card is handed to players in soccer for serious foul play.

Senate Bill 488 represents a Legislative Red Flag.

From the inception of this Bill there were Red Flags:

1. Red Flag when the Bill was conceived as a method to head off a politically unfavorable decision by the Wisconsin Supreme Court on our current gerrymandered maps.
2. Red Flag when there was no input from stakeholders like the voters.
3. Red Flag when there was no input from well-known experts on Fair Maps.
4. Red Flag when there was no input from concerned interest groups such as the Wisconsin Fair Maps Coalition.
5. Red Flag in Committee when the bill was introduced without discussion or a hearing.
6. Red Flag when the bill painstakingly sets out nonpartisan rules to follow for the Legislative Reference Bureau when drawing maps but is silent on rules for the Legislature when they draw maps.

Public Hearing SB 488

Testimony to members of the State Senate Committee on Shared Revenue, Elections, and Consumer Protection

Thursday, October 19, 2023

9:00am

Room 411 South of the Wisconsin State Capitol

FLAG ON THE FIELD

Vicki Aro-Schackmuth

920 S. Imperial Dr.

Hartland, WI 53029

7. Red Flag when the legislature is allowed to draw partisan maps with only a simple majority.
8. Red Flag when naming the Bill after the Iowa Model which completely misrepresents the Bill's content. According to Iowa State Auditor Rob Sand: "This is not the Iowa Model. It's also just impossible to expect Iowa-style fair results when you still have the capacity to gerrymander at the end of the day, which is what this bill allows for. They can reject, and reject, and draw their own maps."

AND FINALLY, as an independent voter who does not have party allegiances, I throw a Red Flag because this Bill allows extreme partisan gerrymandering that ends up not only hurting the minority party it also damages the ability to function in the majority. I'm urging you to STOP going down this dangerous road and vote NO on Senate Bill 488.

Thank you for listening.

Rep. Knodl and Members of the Shared Revenue, Elections and Consumer Protection Committee,

I'd like to begin by thanking both branches of the Legislature for being receptive to opening a path away from their long-held grip on the gerrymandered design of our voting districts.

These bills aim for a more nonpartisan voice to this process via a Legislative Advisory Committee that would serve as a resource to the Legislative Reference Bureau when presenting redistricting plans to the Legislature.

The drafters of these bills say that they compare favorably to the Iowa Redistricting Model which they now seem to be endorsing. It is true that there are areas of commonality between the two approaches.

- a. Both give the map drafting task to a nonpartisan group even though 4 of the 5 Wisconsin members would be picked by the two parties in the Legislature.
- b. Both prohibit the consideration of any political or demographic data.
- c. Both limit, at least partially, the ability of the Legislatures to make amendments to the drafts.

But in several important ways, the bills diverge from the Iowa model.

- a. In Iowa, the General Assembly (Legislature) may reject up to two versions of the plan requesting that certain changes be made. If the General Assembly still cannot endorse a plan, the state Supreme Court is given the authority to adopt a redistricting plan.

In Wisconsin, I think that more than two drafts may be submitted to the Legislature. If no endorsement is agreed to, the authority to develop a map plan reverts back to the legislators themselves with the state Supreme Court having no role. Also, the Legislature would have no deadline to have finalized their plan.

- b. In Iowa, there must be at least three public hearings. In our state I believe that no hearings were initially scheduled, although now we are having one today. No input was sought from organizations long associated with this issue.

The bill, announced on Sept. 12, 2023 was on the Assembly floor two days later. There was no prior Committee hearing, debate or vote. This does not serve Wisconsin voters well.

- c. I think that both states' legislatures are required to vote on the plan in a bipartisan manner. But the Wisconsin bills require that only one member of the minority party vote for the majority party's plan.

1. When Gov. Evers proposed the Iowa model in 2009, he called for 75% legislative approval.

- d. Wisconsin's bills apply only to state legislative, and not congressional districts.

To conclude, these bills are a first move in the right direction, but they are, in no way, constructed to mirror the Iowa model completely and are not ready to be presented to the Governor.

Submitted by
Dr. Jeffrey Zdrale
1351 Silverwood Lane
Neenah (Fox Crossing), Wisconsin 54956
920-722-0693

October 18, 2023

Chair Knodl and Committee Members,

My name is David Fodroczi, and I live on Big Lake in the Town of Garfield, Polk County. Please accept this message as my written testimony on SB 488 to be heard at a public hearing at 9:00 am, Thursday, October 19, 2023, at the Capitol in Madison. The long trip from Polk County makes it difficult to attend in person.

I have been directly involved in the redistricting process during the last five decennial redistricting cycles. Things have gotten worse instead of better. However, over two years ago as we anticipated the release of the 2020 Census data and the redistricting process to follow, I was pleased to see my Polk County Board join more than 50 county boards in passing a resolution supporting fair maps and a nonpartisan process for redistricting. Then my fellow citizens in Polk County and I passed an advisory referendum endorsing the same concepts. There are now 56 counties that have passed a county resolution and/or referendum in support of fair maps and nonpartisan redistricting. If there is one positive feature of SB 488, the people of Wisconsin are finally getting a public hearing on this issue in at least one house of the Legislature. (What took so long?)

SB 488 is not the Iowa model. Legislative rhetoric about AB 415 and now SB 488 claims that the bills copy the Iowa model for nonpartisan redistricting. This bill doesn't include important safeguards found in Iowa law to protect against continued partisan control by the Legislature, specifically providing for judicial review and resolution by the Iowa Supreme Court in the event the Legislature and Governor can't agree on a map. Your bill conveniently leaves out this safeguard, so the Legislature can adopt any map it wants with a simple majority that includes just one minority party vote. Previous bipartisan versions of this bill that were introduced then ignored by the Legislature included the requirement for a super majority vote. What a clever thing to avoid! The real proof that this is not the Iowa model came from Iowa election officials themselves. The Democrat Iowa State Auditor and former Iowa Republican Party Chairman together explained that AB 415 is not the Iowa model. They went so far as to say, "The Iowa model cannot be replicated by cherry picking elements from it."

The Iowa model belongs in Iowa, not Wisconsin. These bills are based on old, outdated thinking and experience of the Iowa model that doesn't fit our state. Redistricting experts and scholars in our state have documented the shortcomings, if only you would ask and listen. We are much more culturally and economically diverse and much less politically homogeneous than Iowa. Also, important to consider is that the Iowa model as embodied in SB 488 and previous bills is bipartisan, not nonpartisan as all our county resolutions, local referenda and fair maps organizations have advocated. We have learned a lot from other states just in the last three years about reorganizing the redistricting process to produce fair, defensible maps that legislatures, governors, and yes, the people can support. You want to learn from neighbors? Take a look at Michigan. Their demographics, economy and politics are much more like

Wisconsin than Iowa, and their first-time, nonpartisan redistricting commission had far more success than our Legislature has had in decades.

SB 488 is a clear step backward from previous proposals. Some better version of this bill has been introduced with bipartisan sponsorship in the last few legislative sessions. The latest version was 2021 AB 395. Why doesn't this bill have bipartisan sponsorship? Why does this bill weaken and lessen the role of the redistricting commission? Why does this bill remove the 4/5 majority required to approve the third attempt and amendments to the redistricting plan? Why does this bill eliminate the check on partisan fairness once a plan has been prepared? These changes from previous versions have something in common. They all appear designed to maintain legislative control, political power, and partisan advantage. Anybody who has worked on redistricting can see this for what it is. The emperor has no clothes!

SB 488 is incomplete, because it ignores Congressional redistricting. Every redistricting cycle must update legislative and Congressional districts. This bill does not include Congressional districts. Any proposal to change redistricting in Wisconsin must include Congressional districts.

SB 488 is a questionable step toward a long-term solution for redistricting in Wisconsin. The timing, process, and provisions of SB 488 call into question its validity as the foundation for improved redistricting in Wisconsin. Why is the bill being fast tracked after years of Legislative avoidance? We have plenty of time to develop thoughtful and meaningful improvements for the next redistricting cycle in 2030. Why would new maps be required to be prepared by January 31, 2024? Does the Legislature have serious misgivings about the 2022 maps it prepared, or is this a preemptive maneuver for the redistricting case currently before the Wisconsin Supreme Court? That would certainly be bad reasoning. Why was there no bipartisan support for this bill when previous versions did? Will the Governor support this bill? Why haven't knowledgeable, well established fair maps organizations been consulted for their recommendations? Without these ingredients to the process, where will this bill end up, another veto? Be inclusive. Be transparent. Be constructive. Otherwise, you're just stirring the pot while the pot boils over again. We, the people of Wisconsin, deserve better.

I am a member of a statewide citizens group, Wisconsin Map Assessment Project (WIMAP). Over the last 2½ years our group has reviewed and analyzed all the citizen and official redistricting maps prepared or submitted as part of the 2020-22 redistricting cycle in Wisconsin. We will be releasing a final report on our work soon, and we have much to offer to a new redistricting process that makes sense for Wisconsin.

Thank you for finally holding a public hearing on this issue and considering my comments. You have time and people willing to get this right.

David Fodroczi
621 Nokomis Drive
Osceola, WI 54020

Public Hearing Testimony on SB488 prepared for the Members of the Committee on Shared Revenue, Elections and Consumer Protection – October 19, 2023

Dear Committee Members,

As a life-long Wisconsin resident and a member of several groups which have spent the last many years educating ourselves and working on issues related to redistricting, I want to thank this committee for beginning the task of developing a new system for redistricting in Wisconsin.

We do need to start somewhere. But the Iowa model, which we used as a guide in earlier times, is not the redistricting model for Wisconsin today. We have learned so much along the way as we have studied other models for non-partisan redistricting. I will focus my comments on a few sections of SB488 which especially require attention as we begin this work of developing a redistricting process that is based on the Wisconsin way, keeping in mind that we are uniquely **Wisconsin**.

- The role and tasks of the Redistricting advisory commission have been significantly diminished from the proposed 2021 version of the Iowa model bill (AB395). The role of the advisory commission is to advise and provide direction to the LRB, not vice versa.

Removed from SB488 is the paragraph from the 2021 AB395 that states that the advisory commission “must oversee the work of LRB employees engaged in preparing a redistricting plan and may enter into contracts for hiring experts to assist in plan preparation. Entering into such a contract, or terminating a contract employee, requires approval from three-fourths of the members of the commission.” Decision-making about entering into contracts to hire experts is the role of the advisory commission, under consultation with the LRB.

SB488 states that the LRB can make a recommendation to appoint a person with expertise in complying with the federal VRA. The determination that a VRA expert is necessary should lie with the advisory commission in accordance with consultation with the LRB.

The LRB needs to be represented at the public hearings since it is the body that is actually in charge of drawing the maps and has the ability to respond to questions regarding the maps.

Why doesn't the LRB deliver the maps to the redistricting advisory commission for review before it is delivered to the Legislature? This is not clear.

SB488 states that the advisory commission must make available to the public at the earliest feasible time copies of any redistricting bill delivered by the LRB to the Legislature. If the redistricting bill is available to the Legislature, why isn't it available to the public at the same time? As SB488 is currently written, the public has a minimum of seven days to review the redistricting bill before it is voted on by one or both of the Houses. When do the public hearings occur so that public input is factored into final maps?

The bill refers to a report to be filed by the advisory committee which summarizes the information and testimony from the hearings. When must it be completed and when and where will it be disbursed?

- The Wisconsin Constitution requires that we redistrict legislative and Congressional districts following each federal decennial census. Congressional districts are not addressed in this bill. They should be, and the public hearings on the redistricting plans should coincide with the eight Wisconsin Congressional Districts.
- Iowa model bill AB395 proposed that three quarters of the Legislature was required to approve the final map. SB488 only requires a bipartisan vote of the Legislature. This is nothing but a scheme to control the makeup of the districts and is an affront to equal statewide representation and good government policies. It could lead to malfeasance.
- This Bill provides no remedy if the maps drawn by the LRB are continually rejected by the other involved parties when the deadline of "after January 31 of the even-numbered year following the census" approaches. With no remedy to adopt a map, how would we achieve redistricting in time for the next election?

All the people of Wisconsin have a stake in the outcome of these efforts to develop a new system of redistricting in Wisconsin. As you have read here and will hear at the hearing today, there are many unanswered questions. I ask that the entire Legislature, both Republicans and Democrats, along with the people of Wisconsin and the groups and individuals who have shown their deep commitment to this effort work collaboratively to devise a redistricting process that works for all of us. Take the time to do it right, by and for the people of Wisconsin.

I am a member of a statewide citizens group, Wisconsin Map Assessment Project (WIMAP). Over the last 2½ years our group has reviewed and analyzed all the citizen and official redistricting maps prepared or submitted as part of the 2020-22 redistricting cycle in Wisconsin. We will be releasing a final report on our work soon, and we have much to offer to a new redistricting process that makes sense for Wisconsin.

Janie Riebe
2965 Siggelkow Road
McFarland, WI 53558

Testimony for SB488 Hearing

Dear Senator Knodl,

I am a member of a statewide citizens group, Wisconsin Map Assessment Project (WIMAP). Over the last 2½ years our group has reviewed and analyzed all the citizen and official redistricting maps prepared or submitted as part of the 2020-22 redistricting cycle in Wisconsin. We will be releasing a final report on our work soon, and we have much to offer to a new redistricting process that makes sense for Wisconsin. I am not registered with either party. Here is my testimony on SB488.

1) Recent history shows that the legislature cannot be trusted to draw maps without partisan bias. Sorry, it is sad to say this, but the evidence is there. How else could districts like 73 “Jaws”, 30 “Quadrapus” and 24 “Flipper” be created? What’s to protect map drawers from doing the same the next time around? Democrats gambled in 2009 to try to gain advantage, Republicans showed what they could do in 2011 creating one of the most gerrymandered maps in the nation. Then again in 2021 “doubled down” to try to gain even more political advantage. Where is the contrition? “Fool me *twice, shame on me*....!!! Legislature, you had your chance to make amends and you let the state down. You are required to approve the maps, fine, but you shouldn’t be drawing them. Unfortunately, this is a big trust issue brought on by yourself.

2) The bill lacks transparency, inclusiveness, and independence from the legislature. The bill has no Democratic sponsors. The commission proposed is partisan in its composition. There is no check of incumbent protection. Backroom deals are still very possible. Early drafts of maps are not available to the public.

3) The bill creates a toothless commission with no real power. It is just a glorified complaint department. The LRB draws the maps, and the commission visits the public and takes the flak. The legislature still holds all the power. Let’s have a commission that creates maps modeled after the People’s Maps Commission But this time provide the resources needed to do the job.

4) The bill has no safeguards to check for implicit gerrymandering. Look at Michigan. At least eight different measures of partisan fairness. Let’s learn from our neighbor to the east and the PMC experience. Construct the maps without voting information, **then** check for partisan fairness. If the partisan fairness is grossly unbalanced, make adjustments. This was the strategy employed by the

PMC and a small check was included in 2019 AB 303. That check needs to be included again and be made more robust and powerful.

5) The bill is lacking in precision on important map standards. It tells us how compactness is measured but does not give a minimum value. It has a goal of minimizing splits but does not deal with situations when the minimization of splits comes into conflict with increasing compactness and partisan fairness. It focuses on the number of counties that are split when the more useful statistic is the number of times counties are split. The standards should prevent Columbia County (pop. 58,490) from being divided by five districts.

6) This fast-tracked bill is rushed. If it is a permanent solution, let's take the time to do it right. That includes giving the public ample opportunity to weigh in on it. No rush job! SB488 needs a total redesign. The bill leaves out Congressional maps. Why? Is this a stop-gap measure or a permanent solution? Wisconsin voters have waited over a decade to have a truly independent commission that will listen to us and be supported by the legislature. An earlier version of this bill was proposed in 2019 and totally ignored. I think we all know why it is being proposed now. The reason is transparent to see. Let's take the high road this time.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Don Leake
523 Birchcrest Dr.
River Falls, WI 54022

Legislators take an oath of office swearing to support the constitutions of the United States and the State of Wisconsin.

Those constitutions establish a representative democracy, where the people choose their government. In my opinion, legislators supporting a system that takes that choice away from the people violate their oaths of office.

Since 2012 we have suffered under an extreme partisan gerrymander. The proof is in the results. Since that year, in every election, the same party ALWAYS wins 61% - 65% of the seats in the state assembly. It hasn't mattered whether that party only won a minority of the statewide votes as happened in 2012 and 2018. They still won nearly two thirds of the seats in the assembly.

The clear message to us voters is that it doesn't matter how we vote. That political organization owns the state legislature. The legislature doesn't belong to the people of Wisconsin.

And now the gerrymanderers are trying to fool the people into thinking they suddenly support nonpartisan redistricting. SB 488 is actually partisan gerrymandering with nonbinding, nonpartisan advice. Only the advice must be nonpartisan, not the redistricting. The gerrymandering majority can reject any maps drawn by the LRB that don't allow them to keep control and, based on their history, that is exactly what we should expect. They can continue indefinitely to prevent the people from choosing their legislature.

SB 488 should be defeated. Legislators of conscience in both parties should work together on an honest system of nonpartisan redistricting. I urge you to let your oaths of office guide you and return the legislature to the people of Wisconsin.

**Calvin Dexter
915 Winton Street
Wausau, WI 54403
(715) 297-7012**

Public Hearing Testimony on SB488 prepared for the Members of the Committee on Shared Revenue, Elections and Consumer Protection – October 19, 2023

My name is Debbie Patel. I live in River Hills. I co-lead North Shore Fair Maps, and I am a member of the Wisconsin Map Assessment Project (WIMAP). Over the last 2½ years, WIMAP reviewed and analyzed citizen and official redistricting maps and more. Our findings, including recommendations, will be published shortly.

The Senate is starting this important project amid difficulties. Both the 2010 and 2020 redistricting cycles left voters dissatisfied and distrustful. It will take time and effort to prove you are seriously interested in a fair redistricting process.

I use my time to ask that this hearing be a new start. Senator Knodl, who happens to be my Senator, asked legislators to come together as adults, and bring the temperature down. Please take his wise advice.

To bring the temperature down, you will need to repair damage already caused by false starts and false statements. For example,

- This bill has no Democratic sponsors. That is not a great start.
- The bill is NOT the Iowa model, and should not be presented as such. In fact, bipartisan political leaders from Iowa have publicly disowned the bill.
- The timing of the bill leaves the impression that it is an effort to stop a lawsuit currently pending before Wisconsin's Supreme Court. And it is common knowledge that efforts to impeach our newest Supreme Court justice is simply an attempt to hold on to gerrymandered power.

To be adults, you will need to take time to listen, speak to each other honestly and openly, and create a redistricting plan that fits all of Wisconsin.

Do not make the mistake made when the last redistricting bill had a hearing, when two hundred individuals attended the hearing, one hundred fifty of them registered to testify against the bill, and yet after nine hours of testimony, none of it made a difference.

We the people did not give up. We will never give up.

That was then, this is now. Be adults. Bring the temperature down. Listen. Learn. Take time. Create voting maps that fit Wisconsin. Not Iowa. Wisconsin.

Deborah Patel / 9130 N Spruce Road, River Hills, WI 53217

Neville, William

From: Jean Radtke <jradtke@phoenixmgi.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 17, 2023 3:26 PM
To: Sen.Knodl; Nancy@grassrootsnorthshore.com
Subject: Testimony against AB415 and SB488 for October 19th

Dear Senator Knodl:

I am against AB415 and SB488 because I stand with Fair Maps of Wisconsin. I testified on October 9th, but cannot make it to the hearing on October 19th. Please share the following with everyone on my behalf. I am in Senate District 4 and live at 6750 Maple Terrace, Wauwatosa, WI 53213.

Jean Radtke's Testimony on October 9th, 2023

In honor of my mother Doris' 10th anniversary of her passing (she and I marched for civil rights, Roe v. Wade and women's rights together), and, in honor of my father's service in WWII (he flew 11 bombing missions over Europe), protecting our democracy, I give you the following testimony:

How do we ever trust Republicans again? The tea party got Scott Walker elected in 2010. In 2011, then Governor Walker, Michael Best, and a mapping service gerrymandered Wisconsin maps, behind closed doors, that in the 2012 elections, allowed Republicans to win 60 out of 99 seats in the state assembly and preserve their majority in the state senate, despite receiving less than 50% of total votes.

They didn't stop there. Republicans promoted the Big Lie, taxpayer funded Fraudits (fake audits), forged electoral certificates, gerrymandered our state, suppressed voters, tried to take the Peoples' Vote away and give it to the gerrymandered Republican-led legislature and Secretary of State. Republicans violently attacked our U.S. Capitol, killing police, wanted to kill Nancy Pelosi and then VP Mike Pence, while trying to overturn our Presidential Election. The GOP has become the Gang Of Psychotics.

- 78% of Wisconsinites want Fair Maps (63% want a bipartisan commission)
- Judge Janet Protasiewicz received over 1 million votes, over 11% more than Dan Kelly
- The majority of voters want Women's Right To Choose, Voter Rights, Gun Laws, and good Education and Healthcare for all.

Vote NO for AB415 and SB488 (which was also drafted by Republicans behind closed doors and rammed through legislation in 48 hours).

Thank you very much!

My two minutes of testimony begins at the final :30 minutes of the recording.
<https://wiseye.org/2023/10/09/wisconsin-fair-maps-coalition-briefing/>

Thanks again!

Jean Radtke

Rise above.

414-531-3187