



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®

WISCONSIN

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

Phone: (608) 256-0827
<http://www.lwvwi.org>



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Contact: Andrea Kaminski, Executive Director
608-256-0827; kaminski@lwvwi.org

LWV-WI Calls on U.S. Supreme Court to Rule in Favor of Fair Voting Districts

MADISON – The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin joined other organizations this week in filing an *amicus* brief in the U.S. Supreme Court in the case *Gill v. Whitford*, the case in which a federal district court ruled the Wisconsin Assembly districts unconstitutional based on partisan gerrymandering. The brief calls on the Supreme Court to uphold a lower court ruling which requires the state legislature to redraw the voting maps in time for the 2018 elections. The brief can be found here:

http://www.lwvwi.org/Portals/0/News%20and%20Events/PDFS/AmicusBrief_GillvWhitford_9-5-17.pdf

The *amicus* brief demonstrates how Wisconsin's 2011 redistricting has resulted in legislation that is much more extreme than would be expected from a more typical shift in the majority from one party to another. By creating "safe districts" in which a particular party is assured of victory in elections, the gerrymandered districts insulate lawmakers from accountability to their constituents.

"We have seen a serious breakdown in the legislative process in recent years. We have seen a bill that appeared to be traceable back to the desire of one wealthy donor. We have seen cases where thousands of constituent calls and emails were simply ignored. This is running roughshod over democracy," said Andrea Kaminski, Executive Director of the League of Women Voters of Wisconsin.

The brief demonstrates the ill effects of gerrymandering specifically on legislation related to government accountability, funding for public education and protection of our natural resources. The League holds positions in all of these areas and is active in the State Capitol working to pass policies that are responsive to the needs of the public.

"Where the majority party used to have to seek a bipartisan consensus to get legislation passed, now it can introduce and fast-track bills with no support from the minority and only the minimum required opportunity for public input. We are urging the U.S. Supreme Court to end partisan redistricting so that every citizen's vote will have equal weight," Kaminski said.

As a nonpartisan organization, the League of Women Voters of Wisconsin has long held that voting maps should be drawn by a nonpartisan entity, rather than by the legislators themselves. The League's position, which was adopted by our membership in the 1970s, lined up with that of the Republicans in the 1980s and now with the Democrats. Our position has not changed substantially in that time; all that has changed is which party is in power in the state legislature.

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The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin is a nonpartisan organization that advocates for informed and active participation in government. The League welcomes women and men across the state as members. With 18 local Leagues in Wisconsin and 800 affiliates across the county, the League is one of the nation's most trusted grassroots organizations. Follow @LWV_WI on Twitter.