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**GOP Kicks Off Map Manipulation Mayhem**

*Sen. Smith's Statement on Local Redistricting Bill*

MADISON – Today, Senate Republicans passed legislation that would delay the redistricting process in Wisconsin. Sen. Jeff Smith (D – Brunswick) released the following statement in response:

“Wisconsinites have every reason to be skeptical of this bill, knowing Republicans’ power-hungry history. Over the last decade, Republicans have consistently turned a blind eye to the needs of local governments and the will of the People. Republican efforts to delay redistricting cement their longstanding reputation of ignoring Wisconsinites’ voices in order to cling to power.

“Fair maps must be our future – it is the only way we can guarantee transparency in our government and confidence in our democracy.”

In May, Sen. Smith introduced legislation to create a nonpartisan redistricting process in Wisconsin. Republicans have repeatedly rejected calls for nonpartisan redistricting reform despite the fact that a majority of Wisconsinites support this idea. As of this April, 55 counties, representing 83% of all Wisconsin residents, have passed resolutions urging legislators to support nonpartisan redistricting reform. There have been 32 counties that have held referenda on nonpartisan redistricting reform and they have passed with an average of 70% of the vote.

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*The 31st Senate District includes all of Buffalo and Pepin counties and portions of Trempealeau, Pierce, Dunn, Eau Claire and Jackson counties and very small portions of Chippewa and St. Croix counties.*