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US CENSUS BUREAU RELEASES REDISTRICTING DATA AND THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF WISCONSIN HIGHLIGHTS ROLE OF LEGISLATORS AND FAIR COURTS IN ENSURING FAIR DISTRICTS

Today, Thursday, August 12, the U.S. Census Bureau released the first local-level data from the 2020 Census - data that states will use for drawing new Congressional and legislative district lines – and the League of Women Voters of Wisconsin will watch as the fair districting process commences. With the release of this data, the once-a-decade process of creating new district maps begins in earnest, with huge political and policy implications for the next 10 years.

Districting occurs once every 10 years and is of critical importance to our communities. More than just determining electoral maps, these new districts determine the allocation of funding for schools, hospitals, public transport, and other essential services. A fair districting process is necessary to guarantee that communities in our state receive the resources they need in a just and equitable manner.

To preserve a fair and open democracy, we must ensure that every voter and every community is given an equal voice. No matter our color, background, or zip code, we can all agree that voters pick our leaders, our leaders should not pick their voters. Lawmakers should not be allowed to rig the process in their own favor for the next decade. Wisconsinites overwhelmingly support fair districts that keep our communities whole and will deliver what our schools and families need for the decade to come. Listening to the voices of the voters, representing those voices to enact laws that reflect the will of the people and being able to defend those laws in courts of law is the heart of our democracy.

The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin wants a transparent districting process we can trust and that process starts today. Population, municipal boundaries, and communities with shared concerns should determine the lines of the maps. If the Legislature draws districts in such a way that prioritizes their partisan ambitions over the needs of their constituents, our courts will have to be the impartial body that oversees the enactment of our maps. Judges are not politicians. Their job is to ensure a fair districting process without concern for partisan advantage. Our judges should focus solely on the rules of the fair districting process laid out in our state's constitution.

The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin has been working for years to ensure that the maps drawn by this Legislature are done so in an open, nonpartisan manner that reflects the will of all Wisconsinites. We will watch with a discerning eye to ensure Wisconsin gets the fair maps it deserves.

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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.