



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF DOOR COUNTY

P. O. Box 306 • Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235-0306

<http://doorcounty.wi.lwvnet.org>

January 20, 2014

Dear Door County Board of Supervisors:

The Door County League of Women Voters would like to go on record supporting a change in how Wisconsin draws its district lines after each census.

Last spring, two proposals were introduced in the legislature that would reform the way the state legislature does redistricting. AB185 and SB163 are proposing a plan similar to that in Iowa, where a nonpartisan agency has drafted district maps for approval by the legislature every decade since 1981. The first iteration of the maps has been approved every time, and there has been no litigation. Iowa has compact districts and many more competitive races than we do. The state has saved millions of dollars in lawyer fees that could be put to work for the people.

Yet the majority leaders in our state legislature and the chairs of the committees to which the proposal have been assigned are stonewalling. They are refusing to hold a hearing despite persistent calls by editorial boards across the state. The majority in the legislature changed the law in 2011, shutting out the input of local redistricting officials and commissions. Then they had a private law firm draw the state districts behind closed doors. By the time the ensuing litigation concluded, the cost to taxpayers was \$2.1 million.

Certainly the taxpayers of Door County, and all of Wisconsin, deserve to have a say----and although many people are calling for a hearing on the method by which districts are drawn; their voices are being ignored.

WHY DOES REDISTRICTING MATTER?

- The way the lines are drawn can keep a community together or split it apart, leaving it without a representative who feels responsible for its concerns.
- The way the lines are drawn can determine who/which party wins an election.
- Ultimately, the way the lines are drawn can change who controls the legislature, and which laws get passed.

This issue is important to Door County! We should be participants in legislation that directly affects us. Yes, other districts' gerrymandering hurts us - it reduces the chances of electing a broad base of quality representatives who debate with open minds the laws that impact every citizen.

We urge you to support the hearings on Wisconsin redistricting reforms!

Sincerely,

Sandy Brown, President
LWV Door County

Shirley Senarighi, Action Coordinator
LWV Door County