

The Fight to Ban Gerrymandering in Wisconsin Goes On!

Written by Wisconsin Democracy Campaign, Matt Rothschild
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U.S. Supreme Court decision means Wisconsin gerrymandering case, set for a re-hearing in federal court next month, is now dead. It's time to take direct political action.

MADISON, WI - The decision by the U.S. Supreme Court today on two gerrymandering cases was disappointing but not surprising. And for the vast majority of Wisconsinites who want to ban gerrymandering in our state, this is not the end of the story. Not by a long shot.

The conservative high court, in a sweeping ruling, rejected the arguments in the North Carolina and Maryland cases that partisan gerrymandering should be remedied by the courts.

"We conclude that partisan gerrymandering claims present political questions beyond the reach of the federal courts," Chief Justice John Roberts wrote. "Federal judges have no license to reallocate political power between the two major political parties, with no plausible grant of authority in the Constitution, and no legal standards to limit and direct their decisions."

Justice Elena Kagan, writing for the four liberals on the court, dissented bluntly. Gerrymandering, she said, is "anti-democratic in the most profound sense," and the types of partisan gerrymandering presented to the Court in the North Carolina and Maryland cases "imperil our system of government. Part of the Court's role in that system is to defend its

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foundations. None is more important than free and fair elections.”

So what does this mean for Wisconsin?

On the down side, it means that the big Wisconsin gerrymandering case, *aka* the Whitford case, which is set for a re-hearing in federal court next month in Madison, is, for all practical purposes, now dead in the water.

But on the up side, the movement to ban gerrymandering in Wisconsin has never been more alive.

Already, 47 county boards in Wisconsin (out of 72) have passed resolutions urging our state legislators to ban gerrymandering.

Eight counties have passed advisory referendums, by overwhelming margins, in favor of banning gerrymandering.

And in a Marquette Law School poll earlier this year, 72 percent of Wisconsinites said they were in favor of such a ban. And that included 63 percent of Republicans and 76 percent of Independents.

The people of Wisconsin are on board!

And now two bills in the state legislature have been introduced to ban gerrymandering and give us independent, nonpartisan legislative and congressional redistricting.

Senator Dave Hansen introduced [SB288](#) on the Senate side. And Representative Robyn Vining introduced [AB303](#) on the Assembly side.

