

Rep. Hintz: Statement on Supreme Court redistricting oral arguments

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Madison – Today, the U.S. Supreme Court will hear arguments on whether redistricting maps drawn in secret by Wisconsin State Republicans are an unconstitutional political gerrymander. A year ago, a panel of federal judges ruled 2-1 that the maps were drawn so sympathetically to Republicans that they violated the constitutional rights of voters. In advance of the Supreme Court’s deliberations, Rep. Gordon Hintz (D-Oshkosh), Wisconsin State Assembly Democratic Leader, released the following statement:

“The people of Wisconsin should choose their representatives, not the other way around. The citizens of our state have demonstrated their changing opinions over the years by voting for candidates and majorities from both parties. These unconstitutional maps represent a direct attack on that freedom, and a successful attempt by Republicans to avoid responsiveness and accountability to voters. I am pleased that the Supreme Court is finally giving this serious issue the scrutiny it deserves. While redistricting for partisan gain is not new, it is new for Wisconsin and it certainly has never been done to this extreme before. It is my hope that SCOTUS will uphold the lower court’s ruling.”

After the census every 10 years, states are required to draw new election maps to account for changes in population. Following the 2010 election, the partisan maps drawn by Wisconsin Republicans resulted in most legislative districts being composed of very safe Republican or Democratic seats. This 10-year map for the Legislature has been effective in preserving Republican control, even in elections where statewide Republicans won far fewer votes than Democrats. In the last

election, Hillary Clinton received 46.9 percent of the vote, yet the Assembly has the largest Republican majority since the 1950s, with 64 Republican-held seats and a mere 35 seats held by Democrats. In addition to gerrymandered redistricting, Republicans have pushed through the following initiatives to circumvent public input and accountability:

- Legislation to exempt politicians from John Doe corruption investigations.
- A bill crippling Wisconsin's campaign finance laws and essentially allowing unlimited dark money in Wisconsin elections, increasing the amount of political junk mail, commercials, and robocalls flooding Wisconsin households.
- Dismantling the state's ethics watchdog, the Government Accountability Board, and replacing it with political appointees.
- Restrictive and confusing Voter ID laws.