

One Wisconsin Institute: Files request for court to enforce rulings striking down Republican lame duck restrictions on voting

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'Attempts to Rig the Rules on Voting Were Unconstitutional in 2016 and They're Unconstitutional Today'

MADISON, Wis. — One Wisconsin Institute, with the support of National Redistricting Foundation, a 501(c)(3) affiliate of the National Democratic Redistricting Committee, [has returned to court seeking enforcement of the 2016 federal court decision](#) and a subsequent enforcement order that struck down limits on voting rights imposed by Scott Walker and Wisconsin Republicans. After losing every statewide office on the ballot in November, Wisconsin Republicans convened to limit early voting and to codify in state statute previously invalidated provisions of the voter ID law.

"The Wisconsin Republican attempts to rig the rules on voting were unconstitutional in 2016 and they're unconstitutional today," said One Wisconsin Institute Executive Director Scot Ross. "We are going back to federal court to ask the judge to enforce his previous ruling and actions to force the GOP to respect our right to vote."

In a July 2016 decision, federal Judge James Peterson struck down limits on early voting as racially discriminatory. As a result, municipalities across the state could choose to offer the convenience of early voting in the evening, on weekends and at multiple locations at their discretion to meet the needs of the community. Nearly one in five, a record 565,591 Wisconsinites, cast their votes early or absentee in the November midterm elections.

"Republicans in the Wisconsin legislature and their defeated governor are using their gerrymandered majorities to - once again - attempt to suppress the votes of people of color in the state," said Eric H. Holder, Jr., the 82nd Attorney General of the United States. "Their blatant disregard for a previous court ruling and refusal to listen to the will of the people are another shameful mark on the legacy of Scott Walker and his allies in the legislature."

The filing from the Institute's lawyers at the firm of Perkins Coie asks Judge Peterson to enforce his ruling and invalidate the re-imposition of a two week limit on the time for early voting passed as part of Senate Bill 884 in the GOP's post election session and signed into law by defeated Gov. Scott Walker before leaving office.

Plaintiffs are also seeking enforcement of Judge Peterson's order in October 2016 requiring the state to maintain the safety valve for voting for citizens who were "stuck hard" in the broken and shameful ID petition process and refused an ID based on missing or minor discrepancies in documentation. The Court ordered that the State provide these citizens temporary receipts that they can use for voting that last for 180 days. The Court also struck down the requirement that university and college IDs have expiration dates to be accepted as valid ID at the polls.

Despite the clear message from the federal court, Republicans passed and Gov. Walker signed provisions putting into state law a 60 day limit on temporary receipts for voting and re-imposing an expiration date requirement on university IDs and extending the previously struck down requirement to technical colleges.

Ross noted that Republicans were fully aware their actions to re-impose restrictions on voting could run afoul of the federal court. A legislative attorney informed Assembly Speaker Robin Vos of the conflict with Judge Peterson's ruling when he requested, a week after the November 6 election, a bill to impose new restrictions on the times of early voting. Analysis of the measures proposed by Wisconsin Republicans prepared by the nonpartisan Legislative Fiscal Bureau also noted their measures were ruled on in the 2016 case *One Wisconsin Institute, et. al. v. Thomsen, et. al.*

Ross concluded, "Republicans know what they did, and they know that it's wrong. Attempting to silence voters because you lost elections is un-democratic, un-American and unconstitutional."

[\[LINK TO MOTION TO ENFORCE THE INJUNCTION AND MAINTAIN THE STATUS QUO\]](#)

[\[LINK TO MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT OF PLAINTIFFS' MOTION\]](#)