

The Fight for 15: In a victory for democracy, court rejects Republican power grab

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Today, a Wisconsin court blocked enforcement of laws that the Republican-controlled legislature enacted during its illegitimate attempted power grab last year.

The ruling came in a lawsuit brought by the League of Women Voters that argued the Extraordinary Session was illegitimate and therefore anything passed during it was void. Today, a state court agreed. Article IV, Section 11 of the state constitution limits when the legislature may meet to 1) times provided for by statute and 2) when the Governor convenes a special session. Because the Governor did not convene a special session and no law provided for any “time” for an extraordinary session, the court held that the Extraordinary Session was invalid and therefore laws enacted during it are also invalid. The court granted the League’s request for a temporary injunction against the laws.

“This ruling is a victory for working people throughout Wisconsin, who deserve to have the government that they chose during last year’s elections,” said Ramon Argandona, president of SEIU Healthcare Wisconsin. “Working people in Wisconsin sent a loud and clear message in November, and we’ve kept on fighting to make sure that our voices are truly heard.”

A separate lawsuit was filed by SEIU Local 1, SEIU Healthcare Wisconsin, individual SEIU member plaintiffs, Milwaukee Area Service and Hospitality Workers Organization (MASH), Wisconsin Federation of Nurses and Health Professionals, and the American Federation of Teachers - Wisconsin to block the laws, arguing that they violated core separation of powers principles embedded in the state constitution. A hearing for that lawsuit is scheduled for Monday.