

Sen. Smith, Rep. Hesselbein: Statement regarding the Constitutional Amendment for Non- Partisan Redistricting Reform

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MADISON – Today, Senator Smith (D – Brunswick) and Representative Diane Hesselbein (D – Middleton) introduced LRB-5162/LRB-3797, to establish a constitutional amendment for non-partisan redistricting reform.

Bipartisan legislation, introduced by Senator Dave Hansen (D – Green Bay) and Representative Robyn Vining (D – Wauwatosa) to create a non-partisan redistricting process in May, still has not received a public hearing. LRB-5162 is modeled after SB 288, but would create a constitutional amendment for fair maps.

Since legislative and congressional maps were last drawn in 2011, Wisconsinites have clearly seen the impact of the Majority Party's influence in drawing maps. Most recently in [2018](#), Democrats won every statewide race, while Republicans still held 64 of the 99 Assembly seats.

This legislation puts the power back in the hands of Wisconsin voters. The constitutional amendment promotes the creation of fair maps, allowing Wisconsin voters to elect the representative for whom they choose. The constitutional amendment would require adoption by two successive legislatures, ratification by the people through a statewide referendum, before it can become effective.

Senator Jeff Smith released the following statement in response to introducing the bill:

“When I served in the State Assembly, I saw partisan gerrymandering at its worst. Ten years later, the unjust decisions made by the politicians in positions of power still influence the rights of Wisconsin voters to choose their elected officials. We must take steps to end the silencing of Wisconsin voters and ensure our legislative maps reflect the diverse perspectives of all Wisconsinites.

“As I reflect on my first year in office and the work ahead of me, I reaffirm my commitment to fight for fair maps in Wisconsin. We need this constitutional guarantee for non-partisan redistricting to be in place for future redistricting efforts and the generations of voters to come.”