

A Better Wisconsin Together: Faced with a choice between partisanship and principles, Wisconsin's conservatives justices pick partisanship every time

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MADISON, Wis. — On Wednesday, the Wisconsin Supreme Court voted 4-3 to take original action in a redistricting lawsuit filed by the right-wing Wisconsin Institute for Law and Liberty, which asks the Court to draw congressional and legislative lines if the Governor and Legislature fail to come to a resolution. All four conservative justices voted to accept the case, while all three liberal justices voted against it.

While there's no lack of precedent for naked partisanship among the conservative majority on the Wisconsin Supreme Court, this case is particularly egregious. Conservative justices—including current members of the court Patience Roggensack and Annette Ziegler—expressed their alarm over politicization of the Court when previously asked by Republicans to intervene in redistricting litigation.

Their forceful warnings ring even truer today than they did in 2009. Said Roggensack, involvement in redistricting litigation has the potential “to increase the political pressures on this court in a partisan way that is totally inconsistent with our jobs as nonpartisan judiciary.” Ziegler agreed, saying, “I’m concerned about the court acting kind of as a super-legislature.”

A Better Wisconsin Together Deputy Director Mike Browne commented, “Justices Roggensack and Ziegler were right in 2009 to be concerned about the politicization of the Court. They were wrong yesterday when they chose to advance the fortunes

of their right wing political allies instead of heeding their own warnings. This rank hypocrisy and naked partisanship is the very reason for the erosion of the Court's status as a nonpartisan institution. Instead of fairly calling balls and strikes, these right-wing judges want to pick winners and losers."