

Fair Maps Coalition: Map-making week of action

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MADISON—During the week of July 11-17, the Fair Maps Coalition and its partners will sponsor a Map-Making Week of Action to generate community of interest maps from people around the state in support of the People's Maps Commission's work.

“There is a huge groundswell of support for banning gerrymandering in Wisconsin,” says Carlene Bechen, Organizing Director with the Wisconsin Fair Maps Coalition. “Activists in every corner of the state and of all different political affiliations have been working hard to call attention to this issue. They just want a level playing field, and they're sick and tired of having their voting districts chopped up to favor one party or another. Creating community of interest maps and submitting them to the People's Maps Commission is one more way to make their voices heard.”

Communities of interest are just that - communities that have shared interests and concerns and should not be divided when new voting district maps are made. Communities of interest can be rural, urban and suburban; large or small. Wisconsinites know our communities best and the People's Maps Commission wants us to create maps that reflect our communities. They will take our maps, as well as the testimony and written comments they have received, into account when they create district maps, to be submitted to the State Legislature for their consideration. Daily workshops will enable people to create community of interest maps using software developed at Tufts University.

“We urge all Wisconsin residents to get involved in this process,” said Matt Rothschild, the executive director of the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign. “We need fair maps for fair elections. This is an opportunity to help shape those maps in a manner that reflects the will of the people, not politicians.”

“People across Wisconsin are sick of partisan games instead of real solutions,” said Sachin Chheda, director of the Fair Elections Project. “Fair district maps mean every voice is heard, and creating a map that represents your community is one way to do that.”

Every 10 years, after the Census is completed, each state must set new district lines to reflect changes in where people live, and each district needs to have roughly the same number of people in it. The Census Bureau is planning on delivering the data from its 2020 Census to the states in mid-August.