

Rep. Hebl: Statement on Gov. Evers' veto of GOP gerrymander

Posted on Thursday, Nov 18, 2021

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(MADISON) – Governor Evers has vetoed Senate Bills 621 and 622, the decennial legislative redistricting bills. The district lines were only slightly changed from 2011's maps, which have been called some of the most politically-skewed maps in the last 50 years. State Representative Gary Hebl (Sun Prairie) released the following statement on the governor's veto:

Wisconsin Republicans refused to work together with the Governor to find common ground on legislative maps. Instead, they took a go-it-alone approach to try to cement a supermajority in both the Assembly and Senate, so they could turn the office of Wisconsin Governor into a ceremonial role. Unfortunately for them, the Governor does have power right now, and he wisely used it to veto their extremely biased maps.

Competition in elections is vital for a strong democracy. It helps keep elected officials accountable to voters and ensures the voices of the people are heard. The Republican maps are anything but competitive. They ensure the outcome of the elections before candidates are even solidified. Under the GOP maps, just 7 of the 99 Assembly seats are competitive. Such a gerrymander insulates elected officials from public opinion and allows them instead to stake extreme, unpopular positions, because they know they won't be held accountable for them.

Such a process cannot and should not be allowed to survive. Governor Evers' veto is not only an attempt to ensure a more fair process, but a more (small-d) democratic and accountable government in Wisconsin. I applaud the Governor's veto, and am hopeful, as the redistricting process continues, we can try to ensure a process that will give a voice to the people of Wisconsin.