

Sen. Bewley: LRB memo highlights legislative Republicans' hypocrisy

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MADISON - When the Republican Leaders of the Legislature released their redistricting maps last week, they also released a Legislative Reference Bureau memo that purports to show that they are following traditional redistricting principles. Although they might be following those principles now, it is only due to their self-interest in keeping one of the most gerrymandered maps in the nation. The same leaders who are touting fairness all but ignored these same principles when they made their skewed maps in 2011.

Wisconsin is almost equally divided along partisan lines and the State Legislature should reflect that fifty-fifty split. By ignoring the principles of retaining cores of prior districts, minimizing disenfranchisement and avoiding pairing incumbents, the Republicans' 2011 maps generated outsized majorities for the last 10 years. Instead of 50 of the 99 Assembly seats, the Republicans now have 61. Instead of 17 of the 33 Senate seats, the Republicans have 21.

The attached memo for LRB should make it clear that they don't really believe in following traditional redistricting principles. I hope people will see through this cynical attempt to feign allegiance to the concept of fairness. Republicans wouldn't be adhering to these principles in their current maps if doing so would endanger the unfair and unrepresentative lock they have on the political process as a result of the 2011 maps.