

Sen. Smith: Republicans leaders openly admit to gerrymandering in the basement of the Capitol, out-of-sight from the public

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MADISON – Today Senate Bill 621 and Senate Bill 622 (SB 621/SB622) were heard in a joint public hearing held by the Senate Committee on Government Operations, Legal Review and Consumer Protection and the Assembly Committee on State Affairs.

Speaker Robin Vos (R – Rochester) and Majority Leader Devin LeMahieu (R – Oostburg) testified together before the committee as the bills' authors. During the course of their testimony they confirmed they used partisan election data for drawing gerrymandered maps. They discussed how their "staff in the basement" worked on the details and they patted themselves on the back for following a made up principle for maintaining "core districts" as a way to legitimize their gerrymandered maps.

Experts representing diverse groups throughout Wisconsin testified to the committee presenting facts and figures upheld by the courts that Wisconsin's current maps are gerrymandered. Countless members of the public patiently waited to share their opposition to the maps. No experts, no member of the public spoke or registered in favor of SB 621 and SB 622.

Sen. Smith (D – Brunswick) released the following statement in response to today's hearing:

“It says a lot when the only people registering or testifying in favor of these bills are the politicians who drew their own gerrymandered maps. Today’s testimony confirmed what everyone already knows: the maps were gerrymandered and Republicans want to keep it that way. I’m just astonished they brazenly and smugly admitted to it in public today. This has always been and always will be about politicians using their power to stay in control.”