

# Wisconsin Democracy Campaign: Position on redistricting

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(Letter from Wisconsin Democracy Campaign Executive Director Matthew Rothschild on redistricting to Senate Majority Leader Devin LeMahieu and Assembly Speaker Robin Vos.)

Dear Majority Leader LeMahieu and Speaker Vos,

Thank you for your invitation on Sept. 13 inviting our input into the redistricting process.

Here it is.

1. We believe that you should pass [SB 389](#) and [AB 395](#) so as to make the redistricting process independent and nonpartisan. And we believe you should instruct the relevant committee chairs to hold public hearings on these bills immediately and bring the bills to a vote.
2. In addition to that, we believe that you should adopt the maps that the [People's Maps Commission](#) comes up with. The Commission held extensive hearings all across the state, took expert and lay testimony, and received more than 800 citizen maps. Your effort to get input is less inclusive than theirs, and their criteria are better than yours.
3. Your criteria, as you outlined in [Assembly Joint Resolution 80](#), would largely cement the brazenly rigged maps of 2011 into place for another 10-years, as one of the top three criteria states: "Retain as much as possible the core of existing districts." As I'm sure you know, the Whitford case demonstrated that the 2011 redistricting, which created those districts, was one of the worst gerrymanders in

modern American history and that a panel of federal judges ruled it unconstitutionally violated the First and Fourteenth Amendment rights of the plaintiffs. No one in Wisconsin should have to suffer under these rigged districts any longer.

4. You also totally misconstrue the concept of “communities of interest” when you followed your clause in AJR 80 about retaining existing districts with this nonsensical phrase: “thus maintaining existing communities of interest.” (The sentence read: “Retain as much as possible the core of existing districts, thus maintaining communities of interest...” ) The redrawn districts of 2011 did not reflect communities of interest. Quite the contrary. They broke up communities of interest, especially by splintering municipalities (such as in Marshfield and Sheboygan, to name but two).

5. You appear intent on maintaining those splintered municipalities, since the seventh criterion in AJR 80 states: “ Avoid municipal splits unless unavoidable or necessary to further another principle stated above.” Well, one of those principles stated above, is to “retain as much as possible the core of existing districts.” This makes your claim that you want to “avoid municipal splits” practically meaningless, and it gives you permission once again to keep these cities splintered. You’ re not fooling us, or anyone else who can read the English language, about your empty commitment to “avoid municipal splits.”

The Wisconsin Democracy Campaign, for decades now, has argued that gerrymandering is wrong, whether Republicans are doing it or Democrats are doing it. And for decades now, we’ve advocated for a version of the [Iowa Model](#) for Wisconsin.

These remain our core convictions on the issue of redistricting.

Matt Rothschild Executive Director  
Wisconsin Democracy Campaign