

Fair Maps Coalition: Over 150 people attend “Fair Courts End Gerrymandering” rally outside the State Capitol in Madison

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Madison — On a frigid January Friday, more than 150 local residents showed up outside the Wisconsin State Capitol to make their voices heard at a “Fair Courts End Gerrymandering” rally.

After Wisconsin’s State Supreme Court issued a “least-changes” framework for their mapping criteria, a bipartisan group of Wisconsinites were outraged that the majority on the court could be captured by special interests and partisan politics. In dozens of municipalities across the state today, fair maps advocates gathered at local parks and courthouses to demonstrate that Wisconsin residents want to end partisan gerrymandering and will not tolerate a rigged system which prioritizes politicians over people.

Speakers at the Madison rally included Rabbi Bonnie Margulis, Executive Director of Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice; Dr. Ruben Anthony, President and CEO of the Urban League of Greater Madison and 2nd Congressional District member of the People’s Maps Commission; Ali Muldrow, Co-Director of GSafe and President of the Madison School Board; and Carlene Bechen, Organizing Director with the Fair Maps Coalition.

“As our state Supreme Court considers the proposed maps, it is essential that they consider the will and the needs of the people of Wisconsin. We need maps that

accurately reflect the makeup of our state, that keeps communities of interest together, and that is non-partisan,” said Rabbi Bonnie Margulis, Executive Director of Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice, “No elected official’s seat should ever be safe, nor should anyone elected to *represent* us be able to *ignore* us. That is not how democracy is supposed to work.”

Dr. Ruben Anthony, President and CEO of the Urban League of Greater Madison and 2nd CD member of the People’s Maps Commission said, “Redistricting maps should be developed transparently and in the light of day, not in some dark, smokey room...The Supreme Court should do what they have to do to end gerrymandering.”

“Without fair maps, the voice of our state is muted,” said Ali Muldrow, President of the Madison School Board, “Our votes go uncounted and the education of our children becomes a partisan issue versus a unifying necessity.”

“Statewide elections in Wisconsin over the last decade have seesawed back and forth between Republicans and Democrats, but legislative seats have remained skewed to one party. This is NOT because of where people live. It’s because of how lines were drawn,” said Carlene Bechen, Organizing Director of the Fair Maps Coalition, “ We call on the Court to rule in a nonpartisan manner when they select the maps that will determine how much our votes matter in legislative elections for the next decade.”