

Sen. Larson: With fairness off the table, Wisconsin's gerrymander grows less extreme

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Milwaukee, WI – Wisconsin's notorious partisan gerrymander for the state legislature and Congress grew a little less extreme, thanks to the maps adopted by the Wisconsin Supreme Court. In a 4-3 decision, the court adopted the "least change" maps put forward by Governor Tony Evers. By accepting the Republican-invented "least change" framework in the first place, the Supreme Court essentially locked in a version of the Republican gerrymander from 2011 for another 10 years – a gerrymander widely considered to be among the worst in the nation.

In choosing the Evers maps, the GOP fever dream of a veto-proof majority next January is likely out of reach. But that doesn't mean these maps are fair.

Wisconsin Democrats tried to offer a nonpartisan, independent redistricting process, one that would take politicians out of the business of picking their own voters. It's an idea that a majority of our Wisconsin neighbors support. In fact, jurisdictions representing about 80% of Wisconsin residents have passed referendums or resolutions in favor of fair maps. Sadly, Republicans in their gerrymandered majority refuse to even give the idea a public hearing.

Instead, what we got from legislative Republicans were maps so biased that nobody outside Republican leadership testified in favor at a day-long public hearing, with dozens of people from all across the state testifying vehemently against.

Today's decision by the State Supreme Court did not introduce fairness to Wisconsin's Congressional or legislative districts. However, they did restore some measure of sanity, and offer some hope for a future where the party that wins the

most votes wins the most seats in the legislature and in Congress. That shouldn't be an unrealistic goal in a democracy, and hopefully going forward it won't be.