

# Common Cause Wisconsin: Encouraged by strong legal challenge to long standing hyper partisan gerrymandered state legislative voting maps

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On Wednesday morning, August 2nd, a day after Milwaukee Judge **Janet Protaseiwicz** was sworn in as Wisconsin's most recent Supreme Court Justice, a long anticipated and expected legal action was filed by Law Forward and several other legal entities challenging the constitutionality of the 2021-22 state legislative redistricting process. The lawsuit alleges that the hyper partisan gerrymandering of state legislative districts that occurred first in 2011 and then was repeated and even enhanced last year, violated the Wisconsin Constitution's provisions guaranteeing equal protection under the law, free speech and association, a free government, required contiguity of districts and the separation of powers doctrine.

The legal action is being made on behalf of 19 individual Wisconsin citizens and voters from all around the state and seeks rapid relief from the Wisconsin Supreme Court in time for the upcoming 2024 state legislative elections. The action seeks that elections in all 33 State Senate districts and in all 99 State Assembly Districts would be conducted in 2024 under new, constitutional state legislative voting maps.

Common Cause Wisconsin (CC/WI) Co-Chair **David Deininger** of Monroe, a former Republican state representative, retired circuit court and Wisconsin Court of Appeals judge and a former long-time appointment to the now defunct Wisconsin Government Accountability Board said, "As currently drawn, Wisconsin's state legislative district map is a crazy-quilt that unnecessarily divides municipalities and

communities of interest throughout the state. I am hopeful that the Wisconsin Supreme Court will grant the petition and provide a timely and objective review of the petitioner's claims."

"The legal challenge by Law Forward and others on behalf of 19 Wisconsin voters to our state's gerrymandered legislative districts is long overdue! It is time for each person's vote in Wisconsin to have the same value as their neighbor's vote. It is time for voters to elect their legislators rather than legislators choosing their voters," said CC/WI Co-Chair **Penny Bernard Schaber** of Appleton, who served in the Wisconsin Assembly from 2009 to 2015 as a Democrat.

"After 12 years of the most partisan and unfair redistricting process endured by the voters of any state in the nation, Wisconsinites can now, with this robust legal action, begin to see some light at the end of this long tunnel of darkness and despair that has enveloped our state due to unfair and unconstitutional representation in the Wisconsin Legislature," said CC/WI executive director **Jay Heck**, who has held that position and been advocating for non-partisan redistricting and fair voting maps in Wisconsin since 1996.