

Jerry Hanson: We, the people, need better government

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I remember it being said, by some Wisconsin state legislator: “The best government is that closest to the people.” This became overwhelmingly clear in the most recent state budget. Included in the GOP authored shared revenue bill was a two-line provision that would prohibit a town, city or county from holding an advisory referendum.

Advisory referendums are non-binding ways for voters to demonstrate that there is popular support for or opposition to issues such as abortion rights and gerrymandered voting districts. Assembly Speaker Vos said that the voting booth is not the place for people to weigh in on issues.

Recently 80 municipalities and 12 counties passed referendums that corporations are not persons and money isn't speech. Even more importantly, 32 counties and 21 municipalities passed “fair maps” referendums demanding an end to gerrymandering.

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Government should have the best interests of the individual citizen at heart.

What is the Republican led legislature afraid of? Advisory referendums are useful to find out what is best for their jurisdiction and inform state legislators what the people want them to do. Why would Speaker Vos and the Republicans in the Assembly want to prevent their constituents from expressing their position on important questions?

The answer appears that once elected those with the “R” behind their name pledge their allegiance to the agendas of Speaker Vos and Senate Leader LeMahieu instead of the needs and wants of the people back home.

Wisconsin needs a government that works for its people.

-Hanson, of Elkhorn, is a member of the Walworth County Democratic Party.