



For Immediate Release  
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Contact: [info@fairelectionsproject.org](mailto:info@fairelectionsproject.org)  
(414) 412-6099

### ***Fair Maps Coalition applauds Governor's call for Transparency***

MADISON, WI—Members of Wisconsin's Fair Maps Coalition reacted positively to the Governor's proposal to require the Legislature to take up the map drawn by the People's Maps Commission, as well as to further increase transparency in the redistricting process, unveiled Tuesday night in his budget proposal.

"The keyword for redistricting is transparency," said Sachin Chheda, Chair of the WI Fair Maps Coalition and Director of the Fair Elections Project. "We applaud the Governor's proposal as a good step forward to ensure Wisconsin gets fair maps in 2022."

The coalition has been supportive of the People's Maps Commission, which the governor created by executive order. The People's Maps Commission has been taking testimony around the state in an open, transparent process, in advance of generating a fair map for the legislature and courts to consider later this year.

"The People's Maps Commission is doing a great job in taking testimony from people all across Wisconsin," said Matt Rothschild, executive director of the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign. "The message the Commission is getting is clear: The people want fair maps and an end to partisan gerrymandering."

Fifty-six of Wisconsin's 72 counties have passed resolutions or referendums urging the Legislature to pass a law requiring independent, nonpartisan redistricting. In addition, dozens of municipalities have echoed the call. These counties represent more than 80% of Wisconsin's citizens.

"From the North Side to the Northwoods, from urban factories to rural farms, Wisconsinites have shown overwhelming support for nonpartisan redistricting," added Wisconsin Farmers Union Communications & Special Projects Coordinator Tommy Enright. "It's encouraging that the Governor is acting on that call."

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Polling steadily indicates that more than 7 in 10 Wisconsin citizens believe redistricting should be taken out of the hands of politicians and handed to independent officials.

The coalition supports legislation to be introduced later this spring to utilize a Wisconsin version of “The Iowa Model,” wherein nonpartisan Legislative Reference Bureau staff would draw a map without consideration of incumbency or political advantage.

“Wisconsin would do well to emulate our neighboring state of Iowa in the way in which they have undertaken redistricting since 1980,” said Jay Heck, state director of Common Cause in Wisconsin. “Instead of partisan politicians and their high-priced lawyers drawing voter maps, Iowa has nonpartisan civil servants utilize nonpartisan criteria to draw new legislative and congressional districts that citizens of all political stripes have confidence in, and at a fraction of the cost to taxpayers that Wisconsin legislative leaders burden us with here. An Iowa-type redistricting process is exactly what Wisconsin needs for 2021 and beyond.”

Every 10 years, after the Census is completed, each state must set new district lines to reflect changes in where people live, and each district needs to have roughly the same number of people in it. The Census Bureau is planning on delivering the data from its 2020 Census to the states late this year.

“The importance of the Census data to drawing District maps cannot be overstated. State demographic information must be the basis for our maps, not our current maps or any map that incorporates voting data,” said Debra Cronmiller, executive director of the League of Women Voters of Wisconsin.

“Municipalities, school districts, watersheds, and neighborhoods must be allowed representation and the only way to ensure that will be the case is to allow all of Wisconsin to see draft maps and determine which will provide the best representation.”

“Grassroots volunteers, people who didn’t see themselves as activists, are making their voices heard in incredible numbers — all saying that they’ve had enough of partisan gamesmanship,” said Carlene Bechen, Fair Maps Organizer with the WI Fair Maps Coalition. “The people of Wisconsin want a transparent process. Thank you, Governor Evers, for hearing us!”

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The Wisconsin Fair Maps Coalition is composed of organizational leaders from member groups working to fight partisan gerrymandering and to promote independent redistricting. The Coalition’s current work focuses on supporting proposed legislation to make the redistricting process in Wisconsin independent, educating the public about the consequences of rigged maps and partisan gerrymandering, and insisting the legislature redraw the maps in 2021, following the Census, in an open and transparent manner.

To learn more about the Wisconsin Fair Maps Coalition, visit [www.fairmapswi.com](http://www.fairmapswi.com), or @WIFairMapsCoalition on Facebook, and @WIFairMapsCo on Twitter and Instagram.