

Returning Elections to the Voters

The Challenge of Redistricting



League of Women Voters[®] of Wisconsin

Federal Legal Requirements for Redistricting

- U.S. Constitution—Each state must redistrict after each census
- U.S. Supreme Court—Baker v. Carr (1962)—Districts for each office must be roughly the same population size
- Voting Rights Act—Redistricting must take into account communities of interest



Wisconsin Legal Requirements

- Wisconsin Constitution—Article 6, Section 3
- Legislature is given the task of Redistricting the State Senate and Assembly districts



Wisconsin's Redistricting Process

Before 2011

- Counties & Municipalities decided where wards were located
- Counties & Municipalities drew local electoral boundaries
- The State Legislature had to respect the ward & local government boundaries when drawing maps

After 2011

- The State Legislature draws the State Senate and Assembly lines without consideration of local government entities.
- County and municipal governments must draw ward and local government boundaries within the constraints of State legislative lines.



Video

How politicians rig elections,
explained in 2 minutes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zoLFOp9WY4g>





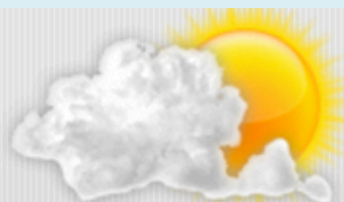
As opposed to infants, our elected representatives shouldn't be strapped & buckled into their seats





What if your elected officials felt they HAD to listen to you?





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Turnout of 15 percent predicted at primary

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August 05, 2014 9:32 am

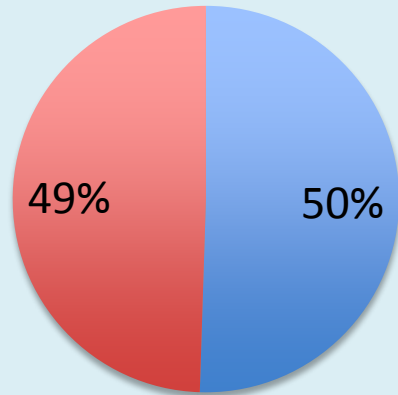
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MADISON, Wis. (AP) — Turnout for next week's partisan primary election in Wisconsin is predicted to be 15 percent.



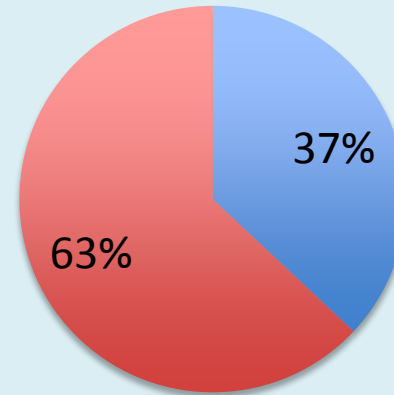
Congress

- Votes Cast Democrat
- Votes Cast Republican



Congress

- Seats Won Democrat
- Seats Won Republican

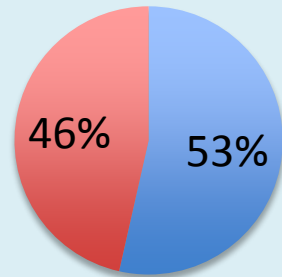


2012: Results that do not reflect the Voters



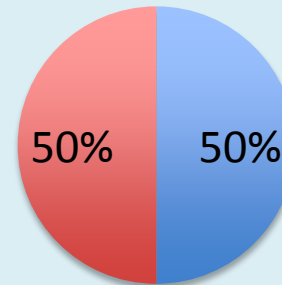
State Senate

- Votes Cast Democrat
- Votes Cast Republican



State Senate

- Seats Won Democrat
- Seats Won Republican

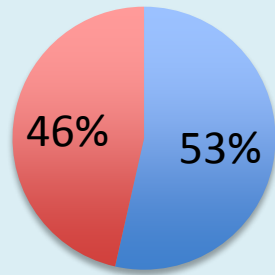


2012: Results that do not reflect the Voters



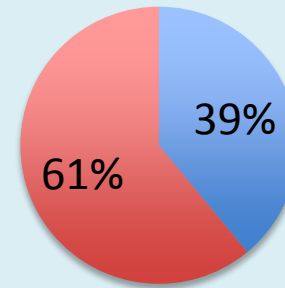
State Assembly

- Votes Cast Democrat
- Votes Cast Republican



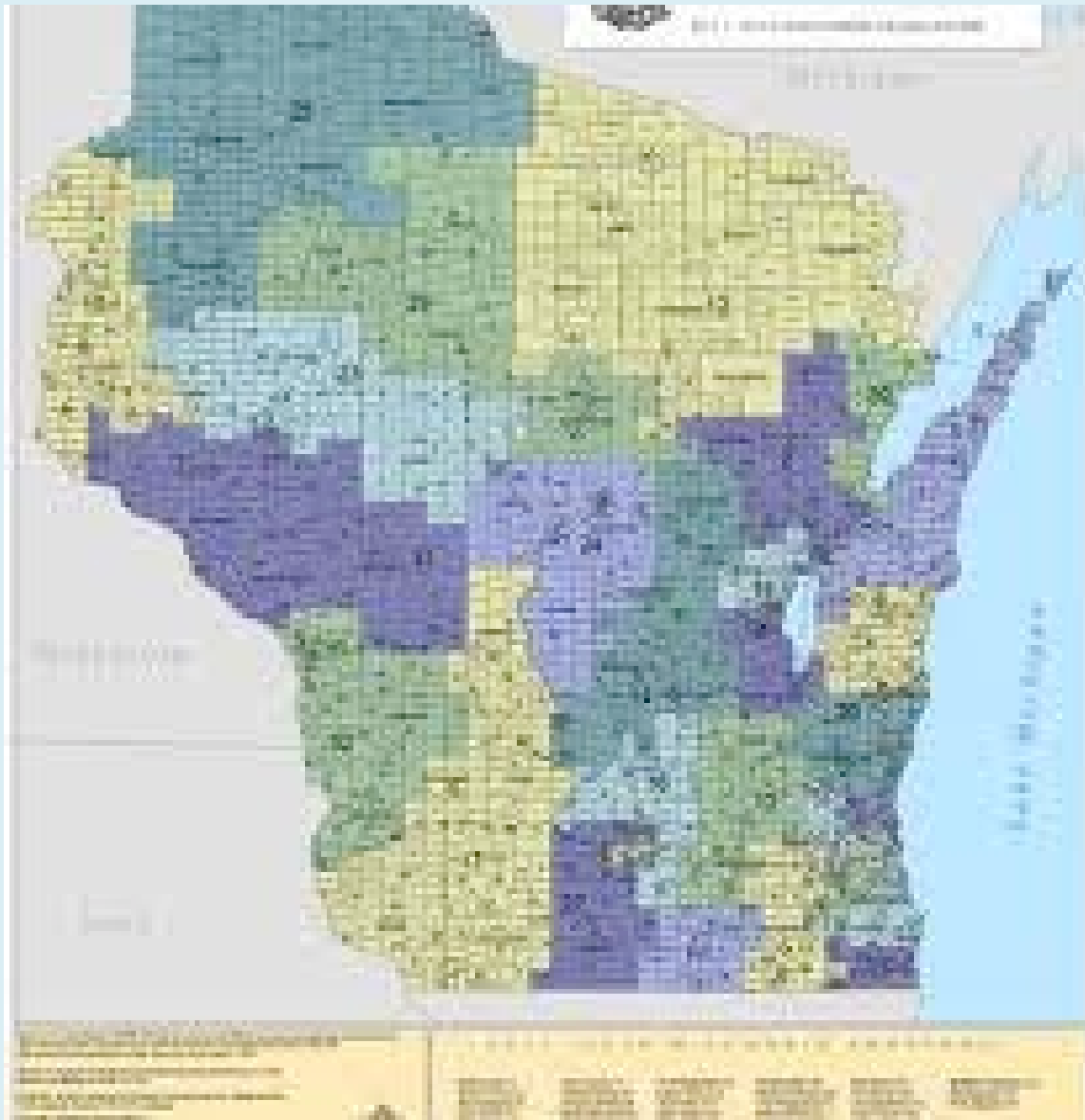
State Assembly

- Seats Won Democrat
- Seats Won Republican



2012: Results that do not reflect the Voters





2011 Redistricting Map—State Senate



Redistricting: What happened to Municipalities

- Parts of the cities of Racine & Kenosha combined
- Beloit split into 2 Senate districts—one ward has only 54 registered voters and only 1 person who votes in low turnout elections.
- City of Mequon divided between two Assembly districts



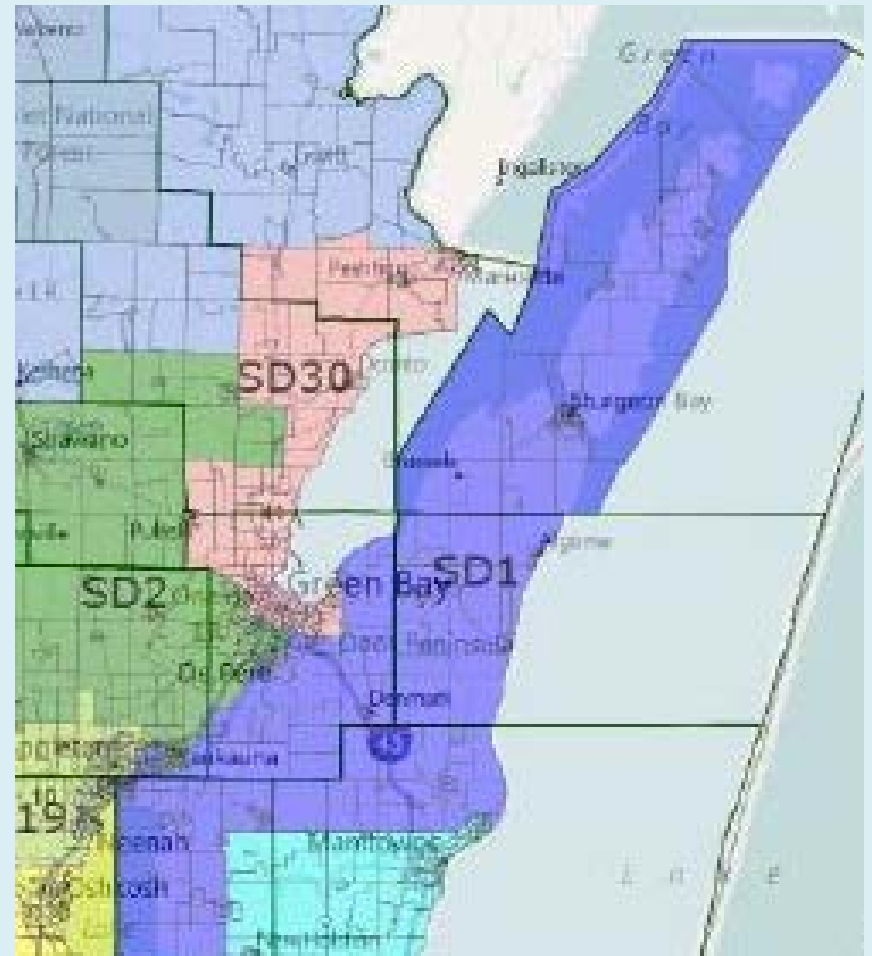
Monroe County

- Population: 45,050
- 2 Congressional Districts
- 3 State Senate Districts
- 3 Assembly Districts
- Tomah divided



First Senate District

- All Door County
- Part of Brown County
- Part of Calumet County
- Part of Kewaunee County





How Redistricting is Done Affects How Your Vote Counts!





DAVE TRAVIS

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

file

JOINT COMMITTEE ON FINANCE, VICE-CHAIR
WI SENTENCING COMMISSION, VICE-CHAIR

March 8, 1989

Ms. Dotty Juengst, President
League of Women Voters
121 South Hancock Street
Madison, WI 53703-3447

Dear Ms. Juengst:

As the co-chair of the Assembly Reapportionment Committee during the early 1980s, it was my belief that the Wisconsin League of Women Voters allowed itself to be used for partisan political purposes on behalf of the Republican Party of Wisconsin during the 1980s redistricting process. Moreover, it was my belief that League was the single most destructive element in a rational legislative process, forcing Congressional and State Legislative redistricting into the courts.

Wisconsin vs. Iowa Redistricting Process

Wisconsin

- Process conducted in Secret
- Few hearings—last time only one
- End result usually litigated, driving up costs
- Minimal number of competitive races at state or federal levels.
- Few criteria for drawing boundaries

Iowa

- Transparent Process
- Minimum 4 hearings around the state
- End result accepted by legislature—no court or legal costs
- Some of the most competitive districts in the country
- Clear criteria



Imagine the Change

- Basis for holding officials accountable
- Elected officials need to listen to their constituents—even if they disagree
- The political center will gain power





Reduce Partisan Gridlock





AB 185 and SB 163 never got a committee hearing last session. Time is getting short before the next redistricting. Nonpartisan redistricting should be passed in 2015.



Making the Change

1. Ask our representatives and senators to back reform—challenge them if they don't
2. Ask them to press for hearings
3. If hearings are held, turn out citizens and officials of all political stripes to testify
4. Voters need to make this an election issue
5. Dane County can be a model in the way it approaches redistricting



GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE,
By THE PEOPLE,
FOR THE PEOPLE,
SHALL NOT PERISH FROM THE EARTH.

Abraham Lincoln

Consent of the Governed is Fundamental

