



Wisconsin Small Business Owners for Fair Maps!

As business owners and job creators in our state, we write to you today about the urgent need to bring fairness into the redistricting process. Republicans, Democrats, and Independents alike regard gerrymandering as a huge issue, and that when executed in a partisan fashion, it undermines the integrity of elections, and our democracy. The current maps manipulate race, municipality, party lines and education for political advantage and incentivizes the creation of bad products: failed and corrupt policies. There is less and less real competition which benefits voters as politicians invest in themselves at the expense of their “customers” - the voters.

We believe that a well-functioning democracy makes our nation stronger. Our community is best served by a system where all people can speak and be heard, and where no one loses an opportunity to make a meaningful choice. In 2020, policies such as voting absentee, ballot drop boxes, and early voting, pushed Wisconsin’s voter turnout to one of the highest levels in our state’s history. When a larger demographic was able to choose their form of access, more of our neighbors and fellow Wisconsinites participated in our electoral process.

The democratic process is how our country solves some of our biggest challenges and disagreements. Inflating the cost of entry into the voting booth through self-interested gerrymandering and undermining a truly free market of ideas in democracy serves only to cut off consumers from that market, and the shared value of legislative compromise.

There are some who would choose short-term gains for themselves and their donors over what's best for their voters. There are some who would carve out Wisconsin for their own power. There are members of our community who have been misled by those with power to think that it's not worth talking to their own neighbors. We believe that now more than ever that this is divisive and we need to value every member of our community to move forward.

A broken democracy has clear and detrimental impacts for both our nation and contributes to market volatility. We need new maps that don't carry the baggage of unfair lines that were drawn in the past to value political expediency over stability and safety. We need leaders who believe every Wisconsinite should be able to exercise their right to vote.

This is a critical juncture to affirm voters’ increased engagement in the redistricting process by expanding transparency and restoring trust. It must actively engage with the broadest audience possible to ensure that all voices are heard and listened to. Just as business owners, decision makers ought to be aware and in tune with where the public opinion sits in order to come to a balanced and fair decision. A truly transparent process sets a precedent for the future and keeps people invested in the democratic process.

We must draw maps in a bipartisan manner where everyone --- not just political parties --- benefits.

We must draw new, fair maps --- that creates districts that promote our natural geographic and cultural diversity and a competition of ideas at all levels.

We must give voice to ALL of our communities, especially those who have been excluded from the legislative process in the past. As we have seen, maps that are not drawn with racial equity lense as a core principle will never be “fair”. Frankly, both major parties have taken part in drawing voting districts which disadvantage Wisconsinites of color. Emerging demographic trends should be accounted for and growing markets appealed to and invested in, rather than “cracked”.



Unfair districts reduce the supply of competition itself and further allows radical ideology and polarization to flourish when no legislator is afraid of losing their seat. A fair democracy should not be a luxury good - the freedom to participate preserves all other freedoms. To this end, we call on decision makers to support mapmaking that follows these principles.

At this critical juncture in our state's history, and in the redistricting process, decision makers have an imperative role to play in ensuring we are all treated with the same fidelity. To restore trust, The maps that will be implemented must be more competitive so either party has a relatively equal chance of winning an election. You deserve it, your constituents and community deserve it, your state deserves it. More importantly, we are watching and the small businesses of Wisconsin will remember this day, let's make it a good one.

Sincerely,

Wisconsin's Small Business Owners for Fair Maps

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