



DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF WISCONSIN

Weekly News From Your Wisconsin Democratic Party Chair

*Follow this newsletter to keep current on the events shaping our state and the work our party
is doing to win in 2022 and beyond.*

Dear friends across Wisconsin,

To quote the famously mild-mannered Governor Evers: "HELL YES!"

Yesterday, the Supreme Court ruled 4-3 yesterday in favor of Governor Evers's final maps proposal, and against the proposals submitted by the GOP. Yes, these maps were constrained by the Supreme Court's prior decision to focus on making the "least changes" to the ultra-gerrymandered 2010 maps. But within that harsh constraint, Governor Evers' maps represent a significant step forward in the fundamental fight for representative democracy in the state of Wisconsin, and represent the fulfillment of one of the Governor's core promises.

Under these maps, instead of a clear 6-2 gerrymander of House districts for another decade, we get a more competitive House map – [particularly in the 1st](#), a seat once held by none other than Paul Ryan himself. And in the Legislature, [analysis tells us](#) that the new maps could elect 44 Democrats in the Assembly – a definite improvement on the current 61-38 GOP majority. Yes, that's still far from a 50-50 split that would match the 50-50 Republican vs Democrat split among voters, and not all of that difference is accounted for by the more clustered geographic distribution of Democrats in our state. But it's genuine progress. It supercharges our fight against Robin Vos's profoundly undemocratic dream of a Republican supermajority. And the dramatic expansion of genuinely competitive districts means more voters have a greater chance of affecting who represents them, which in turn ought to help render legislators more responsive to the needs and views of their constituents.

This victory is the result of work by many heroes, over long years.

Enormous kudos to the grassroots activists, who made this cause their own throughout a grueling decade. Huge thanks to the Fair Maps Coalition, with activists all over the state and its small but mighty staff. The county referenda passed all over the state helped demonstrate unequivocally that the people want fair maps.

Vast gratitude to the state legislators in both the Assembly and Senate who held the line against Republican maps despite heavy pressure. Assembly Democratic Leader Gordon Hintz announced this week that, like Senate Democratic Leader Janet Bewley, he wouldn't be running again this year. All of us owe a debt of gratitude to both leaders for fighting, in partnership with their caucuses, the grassroots, Governor Evers, and the WisDems, to ensure that the GOP wouldn't grab supermajorities in 2020, and for holding the line against a disastrous GOP re-gerrymander. You are both leaving your caucuses, and our democracy, in a stronger position than they held when you took on the mantle of leadership.

Thanks also to the National Democratic Redistricting Coalition and AG Eric Holder for years in the trenches driving forward a vision of a more representative democracy, despite so much incoming. And thanks to so many partners and allied groups who played critical roles, including Black Leaders Organizing for Communities, Voces de la Frontera, the League of Women Voters of Wisconsin; the Law Forward team; and the many attorneys, mathematicians, former judges and legislators, and others who poured themselves into this effort.

Attorney General Kaul and his team at the Department of Justice fought the case for Governor Evers and the state of Wisconsin at the state Supreme Court. Without his steadfast commitment to democracy and prodigious legal talent, things might have gone otherwise. We absolutely need another four years of Attorney General Josh Kaul.

And without the voter uprising of the last four years, we wouldn't have had Governor Evers empowered to veto the GOP maps and propose better ones; we wouldn't have had AG Kaul to lead the case; we wouldn't have had sufficient Democratic strength in the legislature to

sustain the Governor's veto; and we wouldn't have had enough state Supreme Court justices to rule for the better maps at the end. Although gerrymandering is an indelible blight on our democracy, we still have enough democracy for the people—all of us—to have a say, and we have spoken with a resounding voice. You, reading this, played a vital role, and it's worth taking pride in that.

The work stretches out before us. Because of our state Supreme Court's least-changes framework, these maps are still far from an even playing field. And more ominously, Wisconsin law allows the legislature and governor to [pass new maps](#) to supersede maps drawn by courts; if Republicans win the governorship in 2022, they may well seek to undo this progress. It will take continued resolve, vigilance, and labor to ensure that democracy moves forward rather than sliding back.

But we know that we are up to the task. The evidence is in front of our eyes.

Thank you, thank you, thank you to everyone who has made this cause their own, in ways seen and unseen.

In solidarity,

Ben

FIGHT

President Biden Delivers State of Union, Visits Wisconsin Touting Infrastructure

It's been a busy week of building back better for the Biden-Harris administration. Tuesday marked President Biden's first State of the Union address, where he highlighted how his administration is creating good-paying jobs, investing in infrastructure and protecting democracy and freedom at home and abroad.

“And my report is this: the State of the Union is strong—because you, the American people, are strong,” President Biden said. “We are stronger today than we were a year ago. And we will be stronger a year from now than we are today.”

In his remarks, President Biden shared his plans to aid Ukraine and hold Russia accountable, grow our economy and create jobs, and lower costs for working families. The President also shared his vision to supercharge the [Cancer Moonshot](#), with the aim of cutting cancer death rates by at least 50 percent over the next 25 years.

The very next day, President Biden and First Lady Dr. Biden paid a visit to Superior, Wisconsin to discuss investments made by his once-in-a-generation infrastructure plan alongside Governor Evers and other leaders from across Wisconsin. He also visited the Blatnik Bridge, which links the two port cities of Superior and Duluth.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law will invest billions of federal dollars in Wisconsin roads and bridges, expand access to high-speed internet and ensure every household, school and business in Wisconsin has access to clean drinking water. The infrastructure law will also ease supply chain bottlenecks, fight climate change and create good-paying jobs along the way.

Listen to the [full state of the union](#) and his [full remarks in Superior](#).



Wisconsin Democrats Celebrate President Biden's Accomplishments

Ahead of the State of the Union, Madison Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway and Dane County Supervisor Anthony Gray joined Democratic Party of Wisconsin Chair Ben Wikler to celebrate all the ways President Biden and Vice President Harris have worked to cut costs for Wisconsin's working families, create good-paying jobs, support local businesses and deliver historic funding to improve Wisconsin's infrastructure.

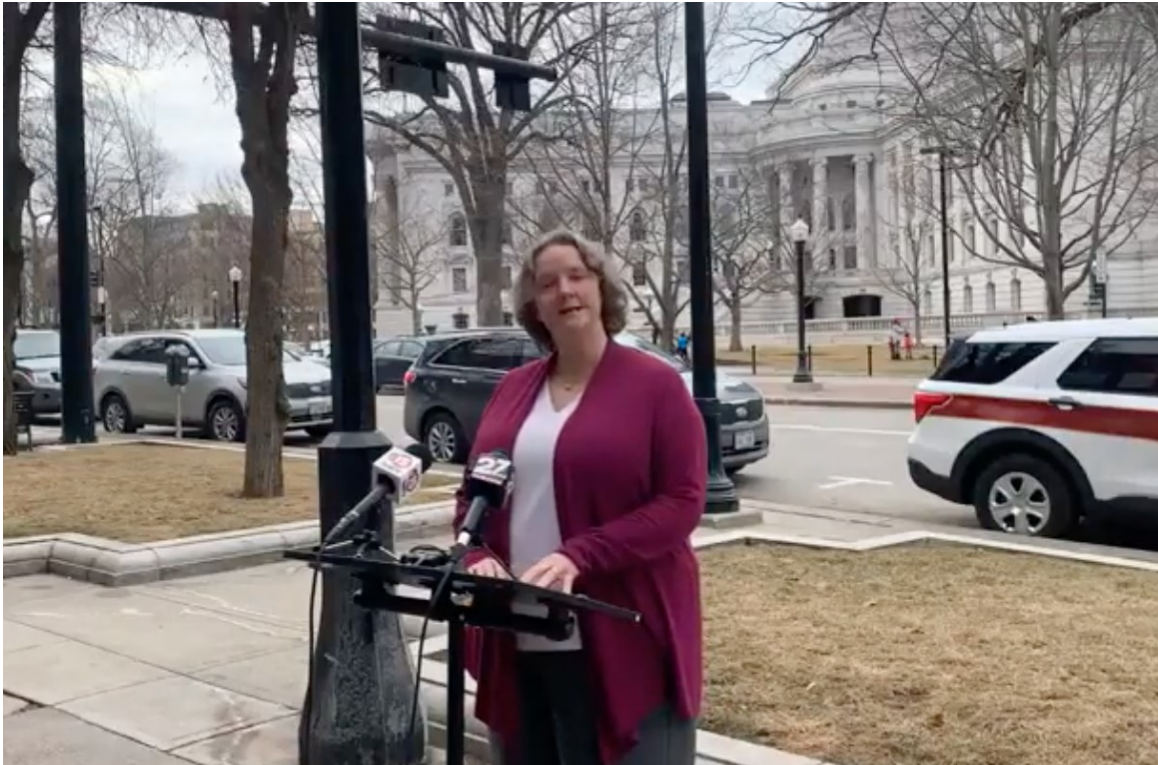
County Supervisor Anthony Gray said, "It's important to recognize that this is not just a concept of something that's happening in Washington – it's being felt right here on the ground in Wisconsin, in Madison, in my district."

"I am delighted to be here to say thank you to President Biden and Vice President Harris. It's really remarkable to think back on how much things changed for the city of Madison when they came into office," **Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway** added, citing federal dollars that have funded projects in Madison and across the state.

"One of the leading Republicans in the Senate, who is in charge of the platform that all of the Republican Senate candidates will run on – including our very own Ron Johnson – a guy

named Rick Scott, Senator from Florida, he laid out a blueprint for Republican policymaking if Republicans get power. And what was their proposal?" **Chair Wikler** explained, "It was to raise taxes on half of the people in America including seniors and retirees....It's exactly wrong for America and it's the exact opposite of President Biden's agenda."

[Hear the speakers' full remarks and watch the event here!](#)



Chaotic GOP Primary Continues To Spiral

Assembly Speaker Robin Vos, one of Kleefisch's most forceful advocates, acknowledged this week that the messy Republican primary is taking a toll on her campaign. [On talk radio this week](#), Vos said Kevin Nicholson's attacks against Kleefisch are making her a "weak" candidate — just as Nicholson did in 2018 with failed Senate nominee Leah Vukmir.

Nicholson's accusations about Kleefisch's close associations with Vos have clouded her interviews on conservative radio and hurt her appearance among grassroots Republicans. She even desperately tried to tweet about her maverick Tea Party roots as an attempt to prove herself. Nicholson has repeatedly accused Kleefisch and Vos of being financially entangled, after a GOP campaign committee controlled by Vos paid Kleefisch's consulting firm tens of thousands of dollars during the last election cycle.

And speaking of weak candidates — Robin Vos's own approval ratings with Republicans have plummeted, according to the latest MU Law Poll. In the August 2019 poll, 26 percent of Republicans viewed him favorably, while 7 percent didn't. In this week's poll, that split was 21-16.

Gableman's Sham Investigation Report Threatens Wisconsin Voter Freedoms

After months of typos and bumbling, radical attempts to jail mayors and election officials, and hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars wasted, [Michael Gableman](#) released a long-awaited "interim" report on the work of his sham investigation so far. As expected, the report was filled with conspiracy theories and misstated facts.

Most shocking of all, Gableman used his report to push the Legislature to "decertify" the 2020 election — a move that even the Assembly's own nonpartisan attorneys have said is illegal and impossible. Gableman also called for "elimination and dismantling" of the bipartisan Wisconsin Election Committee and put politicians in charge of elections, [a move opposed by the very politician who hired him, Robin Vos.](#)

"Governor Evers is the last line of defense against authoritarian attacks on American democracy emanating from the Republican Party. We have been lucky that Governor Evers is in office and resolute about vetoing restrictions on the right to vote," **Democratic Party of Wisconsin Chair Ben Wikler** said in a [press release](#), "As long as he is our governor, Wisconsinites can trust that he will continue to stand up for democracy, protect our right to vote, and fight for free and fair elections. Those who care about democracy should do everything in their power to re-elect Governor Evers to a second term."

Republican Continue To Oppose The Surplus Plan They Asked For

Next week, the Legislature is set to convene the [special session](#) called for by Gov. Evers in his State of the State address last month to take up his plan for Wisconsin's \$3.8 billion budget surplus — [the largest in state history.](#)

The Governor's [common sense surplus plan](#) would reinvest the state's surplus in the people by helping working families with rising costs, making affordable child care more accessible,

and [creating a new Caregiver Tax Credit](#).

Wisconsin Republicans have so far called the Governor's plan a "[non-starter](#)" – even though it's exactly what they asked for. When Senate President Chris Kapenga and Assembly Speaker Robin Vos invited Governor Tony Evers to deliver this year's State of the State address, they wrote that "[there are supply shortages and soaring inflation rates, causing families to have to pay significantly more on items such as food and gasoline. Real people are struggling with these pocketbook issues.](#)"

At a time when families are feeling the effects of rising costs, Wisconsin's record-breaking budget surplus shouldn't be collecting dust in Madison — it should be used to help the workers and families who created it.

INCLUDE & RESPECT

[America's Black Holocaust Museum Grand Re-Opening](#)

Last week, closing out Black History Month, elected officials, activists, community organizers and community members made their way to Vel R. Phillips Dr. in Milwaukee for the grand re-opening of [America's Black Holocaust Museum](#)!



It was a beautiful day rooted in Black stories of the past, grounded in the present, and

recognizing the hope for the future.

Governor Tony Evers joined **Senator Tammy Baldwin** and **Congresswoman Gwen Moore** alongside Milwaukee Mayor — and WisDems endorsed candidate in the April 5 mayoral runoff! — **Cavalier Johnson** to speak at the grand reopening ceremony.



WisDems Celebrates Women's History Month

March is the beginning of Women's History Month! We honor all the women who came before us—including those whose stories go untold—who fought for a more equitable, fair, and inclusive Wisconsin for all.

Follow along on [Twitter](#) and [Tiktok](#) as WisDems highlight these women who have blazed the trail!



[AAPI Spotlight Series Concludes Next Week](#)



		
JOHN LOR, EAU CLAIRE CITY COUNCIL MEMBER	MAI XIONG, FORMER EAU CLAIRE CITY COUNCIL MEMBER	SYED ABBAS, MADISON COMMON COUNCIL PRESIDENT

WISDEMS 7:30-8:30 PM CT, Thursday, March 10 Register here: wisdems.org/aapi AAPI

In the fourth and final event of the [Asian American Pacific Islander Spotlight Series](#), hear from current and former AAPI City Council members about their journey to elected office and why AAPI leadership is critical in Wisconsin. The series continues on **Thursday, March 10 at 7:30 p.m. CST.**

Panelists include: **Syed Abbas** (Madison Common Council President), **John Lor** (Eau Claire City Council), **Mai Xiong** (former Eau Claire City Council)

Sponsored by the [AAPI Caucus of the Democratic Party of Wisconsin](#), the AAPI Spotlight

Series uplifts our Asian and Pacific Islander American leaders and inspires the next generation of candidates to run for office.

[Sign up here to tune into the final event in the WisDems AAPI Caucus Spotlight Series.](#)

EMPOWER The Grassroots

April 5th Election Support

The WisDems Voter Protection team is gearing up for the April 5th election and we need all hands on deck to protect voters this spring. Spread the word and sign up to help at one of our events!

Become a Poll Observer: Poll observers are the eyes and ears for the Democratic Party of Wisconsin's Voter Protection Team inside polling locations across the state for the April 5th election.

Recruitment Phonebanks: Help protect the vote in Wisconsin by recruiting poll observers for our April 5th election!

Voter Protection 101 Training: Every other week, we hold Voter Protection 101 trainings on basic Wisconsin election law and all the tools you need to help everyone you know vote this year.

Calling all County Party, CD Party, Caucus & Youth Subunit leaders!

Next weekend, **Saturday March 12 and Sunday March 13**, the County Chair's Association (CCA) Winter Retreat will be taking place virtually!

An agenda for the weekend can be found **[here](#)**, and the registration link to join for both days is included **[here](#)**.

All subunit leadership — in addition to official CCA members (that is, County Party Chairs and

Vice Chairs) — are invited to this year's retreat. If you are a subunit leader, please be sure to request access to the [Grassroots Officers Portal](#) before the event.

If you have any questions, please contact kendall@wisdems.org!

Free Student Volunteer Team Training

Calling all student organizers: Want to take your campus organizing skills to the next level?

Apply to Swing Left's free, six-week training course to learn how to build a powerful student volunteer team on your college campus for the midterm elections.

[Sign up here!](#)

Upcoming Voter Protection Volunteer Workshops

WisDems Voter Protection team is holding exciting workshops aimed at volunteers on some of our key skills used in our volunteer program over the next two weeks!

Check out our workshop offerings and sign up here!

Let us Know What Candidates are Running in Your Community!

The April 5 spring elections will be critical—not only for local governance, but also for building the bench for higher office. To ensure we can support the pro-democracy candidates in your community, please fill out **this form** to let us know of candidates that are running in your area!

Free Candidate Resource Portal

In preparation for an exciting election year, WisDems has launched a **free 2022 Candidate Resource Portal** to support candidates across the state with a variety of campaign resources.

If you're interested in accessing the Candidate Resource Portal, you can request access at **this link** or by going to the Candidate Resources button at the bottom of **our website**. Each member of your campaign team must fill out the form individually to receive an access

password.

In addition to these incredible resources, don't forget to check out the resources below, as well:

- **VAN Access.** VAN or VoteBuilder is our database of voter file information, plus the tools to make phone banks, maps for canvassing, mailing lists, and more. Candidates can apply for access [here](#).
- **Candidate Question Form.** [This form](#) is the best place for candidates to go if they have any questions or requests for our candidate services team.

Electoral Yard Signs Across Wisconsin

In response to feedback from rural leaders across the state and thanks to Governor Evers, the WisDems team delivered over **10,000** signs across the state in the last few months, helping Democrats show their pride in Gov. Evers' steady leadership and re-election campaign.

Thanks to the **Rural Advisory Council** and all the grassroots and County Party leaders who helped coordinate distribution logistics, all county parties now have access to Gov. Evers' yard signs earlier in the cycle than ever before!

Anyone interested in a yard sign to show off your **#DemPride**, contact your [County Party Chair](#)!

Become a Monthly Donor

The easiest way to help support our work across the state is by signing up as a **monthly donor** for the **Democratic Party of Wisconsin**. These funds **directly** allow us to hire and plan sustainably, working to defeat Ron Johnson, re-elect Gov. Evers, and save our democracy!

Chip in any amount to join the fight!



Paid for by the Democratic Party of Wisconsin, Ben Wikler, Chair

Our mailing address is:

PO Box 1686, Madison, WI 53701

Sent via [ActionNetwork.org](https://www.actionnetwork.org). To update your email address, change your name or address, or to stop receiving emails from WisDems Comms, please [click here](#).