

Tony Evers

Office of the Governor | State of Wisconsin

July 9, 2021

TO THE HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE ASSEMBLY:

I am vetoing Assembly Bill 369 in its entirety.

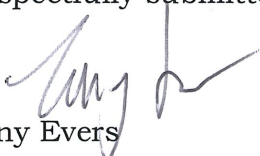
This bill would require county and municipal governments to delay redrawing county supervisory district plans and ward boundaries until after the 2022 spring election cycle. The bill would require city aldermanic plans to first apply in the 2023 spring primary and election and final county supervisory district plans to first apply in the 2024 spring primary and election.

The bill attempts to address a concern that counties will not be able to meet the deadline by which they must submit their tentative county supervisory district plans, which under current law is July 1. Under normal circumstances, counties would have already received the U.S. Census Bureau data upon which the new supervisory district plans will be based, which would give them at least two months to draw tentative district plans before the deadline. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, local units of government are not likely to receive this data until sometime in August.

I am vetoing this bill, however, because I object to the way it seeks to address this issue. In attempting to solve one problem, the bill creates a larger one. The bill creates too great of a delay in creating the new maps. This will result in malapportioned maps that do not accurately reflect current populations, which violates the constitutional principle of one person, one vote. I will not support legislation that deprives people of their voice in the democratic process. There were ways to address the census data delay that would not risk malapportioned maps. The bill could have waived the July 1 deadline and made other changes to help municipalities expedite their redistricting efforts.

Instead of encouraging counties and municipalities to create new accurate and fair maps as soon as possible following the release of forthcoming census data, this bill would result in local elections occurring for one or two more years under old district lines that were created as part of the same process which resulted in some of the most gerrymandered congressional and legislative seats in the country. To deny Wisconsinites from having lawfully reapportioned local districts, even temporarily, is unjust and undemocratic.

Respectfully submitted,


Tony Evers
Governor