

Landmark Partisan Gerrymandering Case *Whitford v. Gill* Heads to U.S. Supreme Court

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Litigators and Plaintiff Confident Three-Judge Lower Court Ruling Will Stand

WASHINGTON – Wisconsin’s landmark partisan gerrymandering case is officially headed to the United States Supreme Court. Today, the State of Wisconsin formally appealed the three-judge panel’s decision in *Whitford v. Gill* (<http://www.campaignlegalcenter.org/case/whitford-v-gill>) to the nation’s highest court.

The State’s appeal sets up an historic opportunity for the Supreme Court to consider the three-part legal test we proposed on behalf of the plaintiffs and to set a standard by which courts can analyze extreme partisan gerrymandering plans and curb the undemocratic practice nationwide.

CLC Director of Voting Rights and Redistricting Gerry Hebert released the following statement:

“For too long our democracy has been controlled by lawmakers who draw legislative districts to benefit themselves. The Supreme Court can now solve this pervasive problem by establishing – for the first time – a manageable standard by which courts nationwide can analyze partisan gerrymandering claims and curb the undemocratic practice. We are confident the U.S. Supreme Court will agree with the panel of judges that has already ruled that Wisconsin’s extreme partisan gerrymander is unconstitutional. The simple fact is that voters should be able to choose their representatives and influence the policy decisions that directly impact their lives.”

Douglas Poland, one of the Wisconsin-based attorneys representing the plaintiffs, released the following statement:

“Two different three-judge federal court panels have now found that Act 43, developed through secret and closed meetings unprecedented in Wisconsin history, violated federal law and the U.S. Constitution. The federal court panel in *Whitford v. Gill* ruled that there is ample evidence and firm

legal precedent to throw out Act 43 because it is a deliberate, extreme, durable, and unjustifiable partisan gerrymander. Wisconsin lawmakers have used taxpayer money for the purpose of entrenching themselves and their political party in sole control of the legislature for the past six years. With this appeal, Wisconsin citizens now look to the United States Supreme Court to finally and permanently remove the cancer of extreme partisan gerrymandering from our democracy.”

Bill Whitford, the lead plaintiff in the case, released the following statement:

“This is another step in our journey for a stronger, fairer democracy. I have faith that the United States Supreme Court will share my belief that extreme partisan gerrymandering is unconstitutional and undermines our democracy. We have to remember what this case is all about – creating a system where the voters select their legislators, not where legislators select their voters. The Supreme Court has an historic opportunity to ensure that my voice, and the voices of all Wisconsin voters, are heard and to put a standard in place that will stop this detrimental practice from occurring across the country. I have full confidence in my lawyers I and am thankful for their efforts to protect every American’s right to participate fully in the political process.”

The Campaign Legal Center (CLC) lawyers along with co-counsel represent Whitford and the other 11 plaintiffs in the case. Private counsel working with CLC includes Douglas M. Poland of Rathje & Woodward, Peter G. Earle, Michele L. Odorizzi of Mayer Brown, Nicholas O. Stephanopoulos of the University of Chicago Law School, and Jessica R. Amunson of Jenner & Block.

Due to the unique procedural process for redistricting cases, the Supreme Court must summarily affirm, summarily deny, or hear the case on the merits. CLC and the litigation team will continue to work with the Fair Elections Project to address partisan gerrymandering in Wisconsin.

