



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF WISCONSIN
EDUCATION FUND**

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To: Assembly Committee on Elections and Campaign Reform

Re: Support of AJR 63

The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin Education Fund supports redistricting which upholds equality in representation for all citizens in our state. AJR 63 would amend the state constitution to exclude incarcerated, disenfranchised felons from the enumeration of population for the purposes of apportionment and redistricting of legislative, county and certain other district offices. We believe this resolution is an important step in achieving equality.

The 2010 Census will count incarcerated, disenfranchised felons in the districts where they are incarcerated, rather than in their home districts. To build a redistricting plan around this policy, with a population of disenfranchised offenders concentrated in a prison district, results in an "inflated" level of representation for other residents of the district. Yet state prisoners do not use local services, such as streets, fire and police, nor may they vote in the districts where they are incarcerated. This gives the representatives of these districts a smaller population by whom they are held accountable in elections.

While we might prefer to change the way the U.S. Census Bureau counts incarcerated offenders, there is not time to do so before this year's census and subsequent redistricting. It is worth noting that the inflation of representation in the prison districts, where the concentration of prisoners is high, is much greater in impact than the dilution of representation that comes from *not* counting state prisoners in their home districts. Thus, for now, AJR 63 would substantially alleviate the imbalance of representation caused by counting offenders in the prison districts.

We urge you to support AJR 63. Thank you.