

WI Democracy Campaign - Mourning RBG

Written by Matt Rothschild, Wisconsin Democracy Campaign
Saturday, 26 September 2020 12:49 -



Career dedicated to equality and justice, two things right at the heart of our work here.

MADISON - Here at the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign, we remain in mourning at the passing of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

Among the many causes she championed in her career dedicated to equality and justice, two are right at the heart of our work here.

The first is reducing the influence of money in our politics. She [told *The New Republic*](#) back in 2014 that the worst decision of the Roberts Court was

Citizens United

. "The notion that we have all the democracy that money can buy strays so far from what our democracy is supposed to be," she said.

And the second cause is ending gerrymandering.

In 2015, Justice Ginsburg wrote the majority opinion in a case called *Arizona State Legislature v. Arizona Independent Redistricting Commission*

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. The case revolved around the constitutionality of Proposition 106, the statewide binding referendum that passed in Arizona in 2000 and that took the redistricting authority away from the legislators and handed it over to the Arizona Independent Redistricting Committee.

Ginsburg ruled that the initiative process was totally in keeping with our founding principles. “The Framers may not have imagined the modern initiative process in which the people of a State exercise legislative power coextensive with the authority of an institutional legislature,” she wrote. “But the invention of the initiative was in full harmony with the Constitution’s conception of the people as the font of governmental power.” That conception is crucial in the context of gerrymandering, Ginsburg argued, stressing the importance of “lawmaking by the people, particularly where such lawmaking is intended to check legislators’ ability to choose the district lines they run in.”

In a sentence that rings so true for those of us in Wisconsin, she noted: “The legislature’s responsiveness to the people its members represent is hardly heightened when the representative body can be confident that what it does will not be overturned or modified by the voters themselves.”



Justice Ginsburg knew well why our Legislature here in Madison is not responsive to the people. It’s because of gerrymandering.

May her memory be a blessing.

Best,

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