

The Exponent - Purdue University

League looks to stop gerrymandering

By JARRED MEEKS City Editor

March 4, 2016

The League of Women Voters of Greater Lafayette will be proposing a resolution to form an independent committee on redistricting, come Monday at the West Lafayette City Council meeting.

Redistricting, a process of redrawing the boundaries of districts, is an important process that affects political elections by altering the composition of voters in a given area.

Indiana law requires that city governments redraw their legislative districts during the second year after the U.S. Census or in cases where new territory is annexed.

Federal law requires that districts contain roughly the same number of residents, but those lines can be skewed to give an advantage to one political party or another, depending on where the lines are drawn – in other words, gerrymandering.

According to the League of Women Voters, gerrymandering reduces competition, something the West Lafayette branch is attempting to remedy with legislation on Monday. The legislation comes as a joint effort which, combined with other branches around Indiana, could change who draws the boundaries.

The League aims to alter the setup in Indiana, where the General Assembly creates the district maps. If their goal is accomplished, an independent nonpartisan commission would determine voting districts in the state of Indiana.

“We are trying to show local support of local communities for this effort,” said Sherry McLauchlan, a chairwoman of the redistricting committee.

While there are some who emphasize the importance of this proposed committee, city officials emphasize patience with the resolution.

“This will take time because it is not anything that is greeted with much enthusiasm at the state level,” said Peter Bunder, president of the West Lafayette City Council. “It’s going to take a while.”

West Lafayette City Council will meet at 6:30 p.m., Monday, at the Morton Center.

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