



JIM DOYLE
GOVERNOR
STATE OF WISCONSIN

April 21, 2004

TO THE HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE SENATE:

I am vetoing Senate Bill 351. The bill allows all counties, except Milwaukee and Menominee, to decrease the number of county board supervisors between federal decennial censuses, either by a board-initiated redistricting plan or by petition and referendum. Under current law, counties may change the number of county board members only once every ten years when a redistricting plan is adopted to conform to the federal decennial census. An exception to this rule was adopted under 2003 Wisconsin Act 32, whereby Milwaukee County may reduce its number of county supervisors once prior to November 15, 2010.

Senate Bill 351 prudently limits the downsizing of a county board through successful petition and referendum to once per decade. There is no limit, however, on the number of times a county board itself may adopt a redistricting plan that reduces the number of supervisors or the number of times a referendum question to downsize may appear on the ballot. The open-ended nature of these provisions may create circumstances where the cost, time and effort spent on redistricting far outweigh any savings or benefits obtained. Also, unlike the one-time authority granted to Milwaukee County, this bill provides ongoing authority into the future.

While I object to this bill because of its open-ended and ongoing authority, a more tailored bill could be developed which would accomplish the goals behind this piece of legislation.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Doyle".

JIM DOYLE
Governor