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REIN IN BIG GOVERNMENT WITH NULLIFICATION

Get Your Sheriff to Nullify

by Peter Rykowski, Research Associate and Bulletin Editor

Nullification is "the rightful remedy" to counter unconstitutional government overreach — and it is just as important on the local level as it is on the state level.

Sheriffs and local law enforcement have an especially important role in nullifying unconstitutional actions. For example, in 2020 and 2021, local law enforcement across the country nullified state and federal Covid edicts — including lockdowns, mask mandates, and vaccine passports and mandates — preventing their enforcement and thus protecting citizens.

Gun control is another area where local police and sheriffs have successfully pushed back against unconstitutional state and federal edicts. Many examples exist of this, but one of the most recent happened in Illinois. At the beginning of this year, the state enacted a draconian bill banning so-called assault weapons, among other extreme provisions. In response, about 90 county sheriffs — out of 102 total — announced they would refuse to enforce this law, thus nullifying it in their respective jurisdictions.

According to the Chicago Tribune, the official response of the Illinois Sheriffs' Association (ISA) to the "assault weapons" ban — which individual sheriffs adopted — differed significantly from its response to a similar proposal in 2013. In the 2013 response, it claimed that "Sheriffs do not possess the legal authority to interpret the constitutionality of any law," and that "ultimate authority" lies in the judiciary. By contrast, the ISA's 2023 response said sheriffs have a duty "to protect the rights provided to all of us in the Constitution," and that they would act themselves by not enforcing the unconstitutional ban.

Why the change? The Chicago Tribune article implied it was because of education — constitutionalists informing their sheriffs about nullification and their duty to follow their oath "to support this Constitution."

Accordingly, please work to educate your sheriff and other local officials about nullification, and to take bold action to enforce and defend the U.S. Constitution in the face of state and federal usurpations. Schedule in-person meetings with these officials, and try to attend public events where they will be present. When doing so, give them copies of The Founders' Brilliant Solution to Big Government: Article VI booklet and the "Nullification: The Founders' Solution to Federal Overreach" pamphlet.


Also, share with your officials and fellow citizens the videos "County Officials Nullify Anti-Gun Illinois Supreme Court Ruling" (https://gojt.us/i5uw) and "Nullification: The Rightful Remedy" (https://gojt.us/j6mn). Both videos are excellent tools to inform others what nullification is, and how officials are using it to enforce the Constitution.


Finally, host a Constitution Is the Solution series in your community to help build an informed electorate and get others involved in The John Birch Society. Invite your sheriff, other local officials, and state legislators to attend this series, and do literature drops in your community (including the nullification pamphlet and an event invitation) to help promote it.






Less government, more responsibility,
and — with God's help —
a better world.

 770 N Westhill Blvd
Appleton, WI 54914

 920.749.3780
800.JBS.USA1

 help@jbs.org

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