



Exercising The Right Redrawing State Lines?

This column has previously reported on how Democratic control of Virginia is causing some supporters of the Second Amendment to look into redrawing state boundaries to protect rural communities from the urban-controlled state government that is hostile to gun rights. CNN reported on February 18 that this idea is now spreading to other parts of the country, as evidenced by the growth in the movement for a "Greater Idaho." CNN reported that the movement, which is referred to as "Move Oregon's Border for a Greater Idaho," is striving to get the proposal on the ballot in the state of Oregon. Such a move is a long shot, as it would require not only the passage of a ballot initiative, but also approval from the state legislature. Such a thing is unlikely, considering the legislature is controlled by Democrats, and they have no incentive to voluntarily cede political control. Obviously, Idaho would have to agree to the proposal, as well.

The main activist behind the movement, Mike McCarter, explained that the impetus behind the movement is to show that the rural counties in Oregon are upset with the utter disdain that their urban-controlled legislature has for them and their beliefs. "Rural counties have become increasingly outraged by laws coming out of the Oregon Legislature that threaten our livelihoods, our industries, our wallet, our gun rights, and our values," McCarter wrote on his website, which promotes the Greater Idaho movement. "We tried voting those legislators out, but rural Oregon is outnumbered and our voices are now ignored. This is our last resort," McCarter explained.

Conservative lawmakers from Oregon's rural region support the movement. Senator Herman Baertschiger, the Republican leader in the state Senate, replied by e-mail to CNN when asked for his comments, and he explained that "Oregon is largely controlled by one party that does not represent the entire state effectively, making the urban and rural divide striking.... Democrats should be paying attention to how unhappy these Oregonians are with the current regime to seek secession from Oregon. I would welcome the idea to serve on the Greater Idaho legislature!"

The movement is not just limited to two states. A proposed map for the new state of Greater Idaho also included counties in northern California.

The movement is only in its infancy stage, and while the odds are long, there's no telling what the future holds. As the activists behind the movement are quick to explain, there are definitely economic advantages for counties willing to join a state with a more pro-business disposition, and the rural residents are getting fed up with attacks on their religious liberty, as well as infringements on their Second Amendment rights.

Not All Bad News

It might seem like we're inundated with nearly constant bad news about how politicians with a vendetta against the Second Amendment are relentlessly on the march, but we have good news to report out of Nashville, Tennessee. WKRN reported on February 27 that Tennessee Governor Bill Lee introduced legislation that is popularly referred to as "Constitutional Carry." The law would allow gun owners to carry without any requirement of a state permit. Lee explained that this would apply to both open carry and concealed carry. "The Second Amendment is clear and concise and secures the freedoms of law-



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abiding citizens to keep and bear arms.... I am pleased to announce Constitutional Carry legislation today that will protect the Second Amendment rights of Tennesseans, while also stiffening penalties on criminals who steal or illegally possess firearms,” Lee said in his public remarks.

Republican Tennessee House Majority Leader William Lamberth echoed Lee’s comments and added that an armed citizenry will assist in dealing with violent criminals. “This absolutely makes us safer as a state to have more law abiding citizens who are hopefully taking advantage of opportunities to train with their weapons to make sure that [if] any criminal endangers them or their fellow citizens, that they can respond appropriately,” Lamberth told reporters shortly after the governor’s announcement.

Virginia Democrats Look to Punish Dissent

Breitbart News reported on March 2 that county sheriffs in Virginia have been threatened with repercussions for their pro-Second Amendment stances. At CPAC 2020, Culpeper County Sheriff Scott Jenkins was interviewed by Breitbart’s Second Amendment columnist, AWR Hawkins. He told Hawkins about threatened retaliation by Virginia Democrats against sheriffs who aren’t toeing the party line. “In early December I came out against the newly proposed legislation to restrict everything from ‘assault weapons,’ so-called ‘assault weapons,’ to ‘high capacity magazines’ ... and said that if we’re going to take away weapons from law-abiding citizens I intend to swear in thousands of citizens as reserve deputy sheriffs so they can keep those weapons and be able to protect themselves and use them.” Jenkins said that the Democrats responded to those comments and similar pro-Second Amendment sentiments by other sheriffs with threats to have the sheriffs’ insurance coverage revoked. Jenkins also told Hawkins that Democrats used not only the stick but also the carrot, and offered incentives for compliance. Jenkins was quoted as saying that he and other sheriffs were offered a \$10,000 pay raise “if we would tuck tail and follow [the Democrats’] lead and stop the push-back.”

Jenkins said that State Senator Janet Howell has a plan to hit sheriffs where it hurts by going after their retirement funds. He talked about how Senator Howell “introduced a bill for next session where she could remove the pension of sheriffs ... next year for ... saying that we won’t follow unconstitutional laws or that I would use my lawful powers as sheriff to swear in thousands of people as deputies.” These threats don’t seem to be working, as Virginia sheriffs such as Jenkins continue to stand tall for the Second Amendment.



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