



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on July 25, 2018

Illinois Counties Declaring Themselves “Gun Sanctuaries” in Opposition to State’s Anti-gun Measures

Thirty counties in Illinois have declared themselves “sanctuary cities” and “safe spaces” for gun owners in an effort to discourage legislators from passing anti-gun legislation. According to Guns.com, the designations are part of a statewide effort to send a message to legislators, including Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel.



Counties across Illinois have passed “gun sanctuary” resolutions or similar measures, stating that gun owners, too, deserve protection from lawmakers. The Daily Wire reports that the “sanctuary” designations are “largely symbolic,” but the idea has become increasingly popular, particularly among Illinois residents outside of the Chicago metropolitan area. The counties are sending a message that if the Democratic-controlled Legislature continues to pass gun restrictions, the counties may bar their employees from enforcing the new laws, according to the *Chicago Tribune*.

“It’s a buzzword, a word that really gets attention. With all these sanctuary cities, we just decided to turn it around to protect our Second Amendment rights,” said David Campbell, vice chairman of the Effingham County Board.

“We’re just stealing the language that sanctuary cities use,” explained the Effingham County’s top prosecutor, Bryan Kibler, who came up with the idea.

Mercer County was the latest to label itself a “gun sanctuary.”

“It is a message that the people here want to send saying we don’t want Chicago and Springfield telling us what to do with our Second Amendment,” said Board Member Brian Anseeuw. “It is guaranteed in the Constitution and the Constitution of the State of Illinois.”

With Mercer County declaring itself a “gun sanctuary,” approximately one-third of Illinois’ counties are now “sanctuary cities,” and that number is expected to grow.

And according to Campbell, the idea could be gaining steam outside of Illinois as well. He said local officials in Oregon and Washington have asked for copies of Effingham County’s resolution.

Illinois has become a battleground for gun rights, as the state has passed what it has deemed “common sense gun legislation,” including a restriction on anyone under the age of 21 from purchasing a firearm, new fees on federally licensed gun dealers, a mandatory 72-hour waiting period on gun purchases, and



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even gun confiscation legislation.

The state has also become a popular talking point for pro-gun advocates who note that despite the state's strict anti-gun laws, its murder rate, particularly in Chicago, remains staggeringly high. In 2017 alone, the city witnessed more than 2,700 shooting incidents.

"That's where this narrative is so false and is so incorrect. And I don't understand the insanity of those — especially the Democrat legislators in Illinois and in the city of Chicago — who believe that if you have the most comprehensive gun control laws on the books, that that will prevent this gun violence that continues to occur," Fox News political analyst and Chicago native Gianni Caldwell said.

The *Chicago Tribune* notes that the battle over gun rights in Illinois has drawn attention to the "rural-urban political divide that was so stark in the last general election."

County officials fear that they are unable to stop the passage of gun restrictions so long as they are outnumbered by lawmakers in Chicago and surrounding areas.

"They are trying to make a point that they really resent how the city of Chicago treats the rest of the state and how they're treated as gun owners," said Richard Pearson, executive director of the Illinois State Rifle Association.

And not all Chicago residents are anti-gun. The Huffington Post pointed out last year that the rate of concealed carry permit requests in the city has soared in recent years, particularly amongst the black population, after the city loosened some of its restrictions, because law-abiding citizens are becoming increasingly frightened about rising rates of violent crime.

Second Amendment advocates are applauding the counties' usurpation of the "sanctuary" status to advance the constitutional rights of its citizens. "I love this kind of pro-gun rights pushback," Alan Gottlieb, with the Second Amendment Foundation, told Guns.com. "It sends a message that the right to keep and bear arms must be protected not attacked."

Americans are increasingly resorting to these sort of nullification efforts to defeat government overreach. In California, counties and smaller municipalities have been rejecting their illegal immigration "sanctuary status" in an effort to force the state to comply with federal immigration laws.

In Illinois, they are using the liberals' own arguments for sanctuary status against them to push for Second Amendment protections.

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