



Written by [James Murphy](#) on May 22, 2020

Illinois Residents Stand Up Against the Most Extreme Lock-down Measures in the Country

The State of Illinois — a state dominated by left-wing politics — is beginning to stand up against the harsh COVID-19 lock-down measures imposed on it by Governor J.B. Pritzger and the mayor of Chicago, Lori Lightfoot. But neither the governor nor the mayor show any signs of easing restrictions at this time.



A [survey](#) conducted by WalletHub, a personal finance website, found the restrictions issued by Illinois and Chicago to be the harshest of any state in the union.

And residents and officials of the state are beginning to get fed up with the unwieldy and sometimes arbitrary restrictions that Illinois and the City of Chicago have put in place. Pritzger defended restrictions against churches in a [tweet](#): “April hosts many celebrations for some of the largest religions. I know how hard it is to break from traditional celebrations of togetherness. But I believe passionately that adapting our expression of faith in these times is one of the most faithful acts of all.”

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But as they should, many churches have [begun holding services](#) in defiance of government orders. After living with the severe restrictions through the month of April while Good Friday and Easter Sunday services should have taken place, many churches are now openly defying Pritzger’s order limiting worship services to only 10 people at a time.

Cristan Ionescu, the senior pastor of Elim Romanian Pentecostal Church in Chicago, urged pastors all over the state to remember their First Amendment rights in a [blog post](#) on May 11. Ionescu came to America from communist Romania in 1987, so he knows a thing or two about authoritarian governments. “In Romania, we knew our rights were a few letters on a piece of paper called constitution. It was just a gimmick,” Ionescu wrote. “Here in the United States the Constitution still counts for something.... Let’s make it count, lest it will become just a piece of paper!”

Liberty Counsel has filed suit on behalf Elim Romanian Pentecostal and Logos Baptist Ministries on the grounds that Pritzger’s executive order is unconstitutional. “Governor Pritzger does not seem to know that churches have the First Amendment right to exist, but businesses do not,” said Mat Staver, the founder and chairman of Liberty Counsel.

Chicago mayor Lori Lightfoot has responded to churches reopening with the heavy boot of authoritarianism. She has directed police to create [new no-parking and tow-away zones](#) around various churches to discourage church attendance. She also stepped up enforcement by having police [stake out](#) churches and give out parking citations. Some worshipers have even had their vehicles towed.

At least three churches were also fined \$500 by the city for their defiance of Pritzger’s executive order, including Elin Romanian Pentecostal.



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But the pushback against Pritzger and Lightfoots' heavy-handed coronavirus measures are not limited to churches or to Chicago. Several municipal law-enforcement officials have said that they will no longer enforce the draconian orders of the governor.

In Du Page County, Sheriff James Mendrick told citizens in a Facebook post that he has no intention of following Pritzger's edict anymore, despite threats from the governor's office.

"I just can't do this anymore. I stand with our citizens and businesses of Du Page County who have offered no trouble or no resistance to any rule we put upon them, no matter how strange. In fact they have communally helped to support us during this pandemic with resources and physical help," Mendrick wrote.

Pritzger responded to Mendrick and any other county official who refused to enforce his orders with threats. "Counties that try to reopen in defiance, may not be reimbursed by FEMA for damages they cause because they ignored the law," Pritzger said. "Local law enforcement and the Illinois State Police can and will take action."

In his Facebook post, Mendrick answered Pritzger's threats. "We are peacekeepers. All these years, you have told us you don't want law enforcement that thinks before arresting, doesn't violate your rights and treats their citizens with decency. Now you have that and are asking us to regress into what you didn't want and didn't deserve. Please let us be the law enforcement you always asked us to be. Non-oppressive."

Photo: Bhupi / E+ / Getty Images Plus

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