



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on May 13, 2014

Playground Photo Reignites Gun Control Debate

When Heather Karenz of Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, posted this photo on Facebook and complained that the father in the background was carrying a sidearm, Police Chief David Beguhn responded by saying that a local ordinance prohibited openly carrying firearms at the Imagination Station children's playground.



That sparked a call to the chief from Nik Clark, president of Wisconsin Carry, a gun-rights group, who informed the chief that a state law prohibited any local township from enacting gun laws stricter than the state's.

Beguhn consulted with the city's attorney, read the state law, realized his error, and retracted his warning that the local ordinance would be enforced. In fact, he now wants the city's Common Council to repeal the ordinance. In the meantime, he will not enforce it.

Beguhn said:

I don't want to sound like I'm making excuses but changes come down in the law all the time and we don't always see them.

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Once [they are] pointed out to us, we need to clarify our ordinances and make changes.

Calls to Beguhn's office by *The New American* were not returned, but Beguhn stated publicly that his city generally does not bar open carry and that no one has been cited under the city's now-illegal ordinance since it was passed in 2011.

This is exactly what another law enforcement official from Wisconsin said had to happen all across the country to accelerate the process of repealing and neutering the more than 20,000 laws at the local, municipal and state levels that no longer reflect recent Supreme Court decisions. Sheriff David Clarke of Milwaukee County spoke at the recent convention of the National Rifle Association where he reviewed what is becoming more and more common knowledge among concerned citizens:

Why am I here? I am here because, as you already know, the country that we understood at its founding is under siege. It's under siege by a cabal that would transform us into something other than what the founding fathers wanted for every generation that followed....

Our Second Amendment is under siege by intellectual elitists like former United States Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens who wrote in an editorial ... that this confusion over the meaning of the Second Amendment can be solved by adding five words..."the right of the people to keep and bear arms, *when serving in the militia*, shall not be infringed."...

I have a better way of clearing up any confusion that activist judges may have about the meaning of the Second Amendment. I would add these seven words at the end of the clause, "the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed ... *keep your hands off our guns, dammit!*"



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Those seven words should clear up any confusion.

Mere exclamations of the obvious won't be sufficient, however, to keep those rights from being infringed; it will take an informed citizenry supporting law enforcement officials with backbone to stand up against those infringements. Clarke added,

All you have to know that defending freedom is going to be a fight that has no end. You have to be willing to resist any attempt by government to disarm law-abiding people by fighting with the ferociousness of a junkyard dog.

It's not just the water in Wisconsin — the state that boasts more than 15,000 lakes — that nourishes law enforcement officers and informed citizens in the gun control fight, either. Fifty-five Colorado sheriffs have sued to rebuff recent gun control laws with Weld County Sheriff John Cooke leading the way:

[Colorado legislators] have turned law-abiding citizens into criminals. They banned magazines that hold more than 15 rounds ... [and said] that any magazine that can be readily converted to hold more than 15 rounds is illegal.

Well, that's 99.999 percent of all magazines ... how do we enforce that?

Cooke's answer? He won't:

There's a grandfather clause in the law that says if you own a magazine before July 1, 2013, that's more than 15 rounds, you're allowed to keep it. How are my deputies going to know who bought that magazine before or after July 1?

So we're not putting any resources into it.

The lawsuit is still pending, raising the question of how Cooke will respond if the court rules in favor of the unconstitutional law. Cooke anticipated such a decision:

Even the federal courts can't make me enforce the laws. So if we lose and the judge says, "No, these laws are constitutional," I still set the priorities and the resources for my agency. There's no law in the state of Colorado that says I have to enforce the law, so I still won't enforce them because in my belief and my opinion, it's not my job to turn law-abiding gun owners into criminals.

Cooke then added that the real solution to crime isn't to attack an inanimate object, or the right to own it, but to focus instead on defending the right to self-defense:

An armed society is a polite society. If you ask a majority of cops on the street, they'll tell you the way to reduce the number of victims of these mass shootings is to have a well-armed public that can shoot back and ... neutralize [the attackers] before they kill too many.

Another Colorado sheriff, Pete Palmer of Chaffee County, made clear that he understands his role in law enforcement:

All law enforcement agencies consider the community standards — what it is that our community wishes us to focus on — and I can tell you our community is not worried one whit about background checks or high-capacity magazines.

In my oath it says I'll uphold the U.S. Constitution and the Constitution of the State of Colorado. [That oath] doesn't say I have to uphold every law passed by the legislature.

The combination of the Internet, Facebook photos of youngsters enjoying a local playground, informed supporters of the Second Amendment who increasingly recognize the threat to ownership of firearms,



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and sheriffs with an understanding of their responsibilities and the backbone to enforce them against government overreach will make such anti-gun laws increasingly difficult to enforce.

It's not just the water in Wisconsin.

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