



Written by [James Murphy](#) on November 18, 2019

## Wisconsin County Becomes the State's First Second Amendment Sanctuary

While the legislature in the State of Wisconsin debates strict gun-control measures, one small rural county is fighting back. Florence County, with a population of approximately 4,500 in the extreme northeastern portion of the state, has proactively acted, passing a resolution to become the state's first Second Amendment sanctuary.



The county's Board of Supervisors voted unanimously on November 12 to send a strong message to the politicians in Madison who are considering certain strict gun-control measures. That message? Keep your hands off of our guns.

The [resolution](#) passed unanimously. The county will now send it to Madison to formally alert the state of its decision.

Edwin Kelley, a Florence County supervisor and vice chair of the County Board, believes that the discussions ongoing in Madison are making his constituents nervous about their future ability to acquire and keep their firearms. "That red flag law — what benefit is that going to do anybody," Kelley said. "It gives too much authority to the government. Just enforce the rules we have instead of increasing them more and more so that down the road weapons will be gone for future generations."

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When introducing the legislation in September, Governor Tony Evers claimed that Wisconsinites overwhelmingly support more aggressive gun control in the state. "The recent [Marquette University Poll](#) shows that Wisconsinites not only overwhelmingly support universal background checks, but 81 percent of Wisconsinites support creating an extreme risk protection order process to remove guns from people who have been found by a judge to be a danger to themselves or others," Evers said.

But constitutional rights are not decided by polls. They are endowed to us by our Creator.

State Attorney General Josh Kaul, a Democrat, says that the new proposed legislation is only a legislative strengthening of powers that the state already has, particularly in cases of domestic abuse. "Actually, in those cases, one of the options is that firearms can be ordered to be seized," Kaul said. "What [the new legislation] does is it expands on that, so if somebody is a threat to themselves or others for another reason, this would give law enforcement a tool to take action. It would also allow family and household members to take action."

The new law would allow police, family, or other members of a household to petition a judge to order a person's firearms taken from them until they can prove to a judge that they're not a danger to themselves or others.



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But increased government control over firearms isn't selling well in Wisconsin's north woods. The county boardroom was packed on Tuesday with no one choosing to speak against the resolution and a number of veterans and hunters speaking in favor of it.

Florence County Board Chairwoman Jeanette Bomberg, not a gun enthusiast, was moved by several of those who spoke in favor of the resolution. "I had chills when they were talking," said Bomberg, a 29-year veteran of the County Board. "I probably would never shoot a gun in my life. But to have that taken away from my home, that should not be for the federal government, the state government or local government to decide."

The idea for the county to become a Second Amendment sanctuary was put forward by Florence County resident Mark Kerznar who was inspired by seeing a Fox News report on another community that made a similar move in May. Kerznar, a local tavern owner, tried his hand at writing the resolution, showed it to Sheriff Dan Miller, who approved of it, then brought it to the county board.

Kerznar for one, has significant concerns about the proposed red flag legislation. "You call the sheriff and say, 'I just got off the phone with Mark and he threatened my life.' With the new law, I would have no recourse. I would have to hire an attorney to get my gun back. It would be my word against yours."

Sheriff Miller was enthusiastic about the resolution. "I think it's a great thing," said Miller, who was elected in 2018. "It sends a message that all of Wisconsin is not exactly the same. We have some different beliefs up north. We tend to be a little more conservative. We like our guns. We believe in God."

Seventeen other states along with the District of Columbia have passed red flag laws similar to the one being considered in Wisconsin.

But Florence County, [along with the States of Alaska, Idaho, Kansas, and Wyoming and hundreds of jurisdictions in 17 other states](#), has declared that it won't follow any state or federal law that it considers an infringement of their Second Amendment rights.

Several other counties in Wisconsin are now considering similar resolutions.

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