

Go Constitutional!

The Movement to Empower Local Governments

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On August 25, 2021, the Cattaraugus County Legislature passed a resolution declaring they recognize that government is to be limited and the people free from unnecessary and arbitrary governmental overreach and intrusions. The Resolution ended by stating: “RESOLVED, that the Cattaraugus County Legislature hereby declares Cattaraugus County, New York, a Constitutional County, unwavering in their commitment to protect Constitutional rights.”

What does this resolution mean?

What are the next steps?

What can you do to convince your County to “Go Constitutional?”

What does this resolution mean?

Many people have contacted me with the question: *“Does this mean that everything is going back to normal in Catt Co?”* While I wish the answer to this question were “yes,” it’s not. The resolution itself is the first step, not the last one, in a long walk back to the liberties we inherited as American citizens. It is an expression of the ideals toward which we want to strive. Whether this resolution becomes consequential depends on the grit and perseverance of the Citizens and the courage and political will of the Legislators whom they have elected. As we seek to take the next steps do we have the courage? Do we have the will? Will we grow weary and discouraged, or will we persevere? Do we treasure the jewel and heritage of liberty enough to press on and strive to pass her on – polished and renewed – as the legacy we leave to the next generation? We must have a long view of the battle and a grand view of the God whom we worship, recognizing as we go that opposing evil and tyranny ultimately are acts of faith, worship, and witness.

What are the next steps?

What do we do after the resolution passes? It will look different for different counties. But in all cases, each county which has committed itself to Constitutional integrity ought to then look for strategic and intentional opportunities to make the commitment matter. Perhaps it will be nullification and civil disobedience of specific mandates/codes/rules/regulations. Perhaps it will be litigation. It ought always to include education of self and other citizens regarding the truth and beauty of liberty's origins and liberty's value. Below are some of the next steps to consider.

Expand the scope and of the resolution within the County and within the State...

Reach out to towns within the County sharing the vision of the resolution.

Recruit other Counties to join the movement (focus on rural counties).

Get good people in government! Run for office. Attend local government and school board meetings.

Organize for the purpose of litigation...

Learn the lingo about who has “standing” to file lawsuits.

Learn the lingo about preliminary injunctions and special legal proceedings.

Organize with others “similarly situated” to pursue legal redress and share the cost of litigation.

Engage in strategic nullification...

Communicate with the Legislators regarding nullifying specific mandates.

Encourage the Legislators to refuse to enforce specific mandates; be strategic, not haphazard.

Develop well-crafted reasons why a mandate should be nullified.

Beware: nullification is generally a response to federal laws that overstep Constitutional boundaries.

To nullify state mandates – you must develop a foundation and clear justification.

Engage in strategic civil disobedience...

Decide to live your life in the freedom you have inherited as an American citizen.

In a gracious manner, go back to doing what you always did (or didn't do) before the COVID era.

Say, “No. I won't be doing that.” Be strategic, intentional, and don't get baited into bad behavior.

Support the Sheriff's Department...

Determine if your County Sheriff is a "Constitutional" Sheriff. Ask him where he stands.
Remind the Sheriff that his oath is to the Constitution and his duty is to the citizens.
Assure the Sheriff that your Constitutional position is rooted in a love for law and order.

Pursue Election Integrity...

Get involved in elections at the precinct level.
Ask questions about safeguards put in place to ensure election integrity.
Use FOIA when appropriate.

Educate...yourself, your children, your church, your community

Remember...That national repentance is the true answer to national restoration and renewal. Pray to the Creator Redeemer God from whom our rights originate that He would have mercy on this land and turn our hearts and minds back to Him. Worship Him every day, in all places, and under all circumstances.

What can you do to convince your County to "Go Constitutional?"

STEP 1: Educate yourself...Familiarize yourself with the concept of "Constitutional County" (see website).

STEP 2: Educate others in the community and organize, organize, organize...

Do this by printing out the petition on the website. Edit it as needed to reflect your specific county. Use the petition as a tool to talk to others about the idea of Constitutional County and to start networking and building support. The purpose of the petition is two-fold. Signatures can certainly indicate support for the idea of Constitutional status when they are submitted to the county government. But the act of gathering signatures is also an act of education and networking. **IDENTIFY A PERSON WHO IS WILLING AND CAPABLE OF LEADING AND ORGANIZING. IDENTIFY HOW YOU WILL COMMUNICATE IN YOUR GROUP** (email list, group text, etc.)

STEP 3: Initiate contact with your county legislators (or their equivalent *)...

Craft an email or letter to send to all the county legislators sharing your vision for establishing your county as a Constitutional County. Ask them if they would be willing to sponsor a resolution. Share examples of other counties who have passed such a resolution. [*Some counties have a "board of supervisors" rather than county legislators*]

STEP 4: Assess the interest and courage of your county legislators...

If some of the legislators respond to your initial email with interest, begin a dialogue with them. If you do not hear back from any or if they contact you but seem reluctant to embrace the idea of Constitutional County, rally the members of your email contact list and other interested parties to respectfully email and call the legislators with the simple message: "We are interested in having a resolution drafted and passed in our county stating that we are a Constitutional County."

STEP 5: Request "Privilege of the Floor"...

"Privilege of the floor" means that you are given the opportunity to address the legislators formally during one of their legislative sessions. County legislatures will have specific procedures to follow, thus you have to request and be granted "privilege of the floor." Be prepared to explain why you are seeking privilege of the floor. An example response: "I am concerned about the loss of civil liberties and loss of local control. I wish to express to the legislators that community support exists for passing a resolution affirming that this county is a county that supports the primacy of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights."

STEP 6: Hit your message out of the ballpark when you address the legislators...

Have a well-prepared message to share (there is a sample one on the website). Bring supporters with you. Make sure the supporters are enthusiastic, respectful, and peaceful. At this point, you can also deliver the signatures you have collected on the petition IF you have a good number of signatures.

STEP 7: Follow up, follow up, follow up...

Continue contacting legislators (and ask your group to do the same) regarding the resolution. If necessary, draft a sample resolution and provide it to the legislators (there is a sample resolution on the website). Ultimately, the resolution passed needs to be drafted by them, but if you provide one they could use and build on, it may encourage them to move it forward.

NOTE: If your county legislators (or board of supervisors) are unwilling to consider a resolution or if they are unable to pass one because there is not enough legislative support, this is an indication that you need to vote them out. DON'T WASTE YOUR TIME if you don't think you can change the minds of your legislators. Instead, concentrate your efforts on identifying WHO NEEDS TO BE VOTED OUT and SEEK PEOPLE TO RUN FOR THEIR POSITION!

