

The question I have been asked the most since the Cattaraugus County Legislators passed a “Constitutional County” resolution is, “What does it mean?”

Many people have reached out and wondered if the resolution means that we can stop sending children to school in masks or if the vaccine mandates will no longer apply to Cattaraugus County. In general, people want to know if the resolution means that we can go back to the good old days. We just want to be left alone by Big Brother.

A resolution is the beginning of the battle, not the end of it. When a county passes a “Constitutional County Resolution” it is communicating the ideals upon which it wishes to proceed. When pursuing ideals, one must possess a dogged determination to press on toward the ideals. It will take time and concerted, intentional effort toward the ideals in order to reach them. The resolution is the document that reminds and motivates. And in the long haul back to liberty, the resolution is the prod keeping elected officials and engaged citizens energized and on track.

We face a Goliath. We – citizens and County legislators alike – are like David. We are small and unimpressive. We carry our slingshot and pebbles, but power appears to be on the side of the adversary. In this scenario, a resolution represents the will of David – the will of We the People – to confront Goliath. And the will to approach and to confront is certainly a rare jewel.

If the resolution is the symbolic framework, what are the next steps?

Craft a comprehensive message. Educate. Organize. Each county and the legislators and citizens of it will need to be intentional and creative. The crafting of a positive message is necessary. By “positive” we mean a message that upholds the truth of our American history and founding documents and that defines the beauty and value of liberty to those who have never heard.

Consider nullification and civil disobedience of specific, targeted mandates. Nullification should not be haphazard and general. A specific issue needs to be identified and a justification for nullification should be crafted. Citizens should communicate with the county legislators and build a base of support for nullification and civil disobedience in regard to an IDENTIFIED and SPECIFIC issue or situation. A written justification should be crafted.

Consider litigation. Citizens with standing can pursue legal remedy. The county legislatures also can pursue legal remedy. This can become time consuming and expensive, but it is an option of great value. In Cattaraugus County, the legislature has filed a petition against New York State regarding the vaccine mandates in health care. Cattaraugus County has standing in court to do so because they employ health care workers in the county nursing homes. Not all counties would have this option....each county would need to carefully consider the possible litigation that they could pursue. **It’s important for citizens to realize that county legislators are not necessarily lawyers. They are usually people like you and I. Since they are not necessarily legal experts, we need to encourage them to find legal counsel that shares the ideals of the resolution.**

Consider running for office. We need to elect people who embrace the ideals of liberty into office at all levels: county election boards, school boards, town offices, county legislatures, state and federal. We have sat out too long. If you can’t run for office, then start showing up at board meetings....pick a couple and keep up-to-date with what is going on.

Remember the Sheriff's Department. The passing of a Constitutional Resolution sends a signal – often a welcome one – to the Sheriff's department. While the Sheriffs may be cautious about jumping head long into the resolution/nullification process, the signal sent about the ideals of the county will resonate with most County Sheriff's Departments. Find ways to connect with the Sheriffs.

Commit to the long haul. There is no quick fix to the situation in which we find ourselves. There is no resolution that is going to take us back to the green grass and blue skies of liberty. It will be a process. We do not have the luxury of being frustrated with the reality that there is no quick fix. We cannot indulge the idea that since there is no quick fix we just throw our hands up in disgust or despair. Our children, our grandchildren, the generations to come are depending on us. If we hope to leave a legacy of liberty, then we must persevere.