

These Sheriffs Are the Difference Between Freedom and Tyranny

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✓ Fact Checked

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STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- › Your local sheriff is in charge of enforcing the laws laid down by your state legislature, city or county councils and executive orders made by your state's governor. If you do not have a sheriff who knows the Constitution and adheres to it, you could end up at the mercy of tyrannical government officials
- › One area where your local sheriff might end up playing a crucial role is if they roll out forced COVID-19 vaccinations. Were rules or laws enacted saying you must get vaccinated or be barred from various locations, your sheriff could refuse to enforce them
- › Your sheriff should safeguard your Constitutional rights and protect your civil liberties against unlawful government overreach. Many, however, lack the proper training
- › The purpose of the Constitutional Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association (CSPOA) is to create a partnership between the people, the sheriff and the local law enforcement chiefs, to make sure county sheriffs are trained on Constitutional rights and their own role as guardians of the Constitution and protectors of civil liberties
- › If enough people get involved, we can create Constitutional counties and take back America, county by county, one sheriff at a time. Eventually, all the police forces will be on the same page as well, and will no longer enforce unlawful, unconstitutional orders, whatever they might be

This article was previously published October 25, 2020, and has been updated with new information.

Richard Mack, a retired sheriff and current president of Constitutional Sheriffs and Peace Officers (CSPOA),¹ is hard at work, educating sheriffs around the country to get them up to speed on the Constitutional rights of U.S. citizens.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, I was essentially clueless as to the importance of your local county sheriffs. I had no idea how crucial they are. Today, I view them as some of the most important elected officials we all have the opportunity to vote for. (Three states — Alaska, Hawaii and Connecticut — do not have sheriffs, so their laws are enforced by other officers such as marshals or deputy sheriffs.²)

In this interview, Mack details the action steps you can take to make sure your sheriff is safeguarding your Constitutional rights and protecting your civil liberties against unlawful government overreach.

Your Sheriff Is the One Protecting Our Constitutional Rights

Ultimately, your local sheriff is in charge of actually enforcing whatever rules and regulations are laid down by state lawmakers, your city or county councils,³ and executive orders from city mayors or governors. Contrary to what some people think, mayors and governors don't make laws — the state legislatures do that — but they can influence city and state legislation as well as invoke executive orders under certain circumstances.⁴

Sometimes sheriffs and local and state police may be asked by their mayor or governor to enforce an executive order. However, some sheriffs may refuse to do that, if they believe the executive order is unconstitutional. For example, some Michigan⁵ and Texas⁶ sheriffs informed their governors they won't enforce mandatory mask orders since they aren't actual laws.

Knowing this, if you do not have a good sheriff who knows the Constitution and adheres to it, you could end up at the mercy of tyrannical government officials trying to create rules and orders outside the powers of your elected legislative officials.

During this pandemic, we've seen quite a few mayors and governors implementing pandemic response mandates that violate the U.S. Constitution and infringe on civil liberties. The counterbalance to such overreaches is the local county sheriff. As explained by Mack:

"This is a crucial time in American history, and we actually have a peaceful and effective solution to it. The only thing that needs to happen is your local officials, especially your sheriff, keep [their] oath of office.

That's the only thing he has to do in order to effectuate the philosophy you just mentioned, and that is that the sheriff is here to protect your civil liberties, your God given rights.

As the founding fathers put it in the Declaration of Independence, 'The laws of nature are nature's God.' Either way, you don't have to believe in God to appreciate this or to be a part of it. You don't, because these are the rights you were born with."

The Brady Bill

Mack is perhaps best known for suing the U.S. government over the Brady Bill, also known as the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act,⁷ signed into law by President Clinton in November 1993, which for the first time in U.S. history conscripted county sheriffs to enforce federal law.

"Cornell University did the best review⁸ of the case that I ever saw. If you want to look up the case, see Printz, Mac V. U.S.⁹ It's the most amazing 10th Amendment decision in the history of our country. It is so powerful," Mack says.

"Justice [Antonin] Scalia wrote the decision, and it went 10 times further than I ever dreamed. In fact, I never dreamed of even going to the Supreme Court. I thought it would all be squashed and forgotten at the district level. But we went through the district court. Six other sheriffs joined me in this lawsuit. All of them won at the district court except the one in Texas.

I don't know how you lose a 10th Amendment, Second Amendment case in Texas. People need to understand we sued on the 10th Amendment to protect the Second Amendment, yes, but also to protect state sovereignty. This is the one thing that really got to me the most.

I understand we're always going to have people believing in gun control. I do not, because it's against the Constitution. However, and I'm not a big gun guy – I never even owned a gun until I was elected sheriff ... But I am a freedom guy. That's all this was about.

And I said that the federal government cannot tell any sheriff what to do. Not me, not the sheriff in Bangor, Maine, or any sheriff across this country. They have no authority. They have no jurisdiction to tell us what to do. And that is where we won.

It pushed the federal government back, but nobody knows about this decision. It's very hidden. Nobody enforces it, and I'm trying to wake the country up to enforce (1) the Constitution, and (2) this decision that just reinforced the Constitution and the principle of Federalism."

The Constitution Protects Us From Our Best Intentions

Had it not been for Mack winning this lawsuit, sheriffs would not have had the legal ability to stand up against tyranny and protect Constitutional rights today. Hundreds of sheriffs have refused to enforce the often ridiculous and biased mandates issued by mayors and governors under the guise of protecting public health.

"One of our best Constitutional sheriffs is Mike Carpinelli out of Lewis County, New York, and he's actually announced¹⁰ that he's going to run against [New York governor Andrew] Cuomo ...

[Carpinelli] is a really solid Constitutional conservative – somebody who actually believes in freedom, who wants to put aside the socialist, communist

takeover of our states and our country, and who really believes in individual liberty."

Another example is sheriff Sharon Wehrly in Nye County, Nevada. She is a lifetime member of the CSPOA. Pam Elliott in Edwards County, Texas, is also a Constitutional sheriff who has gone through CSPOA's training.

"Sheriffs know that when they come to our training, it will change America," Mack says. "I'm going to tell everybody right now; communism and socialism are the antithesis of individual liberty. They do not allow for property rights.

They do not allow for personal freedom. It's all about the state mandating and controlling everything, including your own property. You don't have property under those systems.

Scalia, like I said, went a lot further than I ever thought he would. He said this: 'But the Constitution protects us from our own best intentions.' You would think that quote right there would be enough to get everybody so excited about this case that they would go to our website and buy the reviews of the case.

I have this little pocket sized review, all the highlights, all the best parts of the case, called 'The Victory for State Sovereignty.' You can get that at cspoa.org. You should be passing them out to everyone so that they wake up to this."

The Constitution Protects Us From the Crisis of the Day

In his court decision, Scalia also talked about how the Constitution protects us from the crisis of the day. "It prevents the temptation to concentrate power in one location as an expedient solution to the crisis of the day," he said. And the COVID-19 pandemic is just that, Mack says. It's the crisis of the day.

"How many Americans die from obesity, heart disease and the effects of smoking? About a million a year? Yet we don't make cigarette smoking against the law. Why don't we make obesity against the law? It would be easy to put a

little computer chip in everybody or just have everybody keep their federal obesity card.

When you go to a Dairy Queen, they run it and go, 'Whoops. You can't have a Blizzard today. You had one last week' ... I mean, aren't they going to take care of us? ... Isn't this the same thing as them trying to 'protect us' and make sure that we're all 'safe' by [telling us we must] stay ... in our homes, social distance and wear masks in public?

There's no freedom of choice in any of that ... My message is to all peace officers because we've already seen ... where sheriffs and peace officers across the country are saying, 'I will not force people to do that.'

It might be a good idea to wear a mask. I don't know. But I do know that it has to be up to the individual because liberty is based on the choices that the individual makes, not that the government makes for us.

Even now we have some cities in America, like Englewood, Colorado, that have instituted a rule that if you're not wearing a mask, it's a \$2,600 fine and a year in jail.¹¹ At the same time, we're releasing tens of thousands of convicted hardcore felons so, I guess, we can make room in our prisons for the non-mask wearers."

Americans Jailed and Shot Over Unconstitutional Rules

Among the most egregious overreaches we've seen during this pandemic is the case of a supermarket security guard who shot a customer in the back for refusing to wear a mask. He is now charged with murder.¹² Many of these mask mandates are in direct violation of the Constitution and shouldn't be enforced to begin with, let alone get killed over.

"This is a question I ask on every program. Sheriff [Scott] Nichols in Franklin County, Maine, told his governor, 'We will not make our county a police state. We will not conduct ourselves like Nazi soldiers. We will follow the Constitution.' He was refusing ... social engineering orders ...

The question is, do you want the sheriff in Florida who arrested pastor Howard Brown [for holding church services in violation of stay-at-home order], or do you want the sheriff in Maine who said, 'We won't conduct ourselves like that? We will still respect the rights of the people to make their own choices, even if it's uncomfortable for other people.' Isn't that what liberty is? ...

You would think we already made a law that freedom of religion would be the one principle that we would all agree on, yet we're arresting people in this country, literally, just for going to church ... This is so absurd.

So, which sheriff do you want in your county? The one who will protect your liberty, still educate you as to how you should be careful, but then respect your right to choose for yourself?

I also submit that he actually protects you from other governments trying to arrest you. He protects you from that security guard. They're not actually very well trained. Sometimes cops aren't either, and we need to understand de-escalation, and that we don't shoot somebody over a mask issue, which isn't even a law.

The insanity just seems to get worse and worse every day, and I'm saying, let's go back to American ideals. Let's go back to the Constitution. And we literally train sheriffs and peace officers across this country to follow the Constitution, and to do that you have to know and understand the Constitution, especially the Bill of Rights."

Most of us would probably want a sheriff who will protect your civil liberties and personal freedoms. One area where your local sheriff might end up playing a crucial role is if they roll out forced vaccinations. Undoubtedly, that's the next step in this COVID-19 pandemic.

I believe the orders to wear masks everywhere we go is a preliminary step in that direction. Were rules or laws enacted saying you must get the COVID-19 vaccine or you'll

be barred from various locations, your sheriff would be the one to either comply with such orders or refuse to enforce them.

How Do You Get a Constitutional Sheriff in Your County?

The question then becomes, how do you ensure your local sheriff understands and protects your rights under the Constitution? You basically have two options here. Either vote a Constitutional sheriff in, or educate the one you have.

"We the people need to be involved in that process. Remember, [Thomas] Jefferson said the price of liberty is eternal vigilance. And that's one place where we have failed in this country," Mack says. "We the people have trusted government to take care of liberty. Big mistake.

We were told to never do that. Never trust. I don't care if it's your brother that's in office, never trust anybody in government, including me. Check on me. Always be checking and see what I'm doing, and your public officials should be making that very transparent. This is what I believe. This is what I'm doing."

Mack urges everyone to [join the CSPOA](#) – The Constitutional Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association. Its purpose is to create a partnership between the people, the sheriff and the local law enforcement chiefs. I encourage you to join me in supporting this worthy organization.

Next, you need to vet your candidates. There are just under 3,100 sheriffs in the U.S., and as in all other professions, some are better educated and informed than others. In the case of sheriffs, it's imperative that they understand, and vow to uphold, the Constitution of the United States.

"Be friendly, be tactful, but you need to ask every sheriff candidate running right now if he will be a Constitutional sheriff," Mack says. "You should be able to find that out with one quick phone call, or you can look at their history ...

They need to hear from you, and they need to know you're concerned about this issue. It's great that you go to them and say, 'Sheriff, I'm a member of the CSPOA. I'm on the Constitutional Sheriff's Posse' ... If a sheriff hears from 10 of his constituents, he'll say hundreds of people are calling. They can't ignore you ...

Everybody needs to be a member of the CSPOA. It's the only one out there doing this, and believe me, it's a peaceful and effective solution that is working."

Why Join the CSPOA?

It's important to realize the CSPOA is the only organization of its kind and helps educate sheriffs all around the country. Joining the CSPOA is really one of the most highly leveraged investments you could make to secure your personal liberties.

“ If we get just a third of the sheriffs to do this Constitutional training, we take back American liberty tomorrow. We don't have to wait for another piece of legislation. We don't have to wait for another election. We can do it now, today.”

Their funding comes from private donations and membership fees, which are then used to train sheriffs. The organization doesn't even have any paid employees. But the sheriffs don't flock there by themselves (although some might). The only way the organization can work is by getting citizens involved in the process.

"If people want this solution, become a part of it. The success of this organization is based on your involvement in it, how much time you spend on this, how much money you put into this ...

We want you to have these books. They're tools for liberty. We want you to be able to take a copy of the Supreme Court decision to your sheriff candidate, to

your sheriff forum, and you've got to get going on that because some of these primaries have already happened. You might only have two candidates left, a Democrat and Republican. And you need to find out which one will be a Constitutional sheriff.

I get calls from these candidates all the time. In fact, yesterday I got another one from Florida saying, 'Will you endorse me?' CSPOA does not endorse, but I do. And you need to go [to them] and say, 'Sheriff, have you heard of the Constitutional Sheriffs Association? ... Most of them have already heard about us.

Whether they have or not, you need to ask them, 'Will you be a Constitutional sheriff? Will you protect me from being victimized by other government? Will you protect me if I don't wear a mask in public? Will you protect me if they come and knock on my door and want to come into my home? Will you protect me and my choice to take a vaccination or not?' ...

You need dozens of people to make those calls ... These sheriffs need to create their own policies also, and we train in that. But we train sheriffs to do all this. And we go as far as your donations and your membership fees take us. That's just the simple fact of it."

Don't All Sheriffs Already Know All They Need to Know?

The training CSPOA offers is crucial, as the traditional training sheriffs receive is fairly inadequate with respect to the understanding and appreciation of their oath, which is to protect and uphold Constitutional rights. Many get distracted or confused by the belief or idea that they must enforce things that really are not within their scope of duty.

"Look, we're not going to get every sheriff. We really hope to get about a third of the nation's sheriffs, that's 1,000. If we get just a third of the sheriffs to do this [Constitutional training], we take back American liberty tomorrow. We don't have

to wait for another piece of legislation. We don't have to wait for another election. We can do it now, today," Mack says.

"And so, folks, this is where you come in. The sheriff's position is extremely vital to all of this because he is elected by you. You're the only boss. You're the sheriff's only supervisor. He does not report to anyone else, except you, the voters. And he needs to hear from you. If he never hears from you, he's going to do whatever he wants."

What Does It Mean to Take an Oath?

As explained by Mack, Article 6 in the Constitution requires federal and state peace officers, including state officials, to swear an oath of allegiance to the U.S. Constitution. This is important, because when they do, liberty is protected at every level of government in all three branches.

All agents, on local, state and federal levels, are supposed to be enforcing the principles in the Constitution. Looking around today, it's clear that many do not, and part of the problem is that people do not understand what the oath they're taking actually means.

"How can you take an oath and then not study and know and understand what that means? If you take an oath to the Constitution, that presupposes that you know the Constitution. And that's where the training in law enforcement has failed miserably.

The police academies, ongoing certification training and all agencies in this country do not train at all to understand what your oath means, how you keep your oath, and what our role is in America as peace officers and sheriffs. What our role truly is in protecting liberty.

The place we start is the Declaration of Independence because ... most of us don't even know what form of government we have in America. How can we be a part of protecting the liberties of America when we don't even know what form

of government America has? So, we teach all that. We get rid of all the brainwashing, like 'We're a democracy.' That's brainwashing. That's a lie.

If you take an oath, how will you keep it? And then we go into the Bill of Rights. I'm telling you, if our peace officers in this country understand that quote, 'To secure these rights, governments are instituted among men,' right from the Declaration of Independence, we find what the proper role of government is, and that is to secure God given rights, natural rights, our innate rights. That is the job of every peace officer in this country."

The Best Way to Reform Our Police Force

As noted by Mack, when you get sheriffs and police officers to understand that upholding the Constitution is their actual role, that this is their No. 1 job, the paradigm shifts from kicking in doors and arresting people for not wearing a mask to being a defender of liberty and a guard of the Constitution. It results in a mental paradigm shift.

"That paradigm will make a huge shift and the beneficiary of that will be the American people," Mack says. "The best tool for any situation in de-escalation is the Constitution of the United States of America.

If [police officers] know and understand the Constitution and their role in defending it, then I believe the problems with police brutality are going to disappear in this country, at least diminish extremely ...

Once we understand the principles of freedom that we as peace officers swore an oath to uphold and defend, our job is going to change immensely. If I can enforce the law without beating people into compliance, which I did for 20 years, then every peace officer can do the same.

Isn't it amazing the coincidence that I studied and became a convert to the oath of office and the Constitution back when I was a rookie cop in 1983? When I found out what all that was for, it changed how I viewed my job in law

enforcement, and it really took me from a by-the-numbers jerk to a by, for and of the people peace officer and defender.

This would've never happened to George Floyd if we had officers that truly were converted to why we have peace officers in the first place. And when we understand that my job is to protect liberty ... [then] how we effectuate all those arrests ... will change America ... Getting sheriffs and peace officers in this country to go from the master to the servant is a huge process, and that's what we're doing."

Naturally, once a sheriff has been re-educated and is committed to the principles of being a defender of the Constitution, then they will typically train their entire police department, since the deputies are the ones with boots on the ground, answering most of the calls.

Interestingly, Mack is now also working with a national health freedom organization. His goal with that organization is to start promoting health freedom and food freedom as well, using the Constitution as a guide.

More Information

September 30, 2020, the CSPOA is scheduled to train most of the sheriffs in Virginia at Liberty University in Lynchburg. The Virginia Sheriff's Association helped sponsor that event.

As noted by Mack, if enough people get involved, we can create Constitutional counties and take back America, county by county, one sheriff at a time. Eventually, all the police forces will be on the same page as well, and will no longer enforce unlawful, unconstitutional orders, whatever they might be.

"I believe that this is a ministry of putting people's freedom back where it belongs, and that's with you," Mack says. "We can do this. I promise, we can. We've had so many different success stories throughout this coronavirus

meltdown of American freedom. I love America, and it breaks my heart to see what's going on. Let's rise up together and do something about it."

Join CSPOA Now!

Remember, providing financial support via your membership is just one part of the solution. The more important part is to contact your local sheriff and urge him or her to participate in this process.

A single person can make a major difference, but I encourage you to get your friends and neighbors involved too. The more phone calls or visits your sheriff gets, the more incentive they'll have to get involved and start safeguarding everyone's Constitutional rights and civil liberties against tyrannical overreach.

Not only do we need your support of CSPOA, but we also need you to reach out to your local sheriff to get them onboard. The more people from your local community you get to contact them, the more likely they will listen.

However, as we discuss in the interview, if you live in large urban, Democratic-party controlled centers like Chicago, New York, Los Angeles or Portland, it would likely be a waste of time and a better strategy would be to consider moving to a community that has a Constitutional sheriff.

Sources and References

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- ¹⁰ New York State Sheriff's Association
- ¹¹ New York Post July 9, 2020
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