

Dear Lake County Commissioners,

I am writing to express my strong support for Lake County's adoption of a Bill of Rights Sanctuary Ordinance modeled after the Collier County ordinance that will be placed on the agenda in the near future! I respectfully urge you to give this matter full and fair consideration based on constitutional principles, legal precedent, and the duty of elected officials to uphold their oaths of office.

Whenever a Bill of Rights Sanctuary Ordinance is proposed, it is often met with immediate opposition rooted in misinformation or misunderstanding. Chief among these criticisms is the claim that such an ordinance violates the Supremacy Clause by nullifying federal law. In reality, the ordinance does not nullify federal law, nor does it place county law above it. Rather, it affirms that unconstitutional actions—by any level of government—are not law at all. The Supremacy Clause applies only to laws made “in pursuance” of the Constitution, and local governments retain both the authority and obligation to refuse participation in unconstitutional enforcement.

Another frequent concern is that adoption of this ordinance would jeopardize federal funding, grants, or protections. There is no automatic mechanism by which federal funds are withdrawn simply because a county chooses not to use its own personnel or resources to enforce unconstitutional actions. The ordinance does not reject lawful federal authority; it establishes constitutional guardrails for local participation, which is consistent with long-standing anti-commandeering doctrine recognized by the courts.

Some critics argue that selectively refusing to enforce unconstitutional actions undermines the protection of God-given rights. On the contrary, the ordinance strengthens those protections by requiring county officials to act according to the Constitution rather than deferring blindly to unlawful mandates. Upholding the Constitution is not selective obedience; it is faithful obedience.

Concerns have also been raised that the Sheriff would be “unmoored” from the law or act as a vigilante. This is incorrect. The ordinance does not grant unilateral power or suspend due process. Instead, it provides clear legislative guidance, judicial procedures, and accountability mechanisms so that enforcement decisions are rooted in local law and constitutional analysis—not arbitrary discretion.

It is sometimes said that because we already have a Constitution, a county ordinance is unnecessary. However, history has repeatedly shown that constitutional violations often occur at the local level during emergencies or crises, as seen during the 2020 shutdowns. An ordinance serves as a practical tool to ensure the Constitution is enforced when it matters most, not merely acknowledged in theory.

A declaration, proclamation, or resolution lacks the legal force necessary to protect rights or establish enforceable standards. An ordinance, by contrast, provides jurisdiction, process, and remedies—ensuring violations can be addressed lawfully and consistently.

Claims that the ordinance protects only the first ten amendments or nullifies later amendments are also unfounded. The ordinance affirms the entire Constitution and all amendments, applying constitutional scrutiny to any action that infringes upon the rights of the people.

Concerns about personal liability, insurance, or lawfare are likewise overstated. Elected officials acting within the scope of a duly enacted ordinance and their constitutional duties are not acting recklessly or unlawfully. Clear legislative standards reduce liability by providing guidance, not increasing it.

For these reasons, the Bill of Rights Sanctuary Ordinance should be viewed not as radical or defiant, but as prudent, constitutional, and necessary. Its adoption would:

- Empower elected officials to honor their oaths of office
- Prevent unconstitutional government overreach by officials and their agents
- Protect all constitutional rights, not just those addressed in single-issue resolutions
- Guard against future emergency abuses similar to those seen in 2020
- Establish clear local jurisdiction and enforcement mechanisms
- Provide judicial clarity and due process
- Equip the Sheriff with lawful authority to enforce constitutional protections through local legislation

At its core, this ordinance is about accountability, clarity, and fidelity to the Constitution. It does not divide authority; it reinforces the rule of law at the level closest to the people.

Thank you for your service to Lake County and for your careful consideration of this important matter.

Respectfully,