



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on August 19, 2020

New Jersey Gym Owners Expecting to Be Arrested; Barriers to Be Installed by State

The owners of Atilis Gym in Bellmawr, New Jersey, [are expecting to be arrested before this day is out](#). They are also expecting the state to move barriers in front of their gym to keep them and their customers out.

Back in May New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy decided to make the owners an example for anyone else daring to defy his stay-at-home edicts.

When Murphy learned of the intransigence of the two owners, Frank Trumbetti and Ian Smith, he said, "I'm not concerned [that the situation in Bellmawr] will spiral out of control. If it does, we will take action." And then, addressing the violators directly, he added: "If you show up at that gym tomorrow [May 25] ... we will ... enforce this."

Murphy should have quit while he was ahead. He didn't know whom he was targeting. Smith said, "We're opening up tomorrow morning, no matter what."

When sheriffs boarded up the gym the owners kicked the boards aside, posting the event on Instagram along with this directed to Murphy: "You will not trample on our rights.... We will not back down. Ever."

The town council got into the act and voted last week to rescind their business license. Smith took them on as well: "The Borough of Bellmawr is now an adversary, and they will be dealt with.... They will be served papers.... [They] are going to have to answer for what they've done." And the owners opened without the license.

Smith was a guest on New Jersey 101.5 talk show yesterday, and he took on the governor:

It's just Murphy showing that he will go to no end to enforce his will, even though he still, to date, has had no evidence to support that Atilis Gym Bellmawr or any other gym or any other small business that he still has shut down, is of any danger to the public.

The host relayed a message from the state's attorney general to Smith:

Gym owners — like everyone else — must do their part and follow the law. As we've said before, we're in the middle of a global pandemic, yet these defendants have defied multiple court orders designed to protect the public.

We hope that today's order puts an end to this dispute.

Not a chance, said Smith:

Stop blaming me for the mistakes that your public health agency and Governor Murphy made in the





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nursing homes. Because if it wasn't for that, [the state's] numbers wouldn't be where they're at, and he would have the argument he has, and he still doesn't have a good argument.

When the host asked Smith just how far they were willing to go, Smith said:

We're gonna take this all the way to the Supreme Court and whatever comes along with that. If he wants to lock us up and he wants to continue to throw these fines at us [presently \$130,000 and climbing by \$15,000 a day] ... I mean he's openly admitted that these fines are so high because he's looking to cripple our ability to defend ourselves.

Later that day Smith challenged Murphy on Instagram:

Charge us with over 36 criminal offenses, fine us, lock us out of our business, arrest us, arrest our customers, barricade our doors closed, strip our license, and do everything you can to ruin our lives.

156 days into the 14 days you asked for, Governor Murphy, and you've done all these things. But the one thing you - as an elected official - that you didn't do, was to come and speak to us.

You only seek to punish. A true leader listens to the people. We will be here, exercising the same constitutional rights you trample on.

We will stand our ground. This is not a game. These are our lives.

As this article is being published, the owners are still waiting to be arrested, again, and for the state to install the barricades to keep them and their customers out. It's clear that they will do whatever it takes to get a court to rule on Murphy's unconstitutional edicts, hoping it moves to the Supreme Court. Trumbetti and Smith are prepared to take it all the way.

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