



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on April 21, 2023

Southern Baptist Convention Urges Expansion of Red Flag Law Following Covenant School Shooting

Michael Foust [reported for Christian Headlines](#) on Thursday that 13 Southern Baptist Convention leaders and pastors signed onto [a letter from the SBC](#) urging Tennessee's Republican-controlled Legislature to pass an expansion of the state's red flag law. The letter tells the legislators opposing the expansion to man up and pass the increased infringement before the session ends.

"You have," intoned Brent Leatherwood, president of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, "an opportunity now to respond [to the Covenant School shooting] in a way that is loving, protective of our liberties, and consistent with God's design for the state."

The expansion of the state's present egregious infringement of the Second and Fourth Amendments to the Constitution of the United States would include family members. This would, according to Leatherwood, "strengthen our state's [existing] orders of protection [i.e., red flag law] to guard the broader population from those who are a danger to themselves or others."

And just how would such a danger be determined? According to [WBBJ](#):

[The expansion would allow] a court to issue a risk protection order [a gun confiscation order] *upon a finding by clear and convincing evidence* that a person poses a significant danger of causing personal injury to the person or others if allowed to possess or purchase a firearm.... [Emphasis added.]

And who could "petition" for the infringement?

[It] authorizes a law enforcement officer *or a relative* [of the person at risk of losing his firearms] to petition for a risk protection order. [Emphasis added.]

Dear reader: Please notice that no crime has been committed by the targeted person. And the standard under which his rights would be violated would be greatly lowered. A Tennessean presently has his Fourth Amendment rights guaranteed under the U.S. Constitution:

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, *but upon probable cause*, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the



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place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

According to Cornell Law School, “Courts usually find probable cause when there is a reasonable basis for believing *that a crime may have been committed ... or when evidence of the crime is present* in the place to be searched....” (Emphasis added.)

Under the proposed infringement, only a “finding by clear and convincing evidence” is necessary for the targeted citizen to lose his firearms.

Red flag laws are in effect “pre-crime” laws, targeting individuals who “may” pose a “significant danger” to himself or to others.

Leatherwood ignores any of these concerns in his letter. Instead, he declares that such laws “prevent the loss of innocent lives without eroding our cherished, fundamental rights.” In fact, he charges that not passing the expanded infringement of the Second Amendment may actually strengthen it:

In fact, because this solution [to the problem of deranged individuals like the “transgender” who murdered six at the Covenant School last month] is so clearly situated in the mental health arena, by not passing [the expanded infringement], you [legislators] risk undermining support for the Second Amendment.

One pastor who wasn’t buying any of this is Chuck Baldwin, senior pastor of Liberty Fellowship in Kalispell, Montana:

So now the Tennessee Southern Baptist Convention has come out in full force in support of what can only be categorized as one of the most egregiously unconstitutional and unbiblical assaults on individual liberty and the right and duty of God-ordained self-defense that one could name: Red Flag gun confiscation laws....

Brent Leatherwood has proven to the world that he is totally and thoroughly ignorant of God’s Natural Laws of Liberty and of the repeated instruction of God’s Revealed Word regarding the Christian duty of Liberty and self-defense.

Leatherwood might as well be a liberal, socialist Democrat, because he has lent his support to an egregious, socialist Democrat, un-American gun control law that will, without due process and without a man even committing a crime, take away his God-given right to defend himself and others.

An individual intent on committing a heinous crime will not be deterred. The law will only put at risk an individual who may be targeted by an estranged family member or a law enforcement officer for unspecified concerns revealed only to a judge without that individual being present (or even being aware of the petition filed against him).

Wrote Baldwin:

Evil minds intent on inflicting harm on their fellow man deliberately select places where their intended targets will be unarmed.

Giving the government the authority to disarm free men and women—men and women who



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have never committed a crime—only serves to turn those individuals, and the friends and families who could have been protected by those lawfully armed citizens, into potential defenseless victims of future violence against them.

In other words, red flag laws have the perverse potential of increasing the chances of gun violence by removing the means of self-defense from those whom criminals may be targeting.

Baldwin continued:

Leatherwood also said, “While it may not prevent every instance of this sort of violence, it will prevent some, and thereby save innocent lives. That should be more than enough reason to advance this proposal.”

That’s utter nonsense! That’s the same argument that every dictator in the world uses to enact their totalitarian disarmament and enslavement tyrannies upon their people.

Baldwin concluded:

No man or government of men has the lawful authority to disarm a free citizen until such time as that citizen has demonstrated via an act of violent aggression his forfeiture of his right to be armed.

All of these “pre-crime” police actions are unlawful and unjust to the laws of God and Nature.

At the moment the latest infringement festering in committee in Tennessee is not likely to pass, thanks to the session ending — but no thanks to the misguided “conservative” Southern Baptists taking the side of anti-gun tyrants and their political enablers intent on steadily diminishing citizens’ Second Amendment rights.



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