



Uniting Citizens to Conserve, Protect and Enhance Michigan's Natural Resources and Outdoor Heritage
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Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson
430 W. Allegan St.
Richard H. Austin Building - 4th Floor
Lansing, MI 48918

Dear Secretary Benson,

Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) is a 501(c)3 grassroots conservation organization representing more than 200 affiliate clubs and 40,000 members in the state of Michigan. Founded in 1937, our mission is to unite citizens to conserve, protect and enhance Michigan's natural resources and outdoor heritage.

We are reaching out to you to express our concerns on the recent directive from your office to local election officials disallowing open carry of a firearm within 100 feet of a polling place entrance or exit, inside any polling place or in any hallway used to access a polling place.

The process by which this directive was issued offered no time or opportunity for public comment or stakeholder engagement. The need for transparency resonates through all levels of government, and this sweeping edict issued only weeks before election day sets a dangerous precedent for government officials.

MUCC has numerous member-passed policies in place supporting the Second Amendment, with no exceptions. Much like your office, we want voters to feel empowered and safe when heading to their polling place, while still being allowed to exercise their constitutional rights.

Given the time of year, firearms are ubiquitous among our members. With hunting seasons in full-swing, hunters and trappers are consistently moving firearms to and from vehicles, carrying firearms and transporting firearms to hunting locations. We have concern that merely transporting a firearm or moving a firearm within a vehicle could be misconstrued as "intimidation" per your directive by those who may be reporting incidents to law enforcement.

The unilateral directive handed down to local election officials is confusing and not based in statute. Areas that, by law, are traditionally open to open-carry persons are now being closed to our members' constitutional and statutory rights.

Furthermore, law enforcement and prosecution of "orders" or "directives," without clear statutory authority, has proven time and time again throughout the pandemic to not be binding in a court of law.

Michigan is an open-carry state — our legislative and executive branches have passed laws protecting this right. The recent directive will cause confusion, resentment, animosity and

possible illegitimate prosecution among our members who choose to exercise their constitutional right to open carry where legal.

Our members have spoken loud and clear over the years; restricting firearms where they would otherwise be allowed is unconstitutional and against our organization's policies.

MUCC opposes the directive and the process by which it was handed down from your office and strongly urges you to consider withdrawing it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Amy Trotter". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Amy Trotter, *MUCC Executive Director*