



Judge Rules Illinois Governor Exceeded His Authority with Stay-At-Home Order

Darren Bailey, a farmer and Representative in the Illinois State Legislature, won his lawsuit that challenged Governor JB Pritzker's authority to extend his stay-at-home order beyond the initial 30 days. Judge Michael McHaney ruled that Pritzker was prohibited "from in any way enforcing the March 20 executive order against Darren Bailey forcing him to isolate and quarantine in his home." Bailey said that citizens are "overwhelmed" and "scared to death" not of the COVID-19 virus, but of losing their livelihoods. Illinois is counting anyone who died and merely suspected of having COVID-19 is being called a COVID-19 death. In spite of that policy, the statewide death toll is only 1,983, much lower than typical seasonal flu. -GEG

Political divisions over Gov. J.B. Pritzker's statewide stay-at-home restrictions were on full display Monday, as a judge issued a temporary injunction allowing a Republican legislator to disregard the order, a decision Pritzker quickly denounced while forcefully defending his actions to fight the coronavirus pandemic.

The ruling by Clay County Circuit Court Judge Michael McHaney came in a lawsuit filed by Rep. Darren Bailey that challenged Pritzker's authority to extend his stay-at-home order beyond

the initial 30 days under the state's Emergency Management Act.

While the ruling applied only to Bailey, it could open the door for other Illinois residents to seek similar relief from the stay-at-home order, with McHaney's injunction as a justification.

In seeking the injunction, Bailey said he is "irreparably harmed each day he is subjected to" Pritzker's executive order, and asked the judge to enjoin the governor or anyone under his authority from enforcing it against him.

McHaney's ruling said Pritzker was prohibited "from in any way enforcing the March 20 executive order against Darren Bailey forcing him to isolate and quarantine in his home," or any subsequent orders that would do the same.

At his daily coronavirus news briefing, Pritzker vigorously attacked Bailey, accusing him of acting for political reasons and ignoring the medical threat of the virus. Pritzker promised a quick appeal of the judge's ruling and said he would carry the fight "to the furthest extent possible."

"People are in danger as a result of this ruling, of the judge's ruling of the suit that was brought by Darren Bailey," Pritzker said.

"We certainly are going to act in a swift fashion to try to have this ruling overturned, certainly put a stay in place," the governor said. "I mean it's, frankly, it's insulting, it's dangerous, and people's safety and health has now been put at risk. There may be people who contract coronavirus as a result of what Darren Bailey has done now."

Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot also slammed the judge's ruling, which she called "troubling," and said it could give "the wrong impression that we have beaten the COVID-19 pandemic."

“Nothing about today’s ruling will change the city’s intention to continue imposing the stay at home restrictions,” she said in a statement.

Attorney General Kwame Raoul’s office is “reviewing the order and considering our options for appeal in consultation with the governor’s office,” spokeswoman Annie Thompson said.

Illinois has been under a statewide stay-at-home order since March 21, placing broad restrictions on residents and businesses the order deems “nonessential,” aimed at curbing the spread of highly contagious COVID-19. Illinois was the second state to announce such a far-reaching statewide action, though the majority of states have since followed suit and instituted some statewide restrictions.

Pritzker announced last week he would extend the stay-at-home order through May 30, with some modifications due to take effect Friday.

Pritzker on Monday encouraged municipal leaders and residents across the state “to follow the advice of our scientists here in Illinois and across the nation,” and continue obeying the directives set out in the stay-at-home order.

“History will remember those who put politics aside to come together to keep people safe. It will also remember those who, so blindly devoted to ideology and the pursuit of personal celebrity, that they made an enemy of science, and of reason,” Pritzker said Monday.

In an interview later Monday afternoon, Bailey said he believes the judge’s ruling should apply to everyone in the state and encouraged others to take legal action similar to his own.

“If people want to, if anyone wants to file any kind of similar suit in their home county or in their circuit, they can certainly do that,” Bailey said. “What I’m doing is

challenging the constitutionality of the governor, of what he's been doing."

Read full article here..