

# Hunter Nation and Lakeshore Business Association: Statement on Supreme Court ruling

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Madison...Two non-profit organizations that work to protect the rights of anglers and hunters in Wisconsin praised the decision today from the State Supreme Court that overruled Governor Evers' and Secretary Nalm's Emergency Orders that had classified thousands of small businesses as "non-essential."

In the original brief, Hunter Nation and the Wisconsin Lakeshore Business Association called the Governor's order that had shut off access to fishing for thousands of professional fishing guides, charter boat captains and their clients as "arbitrary and capricious and a clear violation of our constitutionally protected rights."

Hunter Nation President and CEO, Luke Hilgemann said, "Today is a great day for the fundamental freedoms sportsmen fought to protect by instilling them in our state's constitution. We thank the Court for providing clear guidance that our state's fishing economy is "essential" - as are all businesses and jobs in Wisconsin."

WLBA President Tom Kleiman of Kewaunee said, "We applaud the Court's decision and thank them for standing up for charter, and guide fishing businesses. This ruling brings clarity to not only the fishing industry but all businesses in Wisconsin. The WLBA was proud to stand with Hunter Nation defending the rights of Wisconsin

sportsmen and Wisconsin businesses! We wish to thank all that stood with us and our members especially Attorney Adam Jarchow.”

Attorney Adam Jarchow, who volunteered to take the lead in writing the brief pro-bono for the groups had the following to say: “This is a great day for liberty and a vindication of the rule of law. I’m thrilled that hardworking small business owners like the sport fishing guides can get back to work.”

The brief filed by the two groups included more than a dozen Wisconsin fishing guides, charter boat captains and their clients who have been impacted by the Governor’s order. Wisconsin is home to nearly 2,000 licensed professional guides and Charter Boat Captains who make their living providing advice and guidance to hundreds of thousands of anglers every year.

Head of the Wisconsin chapter of Hunter Nation, Tyler Ruhland said, “We want to extend our deep appreciation to the dozens of small business owners who courageously stepped forward to be named in our brief. It’s their voices and stories that personified our arguments for the Court. Wisconsin hunters, anglers, and trappers can be assured that if our rights are in jeopardy, Hunter Nation will be there to defend them to the fullest extent of our abilities.”

Wisconsin voters passed a constitutional right to fish, hunt, trap and take game in 2003 by a margin of 82-18. Twenty other states have passed similar constitutional protections for outdoor pursuits as well. The Wisconsin constitution states:

“Right to fish, hunt, trap, and take game. SECTION 26: The people have the right to fish, hunt, trap, and take game subject only to reasonable restrictions as prescribed by law.”

Today's ruling from the Wisconsin State Supreme Court is the first such ruling affirming these rights since its passage in 2003.

Hunter Nation is a member driven non-profit that fights to preserve God, Family, Country and the Traditional American Values that protect our Outdoor Lifestyle. The group has more than 20,000 members from all 50 states, 2,200 of whom reside in Wisconsin.

Wisconsin Lakeshore Business Association was created to sustain Lake Michigan's world class fishery and works diligently with the Wisconsin DNR to achieve those ends. WLBA provides a unified voice for private fishermen, shore anglers, and many other businesses and communities that rely on a robust healthy fishery.