

Rep. Sortwell: Evers' actions lawless

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Two Rivers - Rep. Shae Sortwell (R-Gibson) released the following statement in response to Thursday's declaration by Governor Evers to extend the "Safer at Home" order beyond the bounds of state law.

"The Governor's actions today cross the boundary from chaotic and arbitrary to lawlessness," said Rep. Sortwell. "State law is clear. The Governor cannot extend his emergency authority beyond 60 days without the consent and approval of the Legislature. Nor can he use a secretary or administrative officer to subvert the legal requirement of legislative approval. The people of Wisconsin elect a Governor to execute the laws, not to disregard the laws and act like a king.

"Wisconsinites have put up with a lot of attacks on our rights in recent weeks. We are seeing reports of law enforcement shutting down peaceful protests. Wisconsinites have a right to assemble and petition their government, and our Constitution is clear: it says those rights **will never be abridged.**

"The Capitol - the people's house - has been closed to the public. My constituents tell me that the Governor's voicemail has been full for days and no one answers the phone. How can they petition their government if they do not have access to it?

"Our Constitution also states that Wisconsinites' right to worship **shall never be abridged... nor shall any control of, or interference with, the rights of conscience be permitted.** Yet Wisconsinites had those Constitutional guarantees obliterated during the Holiest days of the year, during Easter and Passover.

"The Governor has arbitrarily shut down some businesses in our state - effectively seizing them without our guarantee to due process of the law, in the State Constitution and the 14th Amendment.

“The Governor has arbitrarily closed some of the state parks, many of which are on our waterways. Our Constitution declares unequivocally that these waters are **common highways and forever free**.

“All of these actions occur without any communication with the Legislature, and without any regard to the laws or the Constitution of our state. The Governor is not above the law, and must be held accountable. The pleasure of serving as the Governor does not come before our laws. The Governor does not have the authority to declare an indefinite emergency, and this despotic action will be fought to the fullest extent in the courts.”

Representative Sortwell is available for comment.