



FRANK WHITE, JR.
Jackson County Executive

July 29, 2024

Dear Members of the Jackson County Legislature,

I hope this correspondence finds you well. As you prepare for your committee meetings and legislative session today, I want to bring to your attention concerns regarding a proposed piece of legislation that is under consideration.

At issue is Ordinance 5865, which seeks to add to the Jackson County Code a provision that restricts firearm possession for individuals aged 18-21. The prevalence of gun violence in our community is staggering and I am deeply committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of our residents. However, we must approach this challenge with integrity and respect for the rule of law. This proposed legislation goes against those fundamental principles.

The County Counselor's Office has issued an opinion, attached, stating that Ordinance 5865 violates state law, is unenforceable and exposes the County to potential lawsuits, namely by the Attorney General's Office, which has history of suing municipalities over such gun restrictions. This proposed ordinance puts the County in an unnecessary legal battle that will burden the taxpayers with the costs of a legal defense that we will lose and the legal expenses and damages of the plaintiffs.

Despite being fully aware of these legal shortcomings, the sponsor of this ordinance chose to proceed, prioritizing performative politics over honest public service. This is a dangerous disservice to our community. Our focus should be on real solutions that genuinely enhance public safety without misleading the public or wasting taxpayer money.

As a legislative body, you have the opportunity to do what's right and heed the warning of our County Counselor's Office. I urge you to today to oppose Ordinance 5865 and work together on lawful, effective measures to protect our residents.

Sincerely,

Frank White, Jr.
Jackson County Executive