



June 12, 2020

The Honorable Preston D. Cole

Secretary, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Dear Secretary Cole,

We recently learned of a situation in Oneida County where your department told the Oneida County Sheriff that their longstanding Hunter Education courses that were scheduled for later this month would not be recognized by the department due to Governor Evers' Covid-19 restrictions – even though there are no enforceable orders statewide.

On behalf of nearly 3,000 members of Hunter Nation who reside in the great state of Wisconsin, we are calling on you and your department to immediately allow these courses to move forward as scheduled.

We hope this is not a decision that impacts all Hunter Education and field training courses statewide.

To block an entire class of young people and adults from participating in our longstanding outdoor traditions, jeopardizes our hunting heritage and may be a violation of our constitutionally protected right to hunt, trap, and fish.

Earlier this week, Governor Evers' said he "encouraged people to get outside and exercise their rights" in regards to protests that have taken place in Madison and Milwaukee. We would hope that it's not the position of your department or the Evers' administration to say it's ok for protesters to exercise their first amendment rights, but it's not ok for hunters to exercise their second amendment rights or their constitutionally protected right to hunt.

Clearly, this makes no sense and we call on you as the Secretary of our Natural Resources Department to immediately re-open these vital courses for the next generation of Wisconsin hunters.

We stand ready to work with your department, other hunting groups and local ranges to make these courses safe, readily available and fully open to capture the opportunity to get more folks into our great outdoors.

Sincerely,

Luke Hilgemann
President/CEO
Hunter Nation

Tyler Ruhland
Wisconsin State Director
Hunter Nation