

Lansing State Journal (Michigan)

July 3, 2011 Sunday

Repeal state's emergency manager law

BYLINE: By, Jay Johnson

SECTION: OPINION

LENGTH: 496 words

Jay Johnson

is an attorney who has retired after practicing law in Washington, D.C. He now lives in Empire.

In elementary school, I learned to "pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands ..."

In junior high school, I learned that a "republic" is a specific form of democracy in which eligible voters elect officials to act as their representatives in adopting laws and setting public policy.

In high school, I learned that English taxation of the American colonists "without representation" in Parliament was a principal cause of the Boston Tea Party and the American Revolution that soon followed.

In college and law school, I learned much more about the U.S. Constitution, including Article IV, Section 4, which reads in part: "The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union, a Republican Form of Government ..."

With this basic understanding of our republican democracy, I turn to Michigan's new emergency manager law, P.A.4, that greatly expands the authority of Gov. Rick Snyder to allow him (and his successors) to abrogate - unilaterally, indefinitely and much more comprehensively than before - the fundamental rights of Michigan citizens to enjoy an elected, republican form of government at the local level.

Under this legislation, Governor Snyder has "deposed" - no other word will do - the local government of Benton Harbor that was elected by the voters and he has replaced that government with an unelected bureaucrat who will decide how that city's local taxes are spent.

Right now, Benton Harbor residents are in the same position as the American colonists in 1775 - they are paying local taxes, but they have no representation in a local legislative body that will decide how their taxes are

spent.

My pocket copy of the Constitution was published in 2002 by the **Cato Institute**, a libertarian think tank in Washington, D.C. While I don't subscribe to all of Cato's doctrines, I do wholeheartedly agree with the following prefatory

statement. "Government officials must respect their oaths to uphold the Constitution; and we the people must be vigilant in seeing that they do."

It is time for "we the people" of Michigan to repeal P.A. 4 by referendum. Petitions are now circulating.

If you are a registered Michigan voter, please seek out and sign a petition to restore republican democracy to every layer of Michigan government.

In 1787, after the Constitutional Convention had concluded, Benjamin Franklin was asked what form of government the founding fathers had created.

He is said to have replied: "A Republic, if you can keep it."

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"Stand Up for Democracy" is offering training for those who want to circulate petitions to repeal Public Act 4, Michigan's emergency manager law.