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E.L.A., Per. 5/6

December 19 2017

Should one's freedom to assemble be taken away?

Citizens around the country fear that the nation they live in will soon strip them of their long-established rights. As lawmakers plan to pass a bill that would curb the freedom to assemble of the people. According to a The Washington Post article, "Republican lawmakers introduce bills to curb protesting in at least 18 states" by Christopher Ingraham, lawmakers intend to pass a bill in 18 states after protests, like the Dakota Access Pipeline one, that will violate the freedom to assemble of the people. A bill intended to subdue protests after several mass movements have arose should not be passed because it puts state law at the same level as federal law, progress is made through protests, and it contradicts the United States constitution.

First of all, a bill intended to silence the masses should not be allowed because it puts state law at the same level as federal law. In the United States, the power of the country is divided among federal and state governments. Despite the fact that the states are given power, federal law can overthrow it. "The Constitution is the "supreme law of the land;" no other law passed by any of the states can trump the Constitution"(Article 6 Section 2, Constitution). The term "supreme law of the land" indicates that the federal government has more power than the states. The passing of this law would counteract that established order, and allow the states to give themselves more power than necessary. Setting up a sense of equality between the two governments could lead to an anarchy, and cause more harm than if that had not been passed to begin with. Additionally, the

states could argue for a case regarding this bill. However, the freedom to assemble would have to be ruled unconstitutional; “ But (2), states may not block federal authorities who attempt to enforce a federal law unless a court has held that the law is unconstitutional” (Cato Institute). Lawmakers are implying that the freedom to assemble is unconstitutional. However, the removal of that freedom would be unconstitutional. The freedom to assemble allows the people to rally and advocate what they believe in. The approval of this bill would condemn the people to a tyrannical government in which they are not allowed to speak their minds. Yet again, this would give state law supreme power, and diminish the authority of the central government. All in all, a bill intended to violate the freedom to assemble should not be allowed because it belittles the central government, and neglects the fact that protests lead to positive changes in the society.

Furthermore, the passing of this bill would be irrational since progress is made through protests. When there are protests, the community comes together, and unites to create a change in society. Everyone will gather to positively contribute to society, “The largest gathering of indigenous nations in modern American history has set up a camp on land belonging to the Army Corps of engineers, and others at the confluence of the Cannonball and Missouri Rivers in North Dakota” (NBC News). This shows that when the people of the community are in need, they are to protect and help each other. If this law were passed, the people would not be able to do so because they would be harshly fined or punished differently. The community would be silenced, and there would be no way for citizens to right the wrongs that have been done to the less powerful. Additionally, these mass movements make a change, and it would be irrational to strip the people of that ability. “ The Army Corps halts construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline and says it intends to issue an environmental impact statement with “full public input and analysis”

before it approves the river crossing at Lake Oahe” (Southern California Public Radio). As a result of the masses gathering to protests a pipeline that could potentially harm the environment, its construction was passed. After camping out on the construction site, there was progress; regardless of the progress being minimal, there was change. Negligence of the power and ability of the people to make a change in their society would bridge off the passing of this bill. There would be an uprising and the blame would fall on the country and government as a whole. Lawmakers say “Restrictions are for the safety of the people, “ however, why not restrict the power of the police? Teargas, and other harmful chemicals are commonly used by the police to subdue the crowd. If the politicians were truly looking out for the safety of the people, why would they tolerate police officers using violence to calm down the crowds? Even if progress is not made through some protests, the people are still allowed to do so according to the First Amendment.

Lastly, a bill intended to silence the masses should be prohibited because it contradicts the United States Constitution. When the Constitution was first created, the founding fathers made sure that the citizens of their future country would have freedoms that they did not have. For instance, and the First Amendment of the Constitution, “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or the Press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.” The Congress or the individual states cannot make any laws that would violate the freedom to assemble. If this bill were passed, it would be breaking a lot established by the First Amendment, and completely go against what the founding fathers wanted the United States to represent. The freedom of the people to assemble is so valued that it is mentioned more than once in the constitution. In the Preamble of the United States Constitution it

states, “ ... promote the general welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our posterity...” The delegates were very invested in ensuring the wellbeing of the people, along with their freedoms. They wanted to ensure that the people would have Liberty, and that no government would ever take that from them. A new law intended to do the complete opposite of what the Constitution states is absurd. This law will contradict everything the Constitution advocates, and what the country was meant to protect and stand for.

To conclude, the people's right to assemble should never be threatened. Doing so would make state End federal law equal, changes are made through Mass Gathering so would be irrational, and it disregard the First Amendment. If this bill were to be passed, the nation would be silenced; There would be no way for the people to express their beliefs. If there was a law that the people disagreed with, and wanted to change, there would be no way to do so. Any unauthorized Gatherings would lead to fines and other punishments. All in all, if this bill were past, the residents of those States will be silenced, and there would be no way for them to Advocate their beliefs. They're free government would soon turn tyrannical