

TWENTY-EIGHTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT OF VIRGINIA



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SAGE B. JOHNSON, JUDGE
DEANIS L. SIMMONS, JUDGE
ERIC R. THIESSEN, JUDGE
JEFFREY L. CAMPBELL, JUDGE
C. RANDALL LOWE, RETIRED

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

July 7, 2026

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In Re: Santolla, et al v. Katz, et al – *Amendment to June 29th Letter Opinion*
Washington County Circuit Court Case No. CL26-1139

Counsel:

This matter was set for a hearing by the Court for today upon the parties' disagreement as to the verbiage of the proposed Order. Plaintiff's counsel, Mr. Porter, Mr. Kruse and Mr. Stanley and Ms. Burgess of the Attorney General's Office appeared via Webex. The crux of the disagreement was premised upon the Court's scope of the injunction. Plaintiff's version of the proposed Order entertains an Order of universal application across all of the Commonwealth. Conversely, the Commonwealth's version of the proposed Order would limit the scope of the injunction only to the named Defendants herein.

Virginia courts have traditionally disfavored enforcing injunctions against non-parties in the absence of evidence that the non-party is so intertwined in the action being enjoined and has actual knowledge of the same to the extent that they are essentially acting as an agent or in concert with a party. *See Powell v. Ward, 15 Va. App. 553 (1993)*. In the case at bar, the Plaintiffs seek this Court to enjoin all of law enforcement across the Commonwealth from

enforcing the provisions of the Bans, including those persons and their agencies or offices regardless of whether they are parties to this litigation. Essentially, the Plaintiffs argue for the award of a universal injunction prohibiting enforcement of the same across all localities and covering every corner of the Commonwealth.

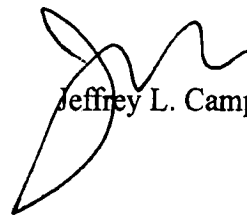
This is a case of first impression from the Court's research of the same. On the facts of this case and the matters pending in other judicial circuits in the Commonwealth, the Court is concerned that the scope of its limited prior ruling raises the proposition of whether the Plaintiffs herein can be afforded complete relief as sought herein. By way of example, the newly enacted statute will ban transport of "assault weapons" within the Commonwealth. The redefinition of "assault weapon" will necessarily ban firearms that were previously allowed to be transported freely throughout the Commonwealth without fear of criminal prosecution. Should this Court's prior ruling be limited only to party defendants herein, a person could freely transport an AR-15 through Washington County without fear of running afoul of the law. However, if they crossed the county line into Grayson County then, arguably, they could be charged for the same since the coverage of the injunction would not extend therein. This Court has concerns about the treacherous patchwork of enforcement that this may lead to for the Plaintiffs and law enforcement alike and whether this ruling should be amplified to include, universally, all of the Commonwealth and law enforcement agencies within the same.

Although no court in the Commonwealth has had the opportunity to directly examine the universal applicability of injunctions such as the one sought herein, the U.S. Supreme Court has recently had an opportunity within the past year to be called upon to determine the validity of universal injunctions within the context of the litigation involving birthright citizenship and the Trump Administration's attempts to regulate the same by executive order. See *Trump v. CASA, Inc.*, 606 U.S. 831 (2025). In the *CASA* case, several U.S. District Courts had issued injunctions preventing the Government from enforcing the provisions of President Trump's Executive Order No. 14160. On a 6-3 decision, the Supreme Court held that "Universal injunctions likely exceed the equitable authority that Congress has granted to federal courts. The equitable relief available in federal courts is that traditionally accorded by courts of equity at the time of the founding. Nothing like a universal injunction was available at the founding, or for that matter, for more than a century thereafter. Thus, under the Judiciary Act of 1789, federal courts lack authority to issue them." Without deciding the constitutionality of a universal injunction, the Supreme Court decided the matter upon the procedural grounds that U.S. District Courts are creatures of statute and that Congress had never granted to them express jurisdiction to issue such injunctions.

Applying the Supreme Court's holding in *CASA* to the case at bar, by analogy, it would appear that for this Court to have solid footing to issue a universal injunction, there would need to be an enabling statute, under Virginia law, granting such authority to this Court. Indeed Chapter 24 of Title 8.01 of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, gives a broad grant of

authority to Circuit Courts to award injunctions, within and without of the Circuit, and in matters involving statewide application. *See §8.01-620, et seq.* Clearly, the General Assembly intended injunctions to be a means of relief to protect plaintiffs and their property from irreparable harm. Partial relief would not suffice, in this Court's view, to achieve the intent of this statute within the context of the facts of this case. Accordingly, the Court now finds that to afford complete relief to the Plaintiffs herein, the injunction imposed by the Court's prior ruling shall be extended to statewide application and enjoin all law enforcement agencies of the Commonwealth and its localities, to include law enforcement officers as defined in §9.1-101 of the Code of Virginia and Commonwealth Attorneys from enforcement of the provisions of the Bans within all localities and jurisdictions of the Commonwealth on the same terms and conditions as otherwise set forth in the Court's prior letter opinion. Although one would think that one would have to be living under a rock not to be aware of these proceedings and their like across both the Commonwealth and the nation, this Court recognizes that reasonable notice of this injunction should be given to all of law enforcement prior to the onset of the terms of the same. Accordingly, the Court will Order that the Clerk provide notice of the statewide application of this injunction by delivery of a copy teste of the Order Granting Injunction to all law enforcement officers as defined in §9.1-101 of the Code of Virginia and Commonwealth's Attorney's Offices within the Commonwealth. The Court will amend the onset date of this injunction to July 21, 2026 to allow adequate time for delivery of the same.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey L. Campbell, Judge

cc: Counsel of record
Clerk of Court