



Let's Make Everything Safe for Everyone Always and Forever!

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By: David Stokes

One consistent article of modern government at all levels and parties is the constant need to protect people in every way imaginable. [St. Charles County](#) is getting [in on the act](#) with a bill (I can't find a link to it) to regulate swimming pools, tanning salons, martial arts studios, fitness centers, and spas. Not all parts of this bill are bad, and by modern standards of government the regulations strike me as reasonable. Swimming pools are dangerous, as brilliantly demonstrated in the book "[Freakonomics.](#)" What troubles me is the fact that the bill has so many silly aspects, like regulating martial arts studios □ although, in defense of St. Charles, the proposed regulations don't seem particularly burdensome.

Of course, that's how they get you. Unburdensome regulations that nobody objects to set the precedent for regulation of an industry, occupation or business, and then when government ramps up the regulations you have already lost the first argument. There is a disturbing comment in the article from County Councilman Dan Foust:

"It would be a great opportunity for the county to address something that could possibly be a safety hazard," said the bill's sponsor, Council Chairman Dan Foust, R-6th District.

Please re-read this carefully with me. These new regulations are not deemed as absolutely necessary, they are just "a great opportunity" to regulate something, probably under the impossible-to-refute logic that it's better to do something now than to wait for a tragedy to force us to act. Next, the items being regulated are not unsafe, they merely "could possibly be a safety hazard." Is there any aspect of life that is not deserving of government regulation □ for our own safety □ under Councilman Foust's logic? What's next, something completely crazy like doctors who have for years complained about lawsuits now suing to protect their own industry turf? [Oh, wait...](#)

About the Author



David Stokes

David Stokes was a policy analyst at the Show-Me Institute from 2007 to 2014 and was director of development from 2014 to 2016.

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