SAMPLE LETTERS TO TOLEDO CITY COUNCIL

Don’t stifle free speech!

Dear Councilperson …………,

The Council is considering an ordinance that would restrict our free speech rights. The "Buffer Zone" law around Toledo's abortion clinic is bad policy, and could open up the city to a costly legal battle.

I urge you - don't stifle free speech. The people who stand outside abortion clinics are merely trying to convey a message of love and hope to women in difficult situations. Buffer zone laws also restrict the ability for people to share other options with these women.

Thank you.

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Dear Councilperson ……..,

I am writing to express my concern and opposition to the proposed ordinance titled “Impeding Access to Health Care" that is scheduled to be heard on August 30, 2017. First, this law is unnecessary as current local and state law safeguards a woman’s access to an abortion if she ultimately chooses to have one. Secondly, and more importantly, this ordinance is a direct assault on free speech, freedom of expression and freedom of assembly. Finally, there is no history or documented evidence of anyone ever being denied access, blocked, and obstructed from entering the abortion facility located at 1160 West Sylvania Avenue.

While this may be a new ordinance for the City of Toledo, for decades other cities have considered similar ordinances. When Councils decide to enact an ordinance like this, these stories end the same way: the ordinance is legally challenged, and the courts reject these unconstitutional laws resulting in an expensive legal bill that the taxpayers must pick up. Even the ACLU voiced its opposition to Columbus City Council when they attempted a similar assault on free speech.

It is never good public policy when that law results in abridging the civil rights of free speech and the freedom of expression of your fellow citizens. I strongly urge a no vote on this ordinance.

Respectfully submitted,