

August 10, 2020

To Louisville Metro Council,

As a health care provider in Louisville, I write in support of enacting a buffer zone outside of health care facilities. Patients, their companions, and medical care providers should never face confrontation, harassment, or threats to their physical safety for seeking or providing medical care.

Safe and secure entry or exiting of a medical facility should absolutely be a basic strand of care in Louisville. Patients and physicians should not feel fearful, nervous, or upset about who or what they may face on the way in or out of any health care facility.

As you may know, doctors who practice medicine at this hospital have been targeted with harassment in the past. Security guards escort them on a regular basis to and from their automobiles due to concerns for their safety. The close and unregulated proximity of protestors to medical staff, patients, and their companions creates a significant risk of safety to all parties involved. Additionally, the risks spill over to our entire hospital and office staff that regularly access the facility. This includes nurses, radiology technicians, medical assistants, resident physicians, and medical students. Finally, the costs related to constant security escorts is also significant and can be avoided with such buffer zones.

In light of the current COVID-19 pandemic, the safety risk now includes transmission and infection of a potentially deadly virus. As front-line workers, our profession already places us at a 3-4 times higher risk than the general population to be infected with COVID-19. That risk should not be compounded by individuals, who may be unmasked, choosing to confront, harass or threaten individuals at health care facilities.

A buffer zone would provide modest boundaries around a space that should unequivocally be a safe conduit for access to medical care. That should be non-negotiable for our front-line health care workers and patients accessing our facility.

I urge you to consider passing and codifying a buffer zone ordinance so that providers such as this practice may utilize this tool for public safety in our city.

Sincerely,



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