

# WYGAL & NEWMAN, P.L.L.C.

Janet Wygal, M.D., F.A.C.O.G. • Nancy Newman, M.D., F.A.C.O.G.

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 standard of care to residents of and visitors to Louisville. Providing high-quality, effective, and trusted medical care is not limited to the exam room; it begins with the patient and their loved ones accessing care in a safe and dignified manner, and concludes with patients and their loved ones leaving feeling informed, hopeful, and empowered – not fearful, nervous, or upset about who or what they may be faced with on the way out.

As you may know, doctors who practice medicine at this hospital have been targeted with harassment in the past. The close and unregulated proximity of protestors to medical staff, patients, and their companions creates a significant risk of safety to all parties involved; in light of the current Covid-19 pandemic, the safety risk now includes transmission and infection of a potentially deadly virus. For many patients, their loved ones, and medical staff, their experiences of harassment as they enter and exit a facility is already traumatic; the added legitimate fear of contracting Covid-19 creates an unconscionable level of safety risk.

A buffer zone would provide modest boundaries around a space that should unequivocally be a safe conduit for access to medical care. Why someone is accessing medical care – or what others may think about them or the providers of that care – should have absolutely no bearing on their personal safety.

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,

Janet Wygal MD  
Janet Honchell MD  
Nancy Newman MD