

MOTION

There are a number of key freedoms that are at the very foundation of our nation, including the freedom to assemble, freedom of speech, and freedom to worship. The government at all levels is obligated to protect these rights by ensuring access to sensitive sites such as religious institutions, health clinics, community centers, and other locations. The City recognizes that access to these sensitive sites is vital for the health and welfare of the residents of the City. We also recognize that the exercise of a person's right to protest must be balanced against another person's right of access.

Los Angeles Municipal Code Section 41.19 states that "No person shall sit or stand on or at the entrance of any house of worship, hall, theater, or other place of public assemblage in any manner so as to obstruct the entrance to that place." However, recent incidents here in Los Angeles and across the nation have demonstrated the need to explicitly provide for a buffer zone around the employees and entrances to these types of facilities to ensure free and open access. The State of Colorado and several cities including Sacramento, Chicago, and Pittsburgh have enacted such bubble zones and the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors has directed County Counsel to draft a similar ordinance for application in unincorporated areas of the county.

Given the increasing number of violent incidents that we have seen in our communities, the City should consider adopting this important policy to protect our sensitive sites. Such an policy would make it a misdemeanor crime for a person to do any of the following:

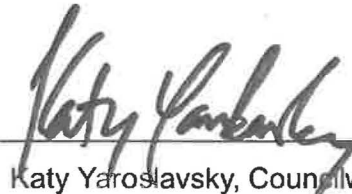
- a) Knowingly obstruct, detain, hinder, impede, or block another person's entry to or exit from a religious institution, healthcare facility, educational facility, or community/public facility.
- b) Knowingly approach another person within eight feet of such person, unless such person consents, for the purpose of passing a leaflet or handbill to, displaying a sign to, or engaging in oral protest, education, or counseling with such other person in the public way or sidewalk area within a radius of one hundred feet from any entrance door to a religious institution, healthcare facility, educational facility, or community/public facility.

I THEREFORE MOVE that the City Council request the City Attorney, with the assistance of the Police Department and any other department as needed, to prepare and present a draft ordinance which would:

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- prohibit a person or persons from knowingly obstructing, detaining, hindering, impeding or blocking another person's entry or exit from sensitive sites including religious institutions, healthcare facilities, educational facilities or community/public facilities; and
- prohibit a person or persons from knowingly approaching another person within eight feet of such a facility without consent for the purpose of passing a leaflet or handbill, displaying a sign, engaging in protest, education or counseling in the public right-of-way within a 100-foot radius of an entrance to the types of locations listed above.

Presented by


Katy Yaroslavsky, Councilwoman
Fifth City Council District

Seconded by



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