

September 9, 2024

Councilmember Monica Rodriguez  
Chair, Public Safety Committee  
200 N Spring Street, Rm 455  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Re: File 24-0910: Entrance Obstruction / Buffer Zone / Religious Institution Entrance / Persons Right to Protest – CONCERN**

On behalf of the more than 100,000 members of SEIU-UHW, thousands of whom live or work in the City of Los Angeles, we would like to express our concern with the proposal to enact a new buffer/bubble ordinance that would limit peaceful demonstration that does not interfere with the operations of a healthcare facility religious institution, educational facility, or community/public facility.

Section 56.45 of Article 6.1 of Chapter V of the Municipal Code already creates a prohibition against intentional interference with the normal operations of a medical facility. ([Section 52.45](#)) This existing ordinance covers any hospital, medical clinic, medical office or other facility at which lawful, professional medical services, diagnoses and/or counseling are delivered to members of the public.

The existing ordinance already covers conduct that interferes with the normal operations of the medical facility, and further restrictions near medical facilities could limit the ability of employees of the medical facility to exercise their right to free speech during a labor dispute.

Further, we are concerned that the ongoing federal litigation regarding Colorado's buffer zone law means Los Angeles risks implementing an ordinance that is then immediately caught up in litigation. While Colorado's law was upheld in 2000, the majority opinion in the *Dobbs* decision signaled that the Supreme Court would be open to another challenge to the concept of bubble/buffer laws – particularly as pertaining to health care facilities. As of the writing of this letter, the Supreme Court is considering a petition for the Court to take up just such a challenge. ([Coalition Life v. City of Carbondale, Illinois](#))

Instead of leaping into a legally fraught fight, we recommend that the City Council begin by engaging a thoughtful community process that brings together stakeholders to understand how the existing ordinance has worked in the past and any incidents and concerns that have led to the proposal of this ordinance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gustavo Medina', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Gustavo Medina  
Political Director  
SEIU United Healthcare Workers West

cc: Councilmember Katy Yaroslavsky  
Councilmember Bob Blumenfield  
Councilmember John S. Lee  
Councilmember Traci Park  
Councilmember Curren D. Price, Jr.  
Councilmember Hugo Soto-Martinez  
Legislative Assistant Luigi Verano