

Health Center Safety

Board Bill 34 - Ald. Christine Ingrassia (6th Ward)

The health and safety of patients are Planned Parenthood's top priority and are central to its mission.

- Every day, Planned Parenthood works to make sure patients receive the high-quality health care they need in a supportive environment. That includes ensuring patients can get in and out of Planned Parenthood health center facilities safely.

Planned Parenthood supports First Amendment rights.

- We support the rights of free speech and peaceable assembly, even when we might not agree with the speech itself.
- Free speech rights must be balanced with the safety of patients, staff and protestors. Board Bill 34 strikes an appropriate balance.

Nearly every day, protestors obstruct vehicular and pedestrian traffic of patients, providers, and staff who are entering Planned Parenthood's Forest Park health center.

- People seeking health care must be able to enter and exit medical facilities unimpeded.
- Reasonable rules will allow patients to access the health care they need without being at risk of colliding with protestors who attempt to stop vehicles in the street or in the driveway.
- Board Bill 34's clear boundaries will protect protestors who would otherwise get too close to vehicles entering and exiting the health center driveway.

Board Bill 34's common-sense provisions will offer increased safety for patients, staff and for those protesting against health care.

- Doctors, nurses, and medical assistants provide critical reproductive health care every day - including safe, legal abortion - and they should be able to enter their workspace safely.
- The American Medical Association says that acts of intimidation and violence against patients, physicians, and health care facilities are "an infringement of the individual's right of access to the services of such centers."

Board Bill 34 is a reasonable, narrowly tailored way to protect patients, providers, and staff.

- The U.S. Supreme Court found the government *does* have a legitimate interest in "ensuring public safety and order, promoting the free flow of traffic on streets and sidewalks, protecting property rights, and protecting a woman's freedom to seek pregnancy-related services," and that the buffer zones at issue "clearly serve these interests."
- This policy balances the rights of patients, providers, and staff to enter and exit the health center safely with the rights of protestors to demonstrate.