

CF 24-0910

Entrance Obstruction / Buffer Zone / Religious Institution Entrance / Persons Right to Protest

POSITION: Against

The Sherman Oaks Neighborhood Council opposes Council File 24-0910

Protest has long been a tool to advocate for accountability and responsibility from our government, institutions, and individuals. It has a long history in winning better wages and better working conditions, and in bringing about expanded civil rights for minority groups.

If passed, this law would mean that the right to protest would be fundamentally restricted across wide swaths of the city and would enjoin labor, victims, and students and parents from exercising their fundamental rights at locations aligned with their grievances.

Some examples of how this ordinance could harm legitimate union activities include:

- 1. Teachers unions being unable to picket outside schools during contract negotiations or strikes.*
- 2. Healthcare workers being barred from protesting unsafe working conditions outside hospitals or clinics.*
- 3. City workers being prevented from demonstrating outside government buildings like City Hall, which could be deemed a "community/public facility."*
- 4. Service workers at stadiums, theaters, or other "public assembly" locations being restricted from engaging in labor actions at their workplaces.*

The proposed 100-foot buffer zone is especially problematic, as it could effectively push union activities so far from relevant sites as to render them ineffective. The 8-foot "bubble" around individuals could also criminalize basic union outreach activities like handing out leaflets or engaging passersby in conversation about labor issues

Additionally, this motion may open the City to future liability claims as the law would likely be challenged in court and subject the City to a long legal battle regarding protected first amendment rights. We are currently on pace to exceed our budgeted legal liabilities this fiscal year and additional expenditures will have to come from our limited reserves.

The right to protest and organize is fundamental to a functioning democracy and has been crucial in securing better conditions for countless workers throughout Los Angeles' history. This ordinance poses too great a threat to those essential rights due to its vague definitions and overly broad scope. We strongly oppose its passage.