

Dear Hon. Paul Merriman,

Thank you very much for your letter to our organisation, responding to our appeal not to support Bill 605. Our organisation and membership sincerely share your desire that both patients and staff experience a safe and harassment free environment when going to work or receiving care.

However, we are saddened by the recent amendment to laws that restrict protests 50 metres from the peripheries of a hospital. We understand these amendments are well intentioned, but we are **very afraid** of the consequences of these measures. Firstly, it is a dangerous affront to the freedom of speech that has been valiantly fought for throughout Canada's history. Secondly, it is a hindrance to our core goal to save the lives of all the babies we can. Shouldn't this also be the goal of healthcare?

As you mentioned in our letter to us, there is a great degree of federal jurisdiction when it comes to Abortion law. It is within your influence, however, whether women receive full access to information for the options they have during a pregnancy crisis. Pro-Lifers almost universally desire to be a peaceful support and word of encouragement to women in these tough situations. It is our duty to encourage and empower them to know they are worthy and capable of raising a baby, or able to entrust them to a loving adoptive family.

With regards to freedom of speech, we want the rights of the pro-abortion individuals to protest outside hospitals to be protected as well as our own, even though we are diametrically opposed to their opinion. It is detrimental for society if discourse is not allowed on this issue. Unfortunately, it is our position that will be most affected by this law.

Recent political history has caused our organisation and members to have suspicion towards a 2-year sunset clause. Promises for 2-week measures have come to be extended indefinitely. Certain targets for freedoms have been met but the goal post has been changed. We highly encourage that the bubble zones cease as soon as possible.

Furthermore, since both safety and free expression is of the utmost importance, can a mutually agreeable solution be reached? (A distinct painting of roadways and paths denoting no protest zones, installation of boom gates that have legal ramifications if trespassed, etc.) We hope that if anyone is abusive, the Police will escort the person away, but peaceful dissent should not be penalised for disagreeing with the status quo.

**As an organisation we have several questions to clarify the application of this change in policy:**

1. Will Pro-Life witnesses be able to stand 50 metres from the hospital sidewalk in small or large groups, or will this simply incur an eventual increase of the bubble zone distance?

2. Lawful labour picketing will be permitted. Does this include hospital staff protesting issues such as abortion/MAID?
3. Does the wearing of Pro-Life clothing or pins on the hospital sidewalk, with the intention of being a prayerful witness and avenue for women and families to seek help, constitute as an illegal action?
4. What is the best way for Saskatchewanians to protest public medical issues? Petitioning MLAs is an avenue for this, but how and where are we to gather to make our communal voice heard?

Hon. Paul Merriman, we sincerely hope you listen to our concerns mentioned in this letter and urge you to help us defend pre-born children. Take courage! The Winnipeg legislatures has now twice rejected the proposal for bubble zone laws, and the Saskatchewan Party can shift in this direction as well. Our organisation, members, those who defend the right to life and liberty will stand with you and support you.

Kind Regards,

Francis Nowak (SPLA Operations Coordinator)