

California City Discriminates Against Pro-Life Pastor

A nonprofit organization is working to protect pro-life supporters, whose rights to speak to women considering abortions are being threatened.

On Friday, the Life Legal Defense Foundation will seek, on behalf of Pastor Walter Hoyer, a permanent injunction against the city of Oakland, Calif., for its inconsistent enforcement of an ordinance that forbids pro-lifers from communicating with women who are seeking abortions at abortion clinics. A copy of the court filing is available [here](#).

In July, Hoyer was vindicated in the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals when they stated that Oakland's "bubble zone" ordinance was constitutional, yet the city of Oakland was infringing on his freedom of speech by not making the ordinance impartial. The city has not complied with the court's decision, and instead has offered contradictory interpretations of the ordinance, such as stating that the law applied "to anyone who is not a doctor, nurse or other employee of a health-care facility," then stating that the exemption was only limited to medical emergencies.

The injunction seeks to ensure that the city will enforce the "bubble zone" ordinance in an even-handed manner. The Life Legal Defense Foundation argues that the ordinance currently creates complex and contradictory exemptions, which they see as efforts to block the freedom of speech of pro-life supporters.

So far, the city has only prosecuted people for approaching women within the bubble zone if they are trying to persuade them to not have an abortion. Pastor Hoyer has followed the law, yet has been arrested and imprisoned, while pro-abortion "escorts"

have encountered no punishment for approaching the women—even within the bubble zone.

“Once again, the city of Oakland is showing their contempt for human life by only giving constitutionally protected freedoms to people who want to abort babies. The city is violating the free speech of people who want to protect life,” said Dana Cody, executive director of the Life Legal Defense Foundation, which represents Hoyer. “Pastor Hoyer is speaking the truth within the law, but the city of Oakland is finding ways to eliminate his voice.”