

VP Vance Sounds Alarm on Law That May Prohibit Prayer in Private Homes

Vice President JD Vance faced swift backlash for asserting a Scottish law is banning prayer within private homes near abortion facilities, but the law certainly does raise concerns about individual rights, particularly given its ambiguity.

During a speech last week at the Munich Security Conference, the 40-year-old Vance said the Scottish government delivered letters to residents whose homes are within the perimeters of so-called “safe access zones” surrounding abortion clinics, the BBC reported.

Could having a conversation about abortion in your OWN HOME while the windows are open be a criminal offence in Scotland?

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– ADF UK (@ADF_UK) October 10, 2024

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The vice president referenced, as CBN News reported, the case of Adam Smith-Connor, a man in Bournemouth convicted last October for praying silently within the “safe access zone” of an abortion clinic in November 2022.

“I wish I could say that this was a fluke, a one-off, crazy example of a badly written law being enacted against a single person,” Vance said. “But, no, this [was] last October. Just a few months ago, the Scottish government began distributing letters to citizens whose houses lay within so-called ‘safe

access zones,' warning them that even private prayer within their own homes may amount to breaking the law."

Critics of Vance immediately argued the letter distributed to residents living near abortion clinics never explicitly stated “prayer” could be considered an “offense.” Instead, the letter purportedly stated simply “activities” could be in violation of the law.

🚨BREAKING🚨: Scottish police filmed applying “buffer zone” law to “silent vigil”, despite recent denials from the Scottish government! 🇬🇧🇪🇺

"Am I committing an offence?"

"Yes, I believe you are conducting a silent vigil"

Vance was right. The law IS being misapplied to prayer! □□□□□□□□□□

– Lois McLatchie Miller (@LoisMcLatch) February 18, 2025

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A spokesperson for the Scottish government told the BBC, "Private prayer at home is not prohibited within 'safe access zones,' and no letter has ever suggested it was. 'Safe access zones' are designed to safeguard a woman's right to access healthcare and protect their right to dignity and respect when they need it most."

The representative went on to say the law is centered on “only intentional or reckless behavior close to a small number of premises providing abortion services” and “it does not—and has never been intended to—criminalize any particular action,

including silent prayer.”

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