

February 15, 2024

Community and Protective Services Committee
City of London
300 Dufferin Avenue, London, ON, N6B 1Z2

Dear London Community and Protective Services Committee and City Councilors,

It has come to my attention that Civic Administration has prepared a by-law amending your Streets By-Law (S-1) to regulate the display of graphic images on the streets of the City of London that would ban fetal images from the public square.

I believe that such a ban would not only infringe upon fundamental rights to free speech but also undermine the critical importance of social justice and human rights in our society.

Let me explain. Abortion stands as one of the darkest chapters in Canadian history, where some four million babies have been erased in the name of “reproductive rights” and “choice” since 1969. Images documenting the victims of abortion serve as a powerful reminder of the atrocities that continue to be committed against the youngest members of the human family. Banning these images would suppress vital educational tools that foster understanding, empathy, and vigilance against discrimination of the most vulnerable among us—the preborn child.

Moreover, the proposed ban directly impacts babies targeted today for abortion. Such images change hearts and minds when it comes to abortion. Such images save lives. From the perspective of preborn babies, displaying these images is not about free speech—they have no voice—but at stake is their very existence, a life that could be saved when a mother sees a fetal image and decides to choose life for her baby.

Furthermore, the proposed ban sets a dangerous precedent that threatens the broader principles of free speech and expression. Freedom of speech is a foundational pillar of our democracy that is enshrined in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms which recognizes that Canada is founded upon the “supremacy of God and the rule of law.” The right to freedom of speech protects not only popular and uncontroversial speech but also dissenting and uncomfortable speech. Suppressing certain viewpoints, no matter how discomfoting they may be to some, undermines the very essence of democracy and pluralism.

If you decide to proceed with this by-law, you can expect litigation from those whose speech you have silenced. You may be aware that legal action is being pursued against the Parliamentary Protective Service for restricting fetal images on Parliament Hill.

Discomfort can never be a valid justification for censorship. While fetal images may evoke painful emotions for some, they also serve as a necessary catalyst for reflection, dialogue, and action when it comes to human rights violations, especially when it comes to denying a group of people the first and most fundamental of rights—the right to life. Banning such images would not erase the discomfort; instead, it would deny individuals the opportunity to confront difficult truths and engage in meaningful conversations.

I urge you to uphold the principles of free speech and social justice by rejecting the proposed ban on fetal images in the public square.

Sincerely,

Sincerely,



Jeff Gunnarson
National President
Campaign Life Coalition