

**Pilon, Janet**

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**Subject:** About restricting fetal imagery in Hamilton

**From:** Subhas Ganguli

**Sent:** Friday, July 19, 2024 6:40 PM

**To:** Office of the Mayor <[Officeofthe.Mayor@hamilton.ca](mailto:Officeofthe.Mayor@hamilton.ca)>

**Cc:** Ward 1 Office <[ward1@hamilton.ca](mailto:ward1@hamilton.ca)>; Ward 2 <[ward2@hamilton.ca](mailto:ward2@hamilton.ca)>; Office of Ward 3 City Councillor Nrinder Nann <[ward3@hamilton.ca](mailto:ward3@hamilton.ca)>; Ward 4 <[ward4@hamilton.ca](mailto:ward4@hamilton.ca)>; Francis, Matt <[Matt.Francis@hamilton.ca](mailto:Matt.Francis@hamilton.ca)>; Jackson, Tom <[Tom.Jackson@hamilton.ca](mailto:Tom.Jackson@hamilton.ca)>; Pauls, Esther <[Esther.Pauls@hamilton.ca](mailto:Esther.Pauls@hamilton.ca)>; Ward 8 Office <[ward8@hamilton.ca](mailto:ward8@hamilton.ca)>; Clark, Brad <[Brad.Clark@hamilton.ca](mailto:Brad.Clark@hamilton.ca)>; Beattie, Jeff <[Jeff.Beattie@hamilton.ca](mailto:Jeff.Beattie@hamilton.ca)>; Tadeson, Mark <[Mark.Tadeson@hamilton.ca](mailto:Mark.Tadeson@hamilton.ca)>; Ward 12 Office <[ward12@hamilton.ca](mailto:ward12@hamilton.ca)>; Ward 13 <[ward13@hamilton.ca](mailto:ward13@hamilton.ca)>; Spadafora, Mike <[Mike.Spadafora@hamilton.ca](mailto:Mike.Spadafora@hamilton.ca)>; McMeekin, Ted <[Ted.McMeekin@hamilton.ca](mailto:Ted.McMeekin@hamilton.ca)>

**Subject:** About restricting fetal imagery in Hamilton

Dear Hamilton City Council,

Thank you for the work you do on the Hamilton City Council. I appreciate that you have an important role in safeguarding our freedoms as Canadians. I am asking you to continue to do so even on a contentious issue like abortion. I am writing to you out of concern because I have become aware of a proposal in the City of Hamilton to enact restrictions on sharing a pro-life message in public.

In November 2023, the City of Hamilton passed a motion calling for restrictions on any leaflets or signage with fetal imagery, targeting the pro-life message in particular. A legal challenge has been launched against just such a by-law in the City of St. Catharines because it violates the *Charter*.

**I am sure that you are well aware of your responsibility under the *Charter* to not unjustifiably infringe freedom of expression. That *Charter* guarantee is designed to promote conversations, even when they're challenging.**

Your role as an elected representative is an important one to our community. I ask that you use the responsibility wisely, remembering that your actions are scrutinized under the *Charter*, which includes protection for freedom of expression. The City of Hamilton is not well-served by expensive litigation.

The freedom to discuss a topic like abortion is especially important for women in our community facing an unplanned pregnancy. As women, we deserve to be presented with the truth and not treated as if we are incapable of handling heavy subjects.

Canadian courts have made it abundantly clear that the *Charter* right to freedom of expression

We have many challenging conversations as a society on a wide variety of issues, such as climate change, racism, and war. Just because the conversation can be hard, does not mean that it isn't important.

Why is the City of Hamilton targeting one particular group and one particular message for special restrictions? In a democracy, the government should not be stifling speech from one side of a debate on a contentious issue.

Many people are thankful to hear about the pro-life perspective and the local community support available in Hamilton, and it can be critical information for people who are trying to make a fully informed choice about a difficult pregnancy.

Thank you for taking the time to read my thoughts on this topic. Please vote against any effort to place restrictions on pro-life speech.

Sincerely,

Subhas Ganguli