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Our Reference #: MC-2017-7482

October 30, 2017

I am pleased to inform you that the Ontario Legislature recently passed the *Safe Access to Abortion Services Act, 2017*.

As you may know, there have been reports of heightened security risks and privacy concerns around clinics and facilities that provide abortion services in Ontario. With the passage of this legislation, Ontario police will have more consistent measures in place to protect the safety, security, health, and privacy of women and health care providers across Ontario.

The legislation will allow for safe access zones to be established around clinics and facilities that offer abortion services, as well as the offices and homes of clinic staff, and other regulated health professionals who provide these services.

The eight abortion clinics in Ontario will automatically receive safe access zones of 50 metres under this legislation. This could be decreased or increased up to 150 metres by regulation.

Other facilities and offices that offer abortion services will be able to apply for safe access zones up to 150 metres. Regulated health professionals who provide abortion services outside of clinics will also be able to apply for safe access zones of up to 150 metres around their offices. We will communicate with you shortly regarding the application process.

Prohibited activities within safe access zones around clinics, facilities, and offices include:

- advising a person to refrain from accessing abortion services
- abortion-related protests
- activities that intimidate or interfere with people accessing or providing abortion services
- recording patients and/or providers (e.g. taking photos or video).

The legislation also provides safe access zones of up to 150 metres around the homes of all clinic staff and abortion service providers.

Prohibited activities within safe access zones around homes include:

- Certain activities that are directly targeted at or are about a clinic staff member or health professional who lives in the home.
- This could include persistently requesting that the health professional refrain from providing abortion services, or physically interfering with or intimidating the health professional for the purpose of dissuading them from providing abortion services.

Finally, the legislation prohibits harassing conduct anywhere in Ontario that is directed at clinic staff and regulated health professionals who provide abortion services.

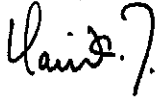
Individuals who contravene the Act would be prosecuted under the *Provincial Offences Act*. These individuals would face fines of up to \$5,000 and/or imprisonment of up to six months for their first offence. For second and subsequent offences, fines between \$1,000 and \$10,000 and/or imprisonment of up to 12 months can be ordered.

As with any provincial offence, the decision to lay charges or arrest individuals is within the discretion of police. The Ministry of the Attorney General and the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services will work with our policing partners to ensure police are aware of the legislation and have the training and information needed to enforce it.

The legislation will come into force on proclamation of the Lieutenant Governor, once the regulations are drafted. Our government is committed to finalizing the regulations in as timely a manner as possible.

Ontario police provide exceptional service and play a critical role in keeping our communities safe, and this legislation will provide them with the tools you need to continue this work. I would like to thank you for your support as we move forward to protect women's rights to choose to access abortion services without fear, interference, intimidation or harassment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Yasir Naqvi", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Yasir Naqvi
Attorney General