

THURSDAY, JULY 28, 2022

## LETTERS

### Step away, Waco

Is the city of Waco going to see a sequel to the bad movie theme of "Waco City Council supports Planned Parenthood and abortion"?

Councilwoman Kelly Palmer proposed an ordinance to prop up Planned Parenthood at the July 19 council meeting. She wants Waco to join Austin and Denton in forcing the city police department to the sidelines in enforcement of Texas bans on abortion. The ordinance would have the sacrilegious name of "GRACE Act."

On three previous occasions in the 21st century, Waco city government has acted as an ally of Planned Parenthood. Each initiative ended as a costly embarrassment for Waco.

In May of 2000, the city intensified enforcement of an ordinance governing the placement of yard signs. The enforcement was particularly strong in front of Planned Parenthood on Columbus Ave-

nue. In November of 2001, the federal district court in Waco forced changes to the Waco sign ordinance because of the city's unequal enforcement.

In mid-2002, the Waco-McLennan County Library System came up with a plan to transform the Planned Parenthood "health" library into a branch of the public library system. Local pro-lifers filed a lawsuit. In May of 2003, Planned Parenthood withdrew its effort to become a public library branch.

The Waco council's biggest pro-Planned Parenthood initiative came in February of 2004. A new "parade ordinance" banned demonstrations and protests within school zones. The Planned Parenthood abortion facility was located within the school zone of Waco Montessori School across the street.

If upheld in courts, the parade ordinance would have prevented counseling moms to choose life rather than death for the babies in the wombs. In

August of 2006, the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans struck down the Waco ordinance as an unconstitutional violation of freedoms of assembly and speech.

I ask the Waco City Council to step away for the intense battle over abortion in our community and focus on roads, recreation, water supply, etc.

**John Pisciotta, Waco**

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Please do not push this **Guarding the Right to Abortion Care (GRACE) Act** through. Waco and McLennan County residents do not want it here. We do not care what Austin does. Waco and McLennan County residents want to uphold the laws that have passed with great prayer and petition.

We value human life and want to save it all cost. We do not want to circumvent the laws, we want to uphold them. Let us value what God has created. Let us fear God and not man.

Let us continue to do good and not grow weary.

**Kathy Mirick, Robinson**

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## LETTERS

### Yes, step away

In Thursday's paper, John Pisciotta outlined the history of the Waco City Council intervening to protect the rights and privacy of Waco women and their families. They are to be commended for their efforts in spite of the legal harassment from Pisciotta's group. He then goes on to ask the city council to step away from the "intense battle over abortion." This is exactly what the GRACE Act resolution is designed to do, so thanks for the endorsement.

**Cheryl Foster,  
Waco**

### Divisive ideas

I am very thankful that the kind of rioting and lack of respect for the law that we have seen in other cities, and that continues in places like Portland, have not affected us in Waco to the extent it has other places.

However, I have asked myself: How did these places get that way? Surely the people living there are

not UK with people rioting in the streets and burning down their property and the places they work. So how did it come to this? I think it happened incrementally over time, one small seemingly minimally effectual action after another. I'm sure people did not think it was good, but it wasn't worth standing up to, and then they woke up one day and the rule of law had collapsed around them. By that time, there was nothing that could be done to stop it.

I am concerned it is starting in Waco because on July 19 Waco City Council Member Kelly Palmer proposed the city of Waco implement something called the GRACE Act. This doesn't make abortion legal, but it would limit the resources of the Waco police to investigate any crimes related to abortion. No matter what your views on abortion, this is not the way to handle the issue. The councilwoman doesn't have to like the current state law and can work to change it at the state Legislature. However, directing law enforcement to not enforce the law and act to limit their capacity to enforce the laws she doesn't like is subversive.

What will be proposed next? Let's not give police

the resources to enforce theft below \$1,000, let's not require bail. Heck, let's just defund the police. A few years ago I would have thought these things impossible to be considered, much less implemented. What worries me is that this kind of action just increases the polarization of the people of Waco.

If the city of Waco does implement this GRACE Act, then the sheriff will set up a dedicated task force just to investigate these issues, and it escalates from there. This GRACE Act won't help women access abortion care, it will only serve to mobilize the other side to fight. Then before you know it, people who just want to live their lives and be left alone (most of us) are forced to pick a side between these crazy zealots.

The law is the only thing that protects us from these people. If the councilwoman wants to protect women, this is not how to do it. If she wants to bring more polarization to Waco, then she is on track.

**Nat Green,  
Waco**