

31-21 Action Packet

The West Lafayette City Council is considering 'Ordinance 31-21. It proposes to ban "unlicensed counselors" from practicing "conversion therapy" on minors, enforced by \$1,000 fines. It defines conversion therapy as "any practices or treatments that seek to change an individual's sexual orientation or gender identity" & "counseling" as "techniques used to help individuals...make decisions relating to personal growth, vocational, family, and other interpersonal concerns."

Since reading the Bible with someone, sermons, meeting with a pastor/priest, etc. can fall under this definition of counseling (let alone self-identified faith-based counselors) this essentially means the city would be able to fine people \$1,000 for reading the Bible to minors. Since 31-21 calls it "exposure to...serious harms and risks," it also leaves the door open for CPS to remove children from the home of parents who do not affirm their gender identity/sexuality.



For additional information and resources visit our website at:

freedomlafayette.org/

You can help defeat 31-21! Please join us with the following action steps:

1. Share This Packet

The steps we will take in this packet are simple and easy to follow for all those who are concerned about 31-21. To show the council members, four of whom were elected with a margin of fewer than 100 votes, we desire the highest volume of concerned individuals possible to reach out to them.

Action Steps

Please share this packet with all the individuals you know who would share your concern about 31-21 so that they can participate with us in defeating 31-21. This packet is available to be downloaded and distributed at:

freedomlafayette.org/actionpacket

2. Pray for the Council Members

God working through the Apostle Paul commands us,

I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. (1 Timothy 2:1-4)

Our first resource in interceding on behalf of West Lafayette is prayer. We pray to the God who “turns [the king’s heart] wherever He wishes,” “who sits in the heavens laughs” at those who oppose him, “who reduces rulers to nothing, who makes the judges of the earth meaningless” (Proverbs 21:1, Psalm 2:4, Isaiah 40:23). God takes special interest in the affairs of civil government, as he says “it is a minister of God” (Rom. 13:4)

Action Steps

Following Paul’s example in 1 Timothy 2, we ought to (1) give thanks for our civil leaders with “thanksgivings,” (2) pray for a peaceful civil environment that permits “a tranquil and quiet life,” (3) pray for our Council members “to be saved,” and (4) pray for our council members to know, believe, think, and speak “the truth.”

You can pray a prayer like this one each day:

God our Savior,

We lift up to You Your ministers:

*Nick DeBoer, Peter Bunder, Shannon Kang, Larry Leverenz, Kathy Parker,
Jeff Brown, James Blanco, David Sanders, and Gerald Thomas.*

We thank You that we enjoy the privilege of a civil government

Elected by the people to uphold law and order,

To lawfully aid our city’s public facilities, economy, and budget.

Let us lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.

Let Your ministers use their authority lawfully to vote against Ordinance 31-21.

Save them from their sin and Your wrath

Through faith in Jesus Christ who gave himself as a ransom for sin.

Bring them to the knowledge of the truth

To stand as Your ministers for what is true and right.

We make these petitions and thanksgivings in the name of Christ Jesus.

Amen.

3. Sign the Online Petition

We have an online petition meant to demonstrate numerically our community's opposition to 31-21. Since the petition asks what zip code you represent, you can sign it and share it with both locals and non-locals to demonstrate both the local and national opposition to the West Lafayette City Council's actions.

Action Steps

Navigate to our petition at:

<https://www.change.org/StandWithUs>

Fill out your first and last name, an email, and your local address. Then choose whether you want your email to be added to LCF's email list and whether you want your name shown publicly on the petition.

First name
Last name
Email
United States
West Lafayette
IN
47906
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Please share my name and email address with Lafayette Citizens for Freedom, so that I can receive updates on this campaign and others.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Display my name and comment on this petition

4. Email Each Council Member

You can send an email to each City Council member individually and express briefly your concerns on Ordinance 31-21. They likely will not read the email, so the Subject line should convey clearly that you want them to vote NAY on Ordinance 31-21. Additionally, you can BCC all the Council members in order to send 9 separate emails at once. You should address Vice President Gerald Thomas, Council member Jeff Brown, and Mayor Dennis differently since they have publicly opposed 31-21.

Actions Steps

Navigate to:

<https://www.freedomlafayette.org/action/contact-council-member>

Click on the name of each Council member who does not oppose 31-21 to automatically generate the following email:

Dear West Lafayette City Council Member,

Please vote NAY on Ordinance 31-21.

Your definition of conversion therapy would infringe on parental rights, religious freedom, and minors liberties. Ordinance 31-21 defines conversion therapy as "any practices or treatments that seek to change an individual's sexual orientation or gender identity" & "counseling" as "techniques used to help individuals...make decisions relating to personal growth, vocational, family, and other interpersonal concerns." This broad and ambiguous definition infringes on individuals', parents', and religious persons' rights to seek counsel from whatever source they desire or to "help individuals...make decisions" based upon their personal convictions.

The Council members' emails are listed here below:

Nick DeBoer	ndeboer@westlafayette.in.gov
Peter Bunder	pbunder@westlafayette.in.gov
Shannon Kang	skang@westlafayette.in.gov
Larry Leverenz	lleverenz@westlafayette.in.gov
Kathy Parker	kparker@westlafayette.in.gov
James Blanco	jblanco@westlafayette.in.gov
David Sanders	dsanders@westlafayette.in.gov

For those who do publicly oppose 31-21, draft an email as follows:

Similarly, you can click on each Council member who does oppose 31-21 to automatically generate the following email to thank them:

Dear West Lafayette City Council Members,

Thank you for choosing to vote NAY on Ordinance 31-21.

I support you all the way! David Sanders's definition of conversion therapy would infringe on parental rights, religious freedom, and minors liberties. Ordinance 31-21 defines conversion therapy as "any practices or treatments that seek to change an individual's sexual orientation or gender identity" & "counseling" as "techniques used to help individuals...make decisions relating to personal growth, vocational, family, and other interpersonal concerns." This broad and ambiguous definition infringes on individuals', parents', and religious persons' rights to seek counsel from whatever source they desire or to "help individuals...make decisions" based upon their personal convictions.

The Council members' and mayor's emails are listed here below:

Jeff Brown	jbrown@westlafayette.in.gov
Gerald Thomas	gthomas@westlafayette.in.gov
John Dennis	mayor@westlafayette.in.gov

5. Make a Public Comment at the Council Meeting

When the West Lafayette City Council brings up Ordinance 31-21 for its first reading, they will permit public comments on 31-21 or any other Ordinances currently before the Council. They must be **3 minutes** or shorter, and all participants are “required to maintain a high level of civility, respect, and courtesy for everyone present.”

Action Steps

If you would like to prepare a public comment, you can write out what you wish to say following this formula:

1. Address the Council members. You might write something like:

President Bunder, Vice President Thomas, and other members of the Council,

2. Introduce yourself and your role in the community. You might write something like:

My name is Winston and I am the Lead Organizer for Lafayette Citizens for Freedom. I live in West Lafayette and am a student at Purdue University. I am also a member of a Bible-believing church in West Lafayette.

3. Thank the Council members for their work. You might write something like:

I would like to thank you, President Bunder, for presiding over the council. I would also like to thank you, Larry Leverenz, for representing me and the largest group of unlicensed counselors in West Lafayette as our District 4 representative. I would like to thank you, Shannon Kang, for representing me as a Purdue student as well.

4. Concisely state why 31-21 is a bad idea to you. If you are a member of a particular religious group, a parent, a Purdue student, etc. consider why your perspective would oppose 31-21. You might write something like:

As a member of a Bible-believing church in West Lafayette, I pointedly tell you the proposed Ordinance 31-21 would outlaw my Christian convictions. My West Lafayette church's Articles of Faith state, "Sexual intimacy outside the marriage relationship is sinful and offensive to God and any form of sexual immorality, including but not limited to...homosexuality, bisexual conduct, ..., cross dressing, ... or any attempt to change one's gender, or disagree with one's biological gender, is sinful and offensive to God. We also believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ."

The definition of "counseling" in 31-21 states that I cannot "help individuals...make decisions" based upon these religious beliefs if they are minors. You may consider my faith to be, as 31-21

states, “exposure to...serious harms and risks.” Personally, I believe it is far worse to teach children according to Secular Humanist beliefs like those of Richard Dawkins who would have me believe, “there is, at bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil, no good, nothing but pitiless indifference.”

As a Purdue Student, I know this community values religious diversity. Just in my own research group at Purdue I work with ardent believers in Catholicism, Atheism, Buddhism, and other religious beliefs. This is by design. Purdue President Mitch Daniels said, “We expect [students] to encounter different opinions, people from different cultures and viewpoints. We think that is part of an education here.” Our Purdue and West Lafayette culture believes that exposure to different opinions, cultures, and viewpoints is part of an education. It is not “exposure to...serious harms and risks.”

5. Conclusion

Ordinance 31-21 is wrong for our community. You will have to give God an account of the decisions you make tonight. Choose wisely.

6. Send in a Letter to the Council Meeting

If you are unable to attend the Council meeting when 31-21 is brought up for a public reading and vote, you can instead write a letter addressed to the City Council and email it to the West Lafayette Clerk to read at the Council meeting.

As with other public comments, make sure your letter takes fewer than **3 minutes** to read and that it maintains “a high level of civility, respect, and courtesy for everyone present.” President Bunder will have the decision whether to read your letter publicly, so we encourage you to state in the letter that you would like it read publicly. Regardless of whether it was read, the letter should be publicly included in the Meeting Minutes for the next Council meeting.

Action Steps

Draft a letter following the same format as a “Public Comment” (See Action Steps for “Make a Public Comment at the Council Meeting”). Put your letter in the body of an email with the Subject:

Public Comment: Vote NAY on Ordinance 31-21

The first line in the email should state,

[Note to the WL City Clerk: please read the statement below publicly.]

Send your email to:

clerk@westlafayette.in.gov

7. Share LCF Blogs on Social Media

Lafayette Citizens for Freedom is compiling many blogs and videos from members of the Lafayette community. These blogs will include both topical blogs on the current issues and how we should oppose them as well as personal blogs from individuals in our community who for various reasons oppose 31-21.

By sharing these blogs on social media, you will help get the community informed and help the individuals who would be harmed by 31-21 alert the community to why this issue matters to them.

Action Steps

Each day, find our most recent blogs and videos on our website at:

freedomlafayette.org/blog

Share these blogs on your FaceBook, Twitter, Instagram, and other social media platforms. You can additionally email them, print them, and distribute them to get them out as wide as possible.

You can also film a short (under 1-minute) video of yourself or add a paragraph explaining why the blog is important to you so that people scrolling through your social media find an engaging reason to look at the blog.

8. Create a Blog or Video

You can go a step beyond sharing blogs and videos from the LCF website by creating your own blog or video. You should reference the blogs and videos on our website to see good examples to follow.

Action Steps

Your blog should be under 2 pages long. Here is a good template to follow:

1. Introduce yourself and why you're passionate about opposing Ordinance 31-21 You might write something like:

My name is Ravin Bright and I was counseled as a minor in a religious setting. The following is a snapshot of my experience as a minor and the continued effects of my counseling experience.

2. Share your personal experience that makes you oppose 31-21. You might write something like:

Counseling, therapy, mentorship, conversion therapy—however you would like to define my experience and those like me—did not confine me or force an opinion upon me. I had an open door. Yes, my experience did shape my life, but it was by my own free will. I am passionate about preserving youth liberties, religious freedom, and parents rights because of the experience I walked away with.

I was treated with kindness and care. My counselor fought for my restoration while equally giving me a choice. Therefore, I am troubled because the West Lafayette City Council members believe they are fighting for restoration by stripping away the elements of choice and free will. The unfortunate truth is, if I had been deprived of the opportunity to be a counselee, I might still have been trapped in bitterness, self-destruction, and constantly blaming others for my problems.

3. Conclude appropriately that 31-21 is wrong. You might write something like:

Although this is my story there are many who have and continue to benefit from non-licensed faith-based counseling in West Lafayette. It would be a shame to strip that opportunity from the youth in West Lafayette and the Greater Lafayette community.

A video can be similar in content to a blog, but spoken orally instead of written out. You can post your blog or video on your social media. If you want your blog or video posted on our website, or if you want to film a video in a high quality studio, email LCF's Lead Organizer Winston Levin (wlevin@freedomlafayette.org).