

Honorable Mayor and City Council:

As members of the Plano delegation to the Texas legislature and the Collin County Commissioners Court, we are appealing to you to postpone any vote relating to an ordinance to amend Section 2-11 relating to the adoption of a policy based on protected characteristics. We do not believe there has been adequate time for the public and community leaders to be a part of the discussion of such a major, wide sweeping change in law and policy for Plano. As husbands and wives with children, we have concerns that your sexual orientation and transgender ordinance may place women and children at risk and does not consider the moral or religious beliefs of Plano citizens or vendors who do business with the city. We see no need for such an ordinance and view it as harmful in the following ways:

1. The ordinance could force some citizens to conduct their business in such a manner that is contrary to their faith, violating their freedom of religion and rights to conscience.
2. The ordinance does not adequately protect women and children against men using women's bathrooms. Although the ordinance attempts to make an exemption for bathrooms, it will cause confusion having different rules for different people under different circumstances.
3. The ordinance places a burden on Plano businesses to enforce transgender, gender identity and sexual orientation rules that do not exist in other Collin or Denton County cities.
4. The ordinance demands individuals and businesses doing work for the city to agree to the ordinance language, even if the language violates their right to conscience, moral or religious beliefs.
5. The ordinance exposes Plano businesses and other entities to civil lawsuits.
6. The ordinance fails to adequately protect religious, faith-based and other non-profit organizations from unwarranted government prosecution and it threatens First Amendment rights. Although the ordinance attempts to make an exemption, the exemption is only partial as other sections of the ordinance specifically point out that non-profit organizations could be prosecuted under other sections of the ordinance.
7. The ordinance attempts to give special protection for "gender identity" purposes, a term that is subjective and not found anywhere in state law. Attempts to add such a term to state law have been routinely rejected by state lawmakers and people across the state.
8. This ordinance is extremely controversial, will cause division in our community and will likely hurt our economy. The City of Houston is currently involved in a very expensive lawsuit after citizens sued the City of Houston over issues related to their ordinance and after months of protests and very divisive public hearings over their ordinance, which is similar to the one being proposed by Plano.
9. The City of San Antonio faced months of controversy over their similar ordinance after they tried to "fast track" their effort, and the result was efforts by citizens to place the ordinance on the ballot and recall elected officials who supported the ordinance.

It seems to us that greater issues are before us and are more worthy of our time and we would appreciate the postponement of a vote so that the people of Plano will have the proper opportunity to share their thoughts, ideas and concerns on the matter. We look forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely:

The Honorable Ken Paxton
State Senator District 8

The Honorable Pat Fallon
State Representative District 106

The Honorable Jodie Laubenberg
State Representative District 89

The Honorable Jeff Leach
State Representative District 67

The Honorable Matt Shaheen
State Representative Elect District 66

The Honorable Keith Self
Collin County Judge

The Honorable Susan Fletcher
Collin County Commissioner Pct. 1

The Honorable Cheryl Williams
Collin County Commissioner Pct. 2

The Honorable Duncan Webb
Collin County Commissioner Pct. 4