



THE ETHICS & RELIGIOUS
LIBERTY COMMISSION
OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

September 1, 2022

Mr. Jeremy Stoppelman
CEO
Yelp, Inc.
140 New Montgomery St.
San Francisco, CA 94105

Dear Mr. Stoppelman,

I am writing to you today as the acting president of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC). Our organization serves as the public policy arm of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), the nation's largest Protestant denomination with over 50,000 churches and congregations and nearly 14 million members.

Southern Baptists have long been involved in the public debates over abortion and have advocated consistently for both women and children to be protected and honored. We do this because of our fundamental belief that all people are made in the image of God and, thus, have inherent value and dignity. At the same time, we also have been on the ground, assisting countless pregnancy centers and faith-based health clinics in a variety of ways, including our efforts to help them obtain life-saving ultrasound machines as well as the requisite medical training to utilize these machines through our Psalm 139 Project. Alongside our robust pro-life advocacy, we also are championing a civilized digital public square for a pluralistic society through our work in technology ethics and digital governance. This work is led by our chair of research in technology ethics Jason Thacker, who has written and worked extensively on the challenges technologies companies, like Yelp, are facing in content moderation and digital accountability.



In light of that unique role, we are deeply concerned by your company's decision to add labels to pregnancy centers and clinics, casting doubt on the authenticity of their medical credentials. A thorough review would reveal that many of these clinics actually do employ medical professionals and offer legitimate, quality, holistic care for women and children in need that exceeds anything offered by most abortion clinics. This new label brings unnecessary doubt and will steer women away from receiving the information, care, supplies, and support that these centers offer, often at no cost. Mislabeling these clinics, their staff and services, is both dangerous and misleading.

As just one example, [Hope Resource Center](#) in Knoxville, Tenn., offers free pregnancy testing, ultrasound imaging, STD testing, well-woman exams, and pap testing, and employs seven medical professionals. It is currently inaccurately designated with the "crisis pregnancy center" label that states "typically provide limited medical services and may not have licensed medical professionals onsite."

While we acknowledge that not all pregnancy centers have as many offerings as Hope Resource Center, it is misleading to imply that all pregnancy centers do not or may not provide authentic medical care by trained professionals. A consistent application of this labeling process must also include identifying abortion clinics that operate without medical licensing or hospital admitting privileges and offer only abortion services. Hope Resource Center should not be labeled as having substandard care while abortion clinics that offer no other services are touted as legitimate healthcare providers. If Yelp is seeking transparency and honesty in their listings, those values must be applied consistently and fairly to all.

I understand Yelp desires to provide "reliable" and "useful" information to its users. That is not what this is. Not only is your company misleading women about these clinics, it also remains silent about the grisly realities of abortion



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facilities. As such, your actions here limit the options of women through your use of one-sided and misleading labeling. We urge you to reconsider this policy and would welcome the opportunity to provide further feedback and suggestions on a better path forward as this issue is being considered and debated throughout our society.

Respectfully,

Brent Leatherwood
Acting President
Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission
Southern Baptist Convention