

MOVIE AD ALLEGEDLY CROSSES LIMITS OF DECENCY AND PROPRIETY



An outrageous movie advertisement, strategically placed at the Clarendon Metro Station, asking President Barack Obama to “go to hell” has raised many ethical issues and raised hackles in political circles. The ad reads “Barack Obama wants politicians and bureaucrats to control America’s entire medical system. “Go to hell Barack.” It further asks viewers to go watch the movie “Sick & Sicker” to see “where ObamaCare will take us.” The ad is for a film called “Sick and Sicker,” which is extremely critical of Obama’s health care policies, and shows what happens when “the government becomes your doctor.” The film has footage based on interviews with doctors, patients, media personnel, politicians and shows all the discrepancies and inconsistencies that exist in government run hospitals. The film is a strong indictment of the President’s health initiative and questions, “Where will ObamaCare lead America?” Congressman Jim Moran called on the Washington Metro Area Transit Authority, to remove the ad immediately, calling it “inappropriate, and disrespectful of the President.” He further warned, “The families with children and thousands of tourists who take Metro everyday should not be subjected to such garbage. I understand WMATA vets these advertisements before allowing them to go up, but it seems someone wasn’t doing their job when this ad was approved.” However, the WMATA has refused to remove the ad, arguing that WMATA ads have been ruled as a public forum and are protected by the First Amendment of the Constitution. Metro Board spokesman Dan Stessel said, that, “WMATA does not endorse the advertising on our system, and ads do not reflect the position of the Authority.” But was unyielding, saying the agency has “no plans of pulling the ad down.” He said the agency “cannot decline ads based on political content.” Congressman Jim Moran said that he was “disappointed” by WMATA’s defense of keeping the ad in place. “If their current advertising guidelines do not prohibit profane advertisements on taxpayer-funded property, then WMATA should take the initiative and update them. Profanity has no place in the public forum.” The specific language in the WMATA-approved ad that should be removed is not political, it’s profane. It defames the President of the United States in a way that coarsens the public discourse. I repeat my call on WMATA to exercise appropriate judgment and remove this offensive ad.” Whilst ad agencies have the right to express their views with as much creativity as they can muster, where and when they should draw the line, is a personal responsibility they themselves must figure out.

