

The Committee to Defend Catherine Wilkerson

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Trial Begins Monday for Ann Arbor Doctor Who Criticized Police, EMT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ANN ARBOR, MI – The trial of Ann Arbor physician Catherine Wilkerson is scheduled to begin on Monday, November 26, 2007, at 1 PM in the courtroom of 15th District Court Judge Elizabeth Pollard-Hines. The trial is scheduled to continue on the 27th, 28th and 30th at 8:30 AM every day. Dr. Wilkerson is charged with two counts of allegedly attempting to "assault/resist/obstruct" police and ambulance personnel. If convicted on either count, Dr. Wilkerson faces up to a year in jail, fines, and being compelled to submit a DNA sample.

The charges stem from an incident on the campus of the University of Michigan (UM), Ann Arbor, on November 30, 2006, where Dr. Wilkerson gave directions to police and Huron Valley Ambulance personnel concerning the care and well-being of a man rendered unconscious by police. Police reports show that Dr. Wilkerson was allowed by police to examine the unconscious man. But when an ambulance supervisor used ammonia on the man in a dangerous, inefficacious, and punitive manner she spoke out not once but twice and, for her efforts, was told to leave by police. As she was complying, she was attacked and then detained by a police officer. Senior police officers on the scene determined there were no grounds for arresting her and Wilkerson was released without having been handcuffed or required to produce identification.

However, nearly two months after the incident and just seven days after she filed a police brutality complaint, she was charged by Washtenaw County Prosecutor Brian Mackie's office, at the apparent request of the UM police, with two attempted felonies. On November 20, 2007, just three business days before trial is scheduled to begin and nearly a year after the incident Prosecutor Mackie's office filed a motion to add two new counts to the charges Dr. Wilkerson is facing. In a written response filed with the court, Wilkerson's attorneys, Hugh "Buck" Davis and Wilson P. Tanner, said, "This motion is suggestive of bad faith and 'piling on' for political reasons."

The Committee to Defend Catherine Wilkerson argues that no good purpose can be served by prosecuting a medical doctor for merely doing her duty and nonviolently exercising her First Amendment rights. On Tuesday, November 20, 2007, members of the Committee to Defend Catherine Wilkerson hand-delivered petitions to Washtenaw County Prosecutor Brian Mackie and UM President Mary Sue Coleman bearing the names of more than 3,500 people who want them to stop this politically-driven prosecution and drop the charges now

*The Committee to Defend Catherine Wilkerson's web site is **defendwilkerson.org** The Committee's work is supported by the National Lawyers Guild, Detroit & Michigan Chapter; Council on American Islamic Relations, Michigan Chapter; Detroit Coalition Against Police Brutality; Huron Valley Greens; Green Party of Michigan; Michigan Emergency Committee Against War & Injustice; Gray Panthers of Huron Valley; Bolivarian Youth (Miami); and, the Broward (FL) AntiWar Coalition.*