

Members of the Public Health Committee,

My name is Carolyn Bennett and I urge you to oppose HB 5416, an Act Concerning Deceptive Advertising Practices of Limited Services Pregnancy Centers. This bill has a dangerous potential to infringe on CT Pregnancy Centers and hinder the good work they are doing in the lives of CT women. I have personal knowledge of Hope Pregnancy Center in Cheshire. My family has volunteered there for many years, and I've heard many warm testimonies from clients of the love and compassion they found at Hope Pregnancy Center.

Hope Pregnancy Center offers free and confidential services; they offer medically accurate options and information, free medical grade pregnancy tests and post-abortion healing support. They have a mentoring program for clients – for both mothers and fathers, and they have a store of baby items and supplies. Hope Pregnancy Center does not provide abortions, nor do they refer for abortions, because they are seeking to meet a vital need in a way that is consistent with their beliefs. HB 5416 would create an avenue for those who are fundamentally opposed to these beliefs to attack Pregnancy Centers like Hope. The crafting of HB 5416 itself forms an attack on CT Pregnancy Centers by implying that they are engaging in deceptive advertising practices. I believe that this targeting is inaccurate and unnecessary, and I ask you to oppose this bill.