



March 19, 2018

Chairpersons Gerratana, Somers, and Steinberg, and Committee Members  
Public Health Committee  
Legislative Office Building, Room 3000  
Hartford, CT 06106

**Re: Written Testimony Regarding House Bill 5416**

Dear Chairpersons Gerratana, Somers, and Steinberg, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this written testimony in support of House Bill 5416.

The National Abortion Federation (NAF) is the professional association of abortion providers. Our mission is to ensure safe, legal, and accessible abortion care, which promotes health and justice for women. Our member facilities care for approximately half of the women who choose abortion in the United States and Canada each year, including Connecticut women. For 40 years, NAF has ensured the safety and high quality of abortion practice with standards of care, protocols, and accredited continuing medical education.

NAF strongly supports House Bill 5416, which would help protect women from deceptive advertising meant to delay or prevent their access to abortion care. Fake women's health centers in Connecticut and across the country use a variety of misleading tactics to confuse or dissuade women from accessing abortion care. Though most of these fake centers are not licensed medical facilities, they often go to great lengths to appear as if they are. These fake centers frequently mimic the appearance and design of real medical facilities, use choice-centric terms in their advertising and nomenclature, and set up in close proximity to real clinics, all in an effort to confuse women seeking abortion care.<sup>1</sup>

Inside their walls, fake women's health centers continue to harmfully mislead the women who have been brought in through deceptive tactics. Because they are not regulated like real abortion facilities, fake women's health centers are free to provide women with inaccurate information that is not supported by scientific evidence or backed by medical consensus. Many fake women's health centers engage in delay tactics, telling women to put off making a decision on seeking abortion care,<sup>2</sup> or that they can access abortion care through all nine months of pregnancy, which is false and misleading.<sup>3</sup> Patients who have mistakenly visited fake women's health centers have suffered from missed and inaccurate diagnoses that

<sup>1</sup> Lady Parts Justice, *Choose a CPC*, <https://exposefakeclinics.squarespace.com/cpc/> (last visited March 7, 2018).

<sup>2</sup> NARAL Pro-Choice Minnesota, *State-Funded Deception: Minnesota's Crisis Pregnancy Centers* (Jan. 2012), [http://www.prochoiceminnesota.org/assets/bin/2012NARAL\\_MNCPCReport\\_.pdf](http://www.prochoiceminnesota.org/assets/bin/2012NARAL_MNCPCReport_.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Lisa McIntire, *Crisis Pregnancy Centers Lie: The Insidious Threat to Reproductive Freedom*, NARAL Pro-Choice America, <http://www.ebony.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/cpc-report-2015.pdf> (last visited March 7, 2018).

*president and ceo:* Vicki A. Saporta

jeopardized their health.<sup>4</sup> The unnecessary delays caused by visiting these fake health centers hit low-wage workers and those living in poverty the hardest.<sup>5</sup>

Some fake women's health centers have recently begun advertising "abortion reversal." When they present themselves as legitimate medical facilities, fake women's health centers send the message that this advertised "abortion reversal" is a safe, evidence-based practice accepted by the medical community. In fact, claims about "abortion reversal" are based on very faulty research, and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the American Medical Association agree that there is no reliable evidence that medication abortion can actually be "reversed."<sup>6</sup> Advertising "abortion reversal" services dangerously misleads women. Engaging in the administration of high dosages of progesterone to "reverse" an abortion amounts to experimentation on the women who have entered a fake center seeking real medical care.

Women seeking abortion care need access to quality health care and medically sound information. When fake women's health centers deceptively portray themselves as real clinics providing the full range of pregnancy services, they are interfering with a woman's right to access the health care she needs. A woman who has decided to seek abortion care deserves to be able to access that care from a qualified provider without being subjected to deception, intimidation, or delay.

NAF urges the Committee to consider the health and well-being of Connecticut women and vote in favor of House Bill 5416.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lisa M. Brown".

Lisa M. Brown  
General Counsel & Senior Policy Director

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<sup>4</sup> Brief of 51 Reproductive Rights, Civil Rights, and Social Justice Organizations as Amici Curiae in Support of Respondents, *NIFLA v. Becerra*, No. 16-1140, at 22-26 (S. Ct. Feb. 27, 2018).

<sup>5</sup> *Id.* at 26-30.

<sup>6</sup> Brief of American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, American Medical Association, and Arizona Medical Association as Amici Curiae in Support of Plaintiffs, at 4, *Planned Parenthood Arizona, Inc., et al. v. Mark Brnovich, Arizona Attorney General, et al.*, 172 F. Supp. 3d 1075 (2016) (No. CV-15-01022-PHX-SPL).