

**Testimony for Public Hearing
Committee on Public Health
March 20, 2018**

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**HB 5416 AN ACT CONCERNING DECEPTIVE PRACTICES OF LIMITED SERVICES
PREGNANCY CENTERS**

Representative Steinberg, Senator Gerratana, Senator Somers, and distinguished members of the Public Health Committee,

My name is Erin Dunn and I live in Milford. I am also a senior finishing my last semester at UConn. I testify in strong, enthusiastic support of H.B. 5416 An Act Concerning Deceptive Advertising Practices of Limited Services Pregnancy Centers. The passage of H.B. 5416 is of utmost importance to me as a woman, a concerned citizen and student, and a former NARAL Pro-Choice Connecticut intern.

Limited Services Pregnancy centers often disguise themselves as comprehensive reproductive health care clinics, using healthcare-related names and branding such as “women’s health center” or “pregnancy support center.” Both in my time as a NARAL intern and in my own community, I have seen firsthand the damaging effects of such misleading practices. Deceptive advertising practices of such pregnancy centers clearly impede women’s access not only to important health services, but also to complete medical information. Through thorough research into the practices of limited services pregnancy centers, it became clear that these deceptive practices are an extreme hindrance to informed medical care, and choices regarding one’s care.

Plus, I know that Limited Services Pregnancy centers often locate near colleges and universities in order to target young women. As a student of UConn Storrs, I know firsthand that it is often difficult to access timely, comprehensive, and accessible care near campus. I have heard the worries and fears of many of my friends and fellow students regarding reproductive care. There is a limited service pregnancy center located in Willimantic, just six miles from my campus and right near ECSU, as well as an affiliated mobile van in the Eastern CT area. With many students having limited options of where to turn for medical care, particularly confidential pregnancy-related care, I am greatly concerned about the countless vulnerable UConn and ECSU students who may be misled and deceived.

It is a threat to public health and wellness in our state when people are being deceived, delayed, or blocked in finding the reproductive healthcare they need. H.B. 5416 will significantly benefit my family and my community in allowing greater access to complete information regarding available healthcare services.

This bill is about standing up for women and families in my community, and across the state. This bill is about supporting Connecticut’s public health. Finally, this bill is about transparency and honesty in advertising. When someone is seeking a clinic, they should be able to find one without deception, delays, or confusion.

In conclusion, I strongly support H.B. 5416 to limit the deceptive advertising practices of crisis pregnancy centers in our state. No matter personal feelings, I think we can all agree that no one

should be deceived or misled when seeking healthcare. Women deserve access to complete and accurate information when making medical decisions. People in our state deserve honesty, and I resolutely urge the committee to move forward with H.B. 5416.

Thank you for your time.

Erin Dunn