

Testimony for Public Hearing Committee on Public Health
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H.B. 5416 An Act Concerning Deceptive Practices of Limited Services Pregnancy Centers

Distinguished members of the Public Health Committee, my name is Sally Grossman and I am from Windsor. I'm here to offer testimony in favor of H.B. 5416 An Act Concerning Deceptive Practices of Limited Services Pregnancy Centers.

I am currently a volunteer clinic escort at the Hartford GYN Center which is the last independently run abortion care provider in the state and where a Crisis Pregnancy Center opened last spring. I am also a mother with two young children, a 5 year old son and a 1 year old daughter. But today I will tell you about the child I never knew.

After the birth of my son, I had an IUD put in as my method of birth control. Despite the fact that it is one of the most effective forms of birth control, I found out I was pregnant 9 months after it was inserted. Though this pregnancy was indeed unplanned, it was not unwanted. My partner and I had decided that it was going to be a girl and we I even picked out a name.

At my first OB/GYN they performed a pregnancy test and ultrasound. They were unable to detect a heartbeat during that first ultrasound. Since my periods had been irregular due to the IUD, it was hard to determine the exact date of conception and I was told the lack of heartbeat could be because it was so early on in my pregnancy. It was at this first appointment that I also learned of the risks of being pregnant with an IUD still in place. The risk of miscarriage increases dramatically and it was recommended that the IUD be removed. A follow up appointment was made for two weeks later where hopefully they would be able to see the fetus on the ultrasound, and the IUD would be taken out.

At my second OB/GYN appointment, they were able to detect a heartbeat and measure the fetus and determined that I was farther along than I originally thought. They attempted to remove the IUD but were unsuccessful. Another attempt a few weeks later in the office setting was also unsuccessful and a procedure was scheduled at the hospital where I would be put under to have the IUD removed. Due to the difficulty of removing the IUD in the first place and the placement of the fetus as was determined through the ultrasound, I was warned that a miscarriage after the procedure was highly possible. I was also warned that the fetus may not be viable. After discussing it with my partner we came to the decision that if the fetus wasn't viable, we wanted the pregnancy terminated. I informed the doctor of my decision and the surgery was scheduled.

When I woke up from anesthesia, I was told that the fetus had grown completely around the IUD, which is why it had been so hard to see on the ultrasound. I was also told that the pregnancy wasn't viable and had been terminated. I never did find out the sex. I had been too upset after the surgery to even ask.

The day after the procedure was my son's first birthday party. I had to throw a party for my son hours after losing what I had hoped was going to be my daughter. It was an almost unbearable situation. What made it bearable was the compassionate and timely care I received from medical professionals. I was given medically sound advice from the beginning where I was sure my health was the number one priority. I was not given misleading or false information, I was not lied to to suit someone else religious agenda, and I was able to make a decision, with the help of my doctors, that was in the best interest of me and my family. Because of the timely care I received, my life was never in danger. I spoke with medical doctors from the beginning and my care was based off of a medical assessment of my situation. I'm lucky, because my gynecologist office isn't located next to a Crisis Pregnancy Center. When I walk into my appointment, I'm not bombarded with false information and handed flyers talking about abortion pill reversals and post abortive trauma. It pains me to think about another woman in my situation who wouldn't get the care they need because they were lured into a Crisis Pregnancy Center under false pretenses. The care I received took place over 6 weeks. I had 4 doctors office visits and a hospital procedure. None of my care would have been possible at a Crisis Pregnancy Center and because of my doctors, I was able to decide when the inevitable end of my pregnancy would be. I was able to make a decision based off of medically sound information, and no woman should have it any other way.

I urge you to vote in favor of HB 5416 and ensure that all women are given medically accurate information free from deception. Thank you.