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*CPHA is an affiliate of  
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TESTIMONY OF  
CONNECTICUT PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION  
REGARDING *H.B. 5416*  
*AAC DECEPTIVE ADVERTISING PRACTICES OF LIMITED  
SERVICES PREGNANCY CENTERS*  
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH  
MARCH 20, 2018

Dear Senator Gerrata, Senator Somers, Representative Steinberg, and members of the Public Health Committee,

On behalf of the Connecticut Public Health Association where I serve as Co-Chair of the Advocacy Committee, I am pleased to submit this testimony. CPHA's mission is to promote the exchange of knowledge to improve the practice of Connecticut's public health professionals and the health and well-being of the people of Connecticut. The Connecticut Public Health Association (CPHA) strongly endorses **House Bill 5416** which would prohibit deceptive advertising practices of limited services pregnancy centers.

Access to comprehensive reproductive healthcare has been consistently demonstrated as critical not only to the health of women, but to children, families, and communities. Decisions regarding pregnancy are especially critical, and women must fully understand their options in order to choose the best ones for their health. This bill seeks to ensure transparency and honesty in the advertising practices of organizations purporting to help women make those decisions. It is therefore vital that any organization offering such services be transparent and honest about the available options. When someone is seeking a clinic, they should be able to find one without confusion or deception.

It is a threat to public health in our state when people are deceived, delayed, or blocked in finding the time-sensitive reproductive healthcare they are seeking. When CPCs deliberately confuse, deceive, and delay people in finding comprehensive medical care, this can result in serious harm.

A patient may miss the opportunity to use emergency contraception which is only

effective within a specific time frame after unprotected sex. She may miss the window to access an early medication abortion, or the window to access an abortion altogether. A patient may miss the opportunity to receive early prenatal care to monitor the pregnancy and to identify any potentially serious health problems including treatment for miscarriage or an ectopic pregnancy.

Unlike reproductive healthcare clinics, CPCs are unregulated by the state. When patients are following up on deceptive advertisements by CPCs, they are likely seeking a reproductive health clinic. When patients enter a clinic and disclose personal and medical information, they expect confidentiality. At CPCs, patient-provider confidentiality is not required. In Connecticut, a majority of CPCs operate in municipalities with existing reproductive healthcare providers. Sometimes CPCs are even located down the street or directly across from a clinic. It is important that clear and honest advertising of services is the standard practice so that women can seek appropriate care in a timely way.

As CPHA is strongly focused on health equity, one of our biggest concerns is that CPCs intentionally locate in low-income communities, communities of color, and near colleges and universities. As we work hard as a state to improve health equity and reduce disparities, CPCs are intentionally working to prevent specific communities from making fully-informed choices about their health. This is a practice that must stop if we are to improve the disparities that hold us back as a state.

CPHA strongly urges the Public Health Committee to support HB 5416 in order to protect women's health and legal rights. For additional information on CPHA's position on HB 5416 or other issues related to health equity, public health infrastructure, environmental health, or prevention, please contact me at [jenna.lupi@gmail.com](mailto:jenna.lupi@gmail.com) or 203-804-3562.

Sincerely,

Jenna Lupi  
Co-Chair, Advocacy Committee  
CT Public Health Association