

**Testimony for Public Hearing
Committee on Public Health
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BILL NUMBER HB 5416 AN ACT CONCERNING DECEPTIVE PRACTICES OF LIMITED SERVICES PREGNANCY CENTERS

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

My name is Polly C. Moran, Certified Nurse Midwife and I live in Hartford, Connecticut. I testify in strong support of H.B. 5416 An Act Concerning Deceptive Advertising Practices of Limited Services Pregnancy Centers.

I have practiced Nurse-Midwifery for over 25 years in the Bristol and Hartford communities and am presently the President of the American College of Nurse Midwives' Connecticut Affiliate. Midwives are at the forefront of women centered integral care; we support women with health decision-making in different phases of their life. Nurse-Midwives support each person's right to self-determination, access to comprehensive health information, and active participation in all aspects of an individualized plan of care. Individuals who seek health care deserve complete and accurate information about all legally available health care options so they can make informed decisions about their health.

I strongly support the efforts of legislators to safe guard the women of our community from entities such as the Crisis Pregnancy Center who deliberately mislead our patients and community members. I understand that many organizations can and do, support and work with women; it is very important that it is clear to those same women, what those organizations do and don't do. As a health provider, I would be negligent if I did not provide complete information to my patients. How can I not try to protect women from the false advertising of Crisis Pregnancy Centers in my very own town? This bill is about transparency and full disclosure. H.B. 5416 it is about making sure that women in my community are aware that the CPCs are unlicensed, unregulated, and are not health clinics, despite deliberate efforts by these clinics to portray themselves as something that they are not.

The issue at hand is not only about misrepresentation, or deliberately choosing sites to confuse women by setting up parallel "clinics" to other licensed reproductive health care offices next door. Crisis Pregnancy Centers can delay care or obstruct women from getting the care and information on the very health issues for which they are seeking care. These delays have health consequences. There are many ways women can avoid unwanted pregnancies. Having access to a medication taken during a short time frame after unprotected intercourse can be a very effective method to prevent pregnancy. CPCs do not offer those services. Medical terminations can take place during the first 7 weeks post conception; these early terminations avoid anesthesia, surgical settings, and can be done at home. If women go beyond that time frame, this is no longer an option. Certain screenings done by licensed professionals trained in caring for women may discover complications, including miscarriage or ectopic pregnancies. CPCs are unregulated, do not need to conform to HIPPA, and can provoke unnecessary health risks.

This is not a partisan issue; this in fact, is not a prochoice/antiabortion issue. This is simply a bill which ensures truth in advertising. I feel strongly, as a trained health professional, that informed decision making makes for better healthcare. I urge the committee to move forward with H.B. 5416 An Act Concerning Deceptive Advertising Practices of Limited Services Pregnancy Centers.

Thank you for your time,

Polly C. Moran, MSN, CNM
President of CT Affiliate of American College of Nurse-Midwives