

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 **Barbie Cristofaro** and I live in **Rocky Hill**. I testify in strong support of H.B. 5416 An Act Concerning Deceptive Advertising Practices of Limited Services Pregnancy Centers.

*This bill is important because it tells of the way we act as a society and how we refuse to tolerate deceptive practices, which in turn inform people in need that honesty is not a moral to uphold. If I needed guidance, or if decided on an already difficult decision, I would want it to be a well informed one. I do not have to be a patient to know what kind of care I would like supporting my self - determination. I would want transparency to help me with my decision.*

When I was younger, there was no one at home to discuss difficult topics with in a healthy and understanding way, this left me with no educational material on what to do as a teen hiding my pregnancy from my parents. I certainly could have used supports in letting me know what my choices were. If this bill was in place then, I could have received support in a non - judgmental manner as opposed to the emotional distress I instead endured because the only information was hearing, " what will the neighbors think", or how I had disappointed my religious family. If this bill was around when I needed it I could have known I mattered and my decision no matter the one I chose was mine and that I could NOT pick a wrong one, or that I was not evil or a monster condemned for my choice- but that I was important enough to make a decision on my own with the proper support and resources. This is only one of my experiences, but it is mine, and it is of countless other faces that you have never met. Do not let so many go to a Dead End Street generating deception practices and guilt, not when we are given the space to love one another unconditionally- let Connecticut practice leadership and benefit its communities.

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