

March 19, 2018

To: Public Health Committee

Re: Bill 5416 AN ACT CONCERNING DECEPTIVE ADVERTISING PRACTICES OF LIMITED SERVICES PREGNANCY CENTERS

As a member of the Board of Directors and as a long-time volunteer for SECT Pregnancy Support Center in New London we are expressing our deep concerns for Bill No. 5146. SECT PSC and other like-missioned facilities in Connecticut are staffed by licensed medical professionals and are clear in defining their services. For example, the Center provides free pregnancy tests and ultrasounds, which are a requirement to sign up for health insurance, and then refers them to agencies where they can enroll. And all of these services are provided at no cost to the clients and with no government funds.

We are concerned about the implications and need for Bill No. 5146. This legislation appears to be targeted against Pregnancy Support Centers in response to misinformation regarding their operation and practices. In recent years Reps. Christine Conley, Mike France, Kathleen McCarty and Senators Cathy Osten and Paul Formica have visited the New London Center to gain an insight to the workings and all were impressed and saw no problems that required legislation. At a February 28th public forum held in Gales Ferry Rep Conley and Sen Osten praised the work of the Center and indicated that nothing in Bill 5416 would affect the current operations.

Prior to taking action on Bill 5146 we would encourage you to take the following actions:

- 1) Visit a Pregnancy Support Center to see firsthand how this and other Centers provide a valuable service to and cares about pregnant women and their unborn babies.
- 2) Clearly identify to the PSC Centers the specific deceptive advertising being used as justification of this bill and the corrective language this bill would require.
- 3) Consider the free speech implications of this legislation and the pending National Institute of Family and Life Advocates v. Becerra currently before the US Supreme Court. For example, would the Public Health Committee look favorably on a bill which required abortion providers to clearly post the locations and services of Pregnancy Support Centers? Or to post words and pictures of an unborn baby's development up to and including 26 weeks and describe the potential for pain during the procedure?

We urge you to reconsider this legislation.

Respectfully,

John and Joyce Rodolico
40 Long Pond Rd
Ledyard, CT 06335
johnrodolico@gmail.com