

Testimony for Public Hearing Committee on Public Health

March 20, 2018

Rebecca P. Williams
133 Robin Hill Road
Meriden, CT 06450

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 Rebecca P. Williams and I live in Meriden. I testify in strong support of H.B. 5416 An Act Concerning Deceptive Advertising Practices of Limited Services Pregnancy Centers.

If you had cancer, you would not run the risk of Google searches listing "Limited Services Cancer Centers" first. You would not show up for cancer treatment having to walk through a gauntlet of praying zealots who feel the need to grab at you and tell horrible lies. You would not be confused by two office buildings, side by side, with almost identical names; one of which is purposely going out of its way to trick you. You would not accidentally go to the "Limited Services Cancer Center" where people put on medical lab coats to give a false sense that you are seeing medical providers. You would not be told lie after lie about how cancer treatment works. You would not be given promises of help that never materialize.

If you wouldn't allow it for cancer treatment, why in the world would you make women face such a gauntlet of misinformation? Pregnancy is a medical condition. There are no immaculate conceptions or miracles – we know how reproduction works – it is biology – not religion. Treatment for pregnancy, just like cancer, should be based on well-established scientific methods and this must include mental health. Women must have the right to self-determination for their health without being thwarted by misogynic religious zealots.

You must ask yourself, why you would change your company's name to almost match that of the abortion provider as is the case with Hartford GYN Center vs Hartford Women's Center. Why have a sign in your window that says "Pregnant Need Help?" when all you are providing is spiritual rhetoric and medical misinformation? Why would you do any of this when Connecticut has a host of licensed and regulated medical and mental health providers who let women know about ***all*** of their medical treatment options and not just a select few.

I strongly support H.B. 5416 to limit the deceptive advertising practices of "Limited Services Pregnancy Centers" in our state. No one should be deceived or misled when seeking medical and/or mental health care.

Thank you for your time.

Rebecca P. Williams
Vice President, Hartford Area Humanist