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**Testimony in Support of:** *H.B. 5416 An Act Concerning Deceptive Practices of Limited Services Pregnancy Centers.*  
Public Health Committee  
March 20,2018

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

My name is Rebecca Yungk and I live in New Britain, and I'm currently a second year graduate student at UConn School of Social Work, and I'm testifying in strong support of **House Bill 5416** An Act Concerning Deceptive Practices of Limited Services Pregnancy Centers.

I first want to enforce that this isn't a debate about being for, or against abortion. This is an issue about transparency, and patients deserving accurate medical information when making decisions about their body.

If a women is actively seeking the services of a Crisis Pregnancy Center (CPCs) that's her informed decision. But, it should also be okay and free of shame for the women actively seeking medical services from a women's health clinic.

Anyone seeking healthcare information deserves medically accurate, unbiased care. The goal of CPCs is to use deceptive tactics when women are at their most vulnerable. They attempt to discourage women, and even interfere with their access to other reproductive health care services like birth control and emergency contraception. This undermines a women's ability to exercise her right to reproductive freedom.

CPCs intentionally use similar names to nearby, real medical providers. We see this a few blocks away where Hartford GYN Center, a women's health clinic is an arm distance away from Hartford Women's Center a CPC. Employees dress in white coats or scrubs, even though there are rarely any medical professionals in these facilities. CPCs are unlicensed, which means that they are not bound by any medical confidentiality rules

California conducted a yearlong study of CPCs and found that **91% of visitors were presented with false information and repeatedly told patients that abortion causes breast cancer, infertility, depression, and suicide.**<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.prochoiceamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/NARAL-Pro-Choice-CA-Unmasking-Fake-Clinics-2015.pdf>

Reproductive health care, especially pregnancy care must meet a standard that is centered on the patient. Accessing safe, accurate and comprehensive medical counseling and services is critical. When a CPC gives out false information about pregnancy options and promotes services that they aren't equipped or qualified to provide, they are harming women's health and well-being.

CPCs should be held accountable when they are dishonest and should not be allowed to engage in behaviors that hurt women. Women are consistently fighting an uphill battle to exercise their freedom of choice.

Women are capable of making intelligent and conscientious decisions about their own lives. Women deserve the autonomy and dignity when deciding what is best for them and their families. Women should be trusted and respected to exercise the choices about their bodies, and not shamed by one's own personal belief when making important reproductive decisions.

In conclusion, true reproductive freedom will ensure that everyone, regardless of their situation, had the equal access to safe, compassionate, and comprehensive health care options. Which is why I strongly support H.B. 5416, and I urge the committee to move this bill forward.

Thank you for your time,

Rebecca Yungk