

## 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 Alicia di Leo. I have been a resident of Ellington, CT for 20 years. I write in strong support of HB 5416, An Act Concerning Deceptive Practices of Limited Services Pregnancy Centers.

I very recently signed on as a clinic escort at the Women's GYN Center in Hartford; I became a Planned Parenthood volunteer in 2017. I do these things because I take seriously my role as a mother of three daughters, as an aunt, as a concerned neighbor, as an engaged citizen in a country where people have protected freedoms to live their lives in accordance with their circumstances, their beliefs, and their wishes.

I am not here to debate anyone's opinion about abortion. I am here to state emphatically that I believe the Representatives in this body have an obligation to ensure that their constituents seeking reproductive health care can do so easily, safely, and without deception. Crisis Pregnancy Centers have a clear mission to convince people facing unplanned pregnancies to carry to term, no matter what. Sometimes this means delaying a woman's access to reproductive health care when time is of the essence. If they deceive and stall a woman long enough, her ability to access a medically safe abortion expires.

Would this body allow a pay-day lender to advertise themselves as a federally regulated Bank? Would a pay-day lender be allowed to produce advertisements that made the average consumer believe they were walking into a bank that was FDIC insured? What if that that pay-day lender deliberately and consistently rented out buildings directly next door to an actual bank? Would we act to protect the consumer? Of course we would.

But this is exactly what CPCs do. They mimic the look of an actual health care provider. The workers physically position their centers, themselves, and their advertisements in a way so they can quite literally intercept a woman intent on walking into a legitimate health care center. These centers are unregulated by the State, usually staffed by volunteers instead of medical personnel, with the intent to lure unsuspecting women inside to convince them to carry their pregnancies to term, no matter what. Under the guise of being a real clinic, their aim is to block a woman's legally protected access to medical care. As legislators who craft the law, and as constituents, this intentional manipulation should be offensive and concerning to all to all of us, regardless of our personal opinions about abortion.

Please support HB 5416. People in our state, especially women in difficult situations, deserve a standard practice of honest advertising so they can make informed decisions. I thank you for your time.

Alicia di Leo