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March 4, 2020

Dear Members of the Appropriations Committee,

My name is Christina Bennett and I serve as the Communications Director for the Family Institute of Connecticut. I am testifying in opposition to S.B. No. 274, "An Act Concerning Funding for Planned Parenthood and other Family Planning Clinics" on behalf of myself, the Family Institute of Connecticut Action and the thousands of residents we represent. In 1981 my mother walked out of her abortion appointment in Hartford, CT. The only counsel she received from the hospital counselor was an affirmation that she was "doing the best thing". Later an elderly janitor saw her crying in the hallway and told her God would give her the strength to keep me. When my mother told the doctor she wanted me he pressured her to stay, stating, "You've already paid for this. Don't leave this room!" My mother still reflects on that moment, believing he feared losing her business and the business of those in the waiting room who might follow her out.

As you discuss the issue of taxpayer funding it's important to remember that Planned Parenthood is a business that makes a profit from their clients. Unlike Pregnancy Resource Center's they do not offer their services free of cost to women in need. When I worked as a Client Services Manager for a CT Pregnancy center I answered calls from women who'd gone to Planned Parenthood for various services. One client expressed gratitude after finding out we offered ultrasounds with a licensed sonographer at no cost. A CT Planned Parenthood office quoted her \$600 for the same service. A service I might add that is often used by abortion clinics solely to determine the size of the fetus so staff can recommend appropriate abortion services.

A report submitted to your committee from the CT Catholic Conference reveals that Planned Parenthood of Southern New England's most recent IRS 990 filing for its fiscal year ending March 2018, shows revenue of almost \$39 million. Over the last two fiscal years, PPSNE had an operating surplus of approximately \$11 million along with \$1.3 million spent on miscellaneous expenses and \$543,000 for conventions and meetings. Planned Parenthood is not only a business but a financially strong and successful one at that.

Statistics show that Black women have the highest rates of abortion in the country. In 1960 prior to abortion becoming legal the Black population in America numbered 18,871,831. Today more than 20,000,000 Black children have been aborted which is a greater number than our entire population in 1960. These high rates can be partly attributed to the fact that 78% of abortion facilities are located in Black and Latino

neighborhoods. To better understand the importance of Title X funds being prohibited towards abortion I've attached a document from an organization of Black men and women who like myself, are committed to protecting the lives of our people.

The document states,

*“At the time of the founding of the Office of Population Affairs, many black leaders, including the members of the Black Panther Party, congressional candidate—and eugenic sterilization victim—Fannie Lou Hamer, comedian Dick Gregory and many others saw abortion as a tool of black genocide. To assuage these fears, the congressional act that founded the OPA specifically stated that “None of the funds appropriated under this title shall be used in programs where abortion is a method of family planning.”*

*However, Planned Parenthood—the nation's largest abortion provider—has consistently received tens of millions of Title X dollars each year. According to its own annual report, in a single year Planned Parenthood performed 327,653 abortions, while referring only 1,880 women for adoption services. Although in theory Planned Parenthood does not use Title X funds for abortion as method of family planning, it performs abortions in the same facilities that receive Title X funds for family planning services. Someone who pays the rent on a massage parlor that is also a brothel cannot reasonably say that he does not fund prostitution. Just as doctors who receive kickbacks from certain pharmaceutical companies tend to prescribe more of that company's drugs, Planned Parenthood has been shown to both profit from and have an inflationary effect on the abortion rate in America. And according to its records, Planned Parenthood spends over one million dollars lobbying for pro-abortion legislation each year. If the OPA cannot find any better organization to receive its funding than the nation's largest provider and promoter of abortion, perhaps it is time to start anew.”*

It's right that the current administration is upholding regulations that bar Title X providers from referring for abortion as a method of family planning. This is not a “Gag rule” as Planned Parenthood falsely states. Under Title X regulations health professionals are still able to provide pregnancy counseling, counseling on abortion procedures and allowed to give medically necessary information about abortion to patients. However, direct referrals for abortion are not allowed as the statute written by Congress prohibits funding programs where abortion is a method of family planning. The majority of Americans support this and oppose tax-payer funding for abortions.

Low-income women facing unplanned pregnancies are vulnerable to pressure from partners, employers, and loved ones. In far too many situations, women are encouraged to abort as a response to the challenging circumstances they face. The Rev. Jesse Jackson once stated that although he believed in family planning he was concerned about abortion being pushed upon the poor. He shared, *“Politicians argue for abortion largely because they do not want to spend the necessary money to feed, clothe and ed-*

*ucate more people. Here arguments for in-convenience and economic savings take precedence over arguments for human value and human life. I read recently where a politician from New York was justifying abortion because they had prevented 10,000 welfare babies from being born and saved the state \$15 million.”*

The CT Catholic Conference’s report on abortion reveals 75% of all the abortions in CT are paid for by tax-payer funds. In 2018 the state’s Husky program paid for 6,995 abortions totaling \$4.2 million. The state paying for such a large number of abortions is concerning as CT law states abortions are only supposed to be paid for by taxpayer funds when a women’s health is at risk. CT law allows doctors to determine what constitutes a "medically necessary" justification for abortion services.

How can we ensure the taxpayer funds already allocated to Planned Parenthood aren’t being used to pay for abortions doctors are deeming medically necessary without adequate reason? A friend and former client of an abortion clinic in CT shared that when she had an abortion the staff only asked for her Medicaid info. She was perfectly healthy and they didn’t bother to ask why she wanted an abortion before billing the state. This same clinic (Hartford GYN) left fetal remains inside of her which later lead to a trip to the emergency room. A story that stays with me is one of another Black woman in CT who after multiple abortions was left permanently infertile. When I asked why the doctor performed so many abortions on a single client the answer I received was, “He didn’t care about nothing but the Medicaid money”. Whether that woman's assumption is accurate or not is something I can prove. I mention it because it reveals a mindset that women of color have in our state. Even some who support abortion feel they are taken advantage of by businesses that profit financially from their choices.

Planned Parenthood is a business that’s supported by politicians, celebrities and millions of Americans. They have singers like Miley Cyrus and political leaders such as Hillary Clinton offering their support and pledging financial donations. They have strong brand recognition and as the figures in the CT Catholic conference’s report show, they are more than able to fundraise for their expenses. CT Pregnancy Centers don’t receive any funds from our state and they raise 100% of what they give to women in need. They do this while being needlessly attacked by pro-abortion radical groups and discriminatory legislation (An act concerning deceptive practices at limited services pregnancy centers) While Pregnancy centers work to raise funds while fighting harassment, Planned Parenthood gets millions in funds from our state.

Planned Parenthood does not have a monopoly on women’s health care. As the Health and Human Services Title X Final Rule Compliance and Enforcement Myth vs. Fact sheet says, “There are 4,000 Title X service sites across the nation, with Planned Parenthood representing fewer than 400.” Planned Parenthood offers a limited amount of services that doesn’t include prenatal care. All of their services except abortion are of-

ferred at Federally Qualified Health Centers. I urge you to allow additional funds to go towards the Federally Qualified Health Centers, Community Centers and non-profits who are lacking resources.

Planned Parenthood has an abundance of financial resources and the ability to raise funds they may need for the future. As a taxpayer and resident of CT, I am deeply burdened that my resources are going towards an organization responsible for 300,000 lives lost annually through abortion. Those may be just numbers on a page but if my mother hadn't walked out of her abortion appt. my life would have also been reduced to a statistic. My mother was treated with disrespect by a medical professional who saw her as a price tag instead of a person.

75% of abortions being paid for by Medicaid should cause us all to question whether or not businesses and organizations are profiting from the challenging circumstances poor women of color are facing in our state. I ask you to deny Planned Parenthood of Southern New England additional funding that they walked away from by refusing to comply with Title X regulations. I urge you to look into the reasons why the majority of abortions in CT are being paid for by Medicaid. How many of those women are being offered the termination of their child as birth control, or a means to family planning? How many have suffered botched abortions and kept silent about their experiences? How many would have kept their children if taxpayer dollars were better invested into women's maternity homes, low cost or free daycare, prenatal care programs, diaper banks, free parenting support groups, and other resources?

It's a shame that Hartford's St. Agnes home for pregnant teens shut down because of a cut in state funds while the state has resources to pay for teenagers to abort through the Husky B program. While I'm thankful for CT's faith-based maternity homes like the Nehemiah House and Malta House, it's unacceptable that teens and pregnant women have such limited choices for housing. The number one reason women abort is because of financial reasons and lack of support. Instead of giving Planned Parenthood millions they are capable of fundraising, please consider ways to make our state a stronger place for pregnant women and their families who need assistance.



