

Dear Senator Moore, Representative Abercrombie and distinguished members of the Human Services Committee:

I am testifying in support of raised S.B. 274 An Act Concerning Increased Funding To Planned Parenthood And Other Family Planning Clinics which will provide critical funding for continued access to preventive reproductive health care for the people of Connecticut who already struggle to get the care they need.

My name is Lauren Christensen. I am a mother of three children, two girls and a boy, and I live in Portland. I teach elementary music part time in a public school, and my husband is a ten year veteran of the US Navy. I spent time as a midwifery student and a doula, and those years forever impacted my feelings about reproductive health and justice. My sister, a resident of Long Island, NY, has long depended upon Planned Parenthood for her well woman care.

Planned Parenthood is one of the few organizations that helps to alleviate the gap in quality health care between both women and men, and women of means and in lower socioeconomic statuses. Between cervical cancer screenings, STD testing, routine exams, breast exams, birth control, and more, Planned Parenthood serves a vital purpose, and I fully support them receiving additional funding.

Healthcare should be a human right. Women of all parts of the socioeconomic spectrum should have the right to quality care, and Planned Parenthood closes that gap. The Title X program fights health care inequity by serving populations that have historically faced significant barriers to care, including people of color, people of low income, LGBTQ+ people, immigrants and people living in rural areas.

Please support Planned Parenthood by continuing our state's strong commitment to protecting and improving women's health care. I strongly support raised S.B. 274 and urge the committee and legislature to vote favorably to support funding for family planning providers, including Planned Parenthood of Southern New England, and protect access to sexual and reproductive health care for those most in need in our state.

Thank you for your time,
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