

Supporting Bill: SB 274 An Act Concerning Increased Funding To Planned Parenthood And Other Family Planning Clinics

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

My name is Sneha Jayaraj, I am from Rocky Hill. I work at MetroHartford Alliance as a Research Analyst.

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.

The reason why I personally felt the need to testify is because Planned Parenthood has been my hero in my time of need and I know this clinic has been saving the lives of folk in the community as well.

January of last year, I felt a burning pain when I would pee. I was very nervous and scared at first because the month before I was involved in non-consensual intercourse. Realizing I had to get this checked out – I went to the location that I felt the safest and most comfortable at – as a Queer woman. I was living on South Marshall Street in Hartford at the time, so I went to the closest location, which was Planned Parenthood on Albany Avenue.

I was very tense walking in, thinking about how I was probably going to die soon, I signed-in, filled out forms, when they looked at my income, I was grateful to know that I'd get a free STI screening. After a week, I got a call from Planned Parenthood to tell me the test results, they started off the call by telling me I didn't have an incurable disease. However, I tested positive for Chlamydia and Gonorrhea and they told me it's a simple, quick fix – and it was.

I had a huge sigh of relief and I went into Planned Parenthood once again. I received a shot from my amazing APRN Heather, I took two pills afterwards and I was cured from Chlamydia and Gonorrhea. This sort of affordable high-quality access should really be a human right. Healthcare should be a right for everyone.

As a queer woman, I share this to say Planned Parenthood is a blessing to all of us in CT. Planned Parenthood has continuously proved to be the most reliable, the most nonjudgmental, and the most supportive clinic for my friends, family, and our community. When one of us is healthy, we're all healthy and vice versa.

Thank you to Governor Lamont and elected leaders for supporting family planning funding in the budget and continuing our state's strong commitment to protecting and improving women's health care. Once again, I'm personally very appreciative and grateful for Planned Parenthood Hartford North. I strongly support 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 so much for your time,
Sneha Jayaraj
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