

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

My name is Aven Kelley. I am a junior Human Rights and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies double major at the University of Connecticut. I am also a Generation Action intern with Planned Parenthood of Southern New England. 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.

As a transgender person, I use hormonal birth control to regulate my menstrual cycle and help manage my dysphoria. And while I currently go to UConn's Student Health and Wellness for this, once I leave school, I know that my best option will probably be a Planned Parenthood clinic. If I ever decide that I want to start hormone replacement therapy, I know that Planned Parenthood will probably be my best resource for this as well due to the informed consent model present in many clinics and the affordability of their services. And should, heavens forbid, I ever find myself pregnant, I know that I can find abortion care through Planned Parenthood, because I cannot handle the dysphoria and trauma of a pregnancy.

I haven't needed Planned Parenthood's services so far. But I may need them someday. And many transgender people do need them today, and use them today. The transgender community, and the LGBTQ+ community as a whole, is one of the many communities that faces systemic health inequities that Title X was designed to address. We continue to confront issues of inaccurate sexual health information, spread of STIs, and lack of access to comprehensive, knowledgeable, and affirming sexual and reproductive health care. Losing Title X funding means that many people in my community will lose access to the care that they need to stay healthy. We simply don't have a lot of options. And health care, including sexual and reproductive health care, is a human right.

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. 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.

Sincerely,
Aven Kelley (they/them/theirs)
University of Connecticut