

Members of the Public Health Committee, my name is Julianna Bennett and I strongly urge you oppose SB 835.

As a supporter of Hope Pregnancy Center in Cheshire, in the past I have felt that my testimony gets dismissed as irrelevant. Often the bad actor/good actor point is raised, especially when talking about the good work that Hope does in the community. As a good actor, we're told there is no need to be concerned.

But it is because of this very point that I am concerned, and here is why.

Two years ago, I listened as Representative Linehan testified on this same topic. I appreciated her kind words as she testified that Hope is a wonderful little center that she has supported in the past. She stated that Hope does not engage in deceptive practices, and she is correct in that statement.

Yet at the very same moment, in their 2018 report which is still on their website today, NARAL lists Hope Pregnancy Center as a "fake clinic."¹ In other words, a bad actor. Whose word do you believe? Representative Linehan, or NARAL? Depending on who you believe, we are either a good actor that does not engage in deceptive practices, or we are bad actors operating a "fake clinic".

And that is concerning.

We all know that without objectivity, opinions change from person to person. If nothing else, take a look at other centers represented here today who can share the same story of upholding the highest standards and not engaging in deceptive practices, yet being targeted and labeled as "fake clinics" in the NARAL report just like us.

And because this bill does not define what it means by deceptive, there is no objective standard by which Pregnancy Resource Centers can be judged. It is left entirely up to the subjective opinion of individuals.

I cannot be confident that if we continue in our honest practices, continue being the "good actor" that we are, that we will be safe, that we have nothing to worry about. Because as already evidenced in the NARAL report, by virtue of being a Pregnancy Resource Center, we are already condemned as dishonest, fake and misleading. We are already condemned as deceptive.

And this bill, a bill that zones in on only Pregnancy Resource Centers, a bill that uses subjective language, and a bill that is clearly framed to right an undefined subjective wrong, would allow us to be fined based, not on fact, but on the subjective opinion and assumptions of others.

For these reasons, I urge you to oppose SB. 835.

¹<https://connecticut.prochoiceamericaaffiliates.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/17/2018/03/2018-CPC-Report.pdf>
page 8 of this report, footnote 5 on page 36 of the report
<https://exposefakeclinics.squarespace.com/cpc/>
<https://reproaction.org/fakeclinicdatabase/>
<https://crisispregnancycentermap.com/>