

Re: Raised Bill No. 835 -

An Act Concerning Deceptive Advertising Practices of Limited Services Pregnancy Centers.

Public Health Committee Chairs and Members,

This is the fourth year that this Bill has been presented. The vast majority of the letters written and the public testimony given have always been in complete opposition to it. This Act should never have been proposed, much less come before this committee once again.

This Act incorrectly insinuates, by its very name, that Pregnancy Resource Centers (PRC) deceive the public. It is well documented from the vast amount of testimony given in defense of PRCs that there is no deception being played out on the public. It is also known that there have been no credible instances of complaint being filed against PRCs to any government or civic watchdog group. In fact, in exit interviews provided by clients of these centers, the reviews are highly favorable of the staff, volunteers, services and materials so freely given. And at no expense to the State of Connecticut. Each new client is made well aware that we don't perform abortions or refer for one, either through our advertising, receptionists or our Registration Forms.

So just who is being deceived? I would propose that it is anyone from the general public who has had no previous encounter with Pregnancy Resource Centers and do not know of their good works and excellent reviews. Yet if I were them, and saw SB835 made into law, I would automatically assume that we, the public, have been deceived and need governmental protection. You know – where there's smoke there is fire. But there is no smoke or fire, not even a hint of it, as I have volunteered in numerous capacities for 21 years at ABC Women's Center in Middletown and can say with certainty that we avoid falsehood. 'The truth and nothing but the truth, so help us God' has always been our unspoken motto.

The argument proposed by the proponents of SB835 is that a pregnant woman might be denied a timely abortion if she first went to a PRC looking for an abortion that we do not offer. Yet in the highly unlikely event a pregnant woman would come to a PRC expecting an immediate abortion she would quickly see on a Registration Form, in large, capital letters, that abortions are not performed at our facilities and referrals are not given for one. If she is determined to get an abortion she can simply walk out the door and seek that service elsewhere. There is no deception there.

Therefore, I propose that the real reason this Bill is being presented here is because that hypothetical woman might not immediately leave one of our facilities. She just might stay and receive information about the development of her unborn child and decide not to pursue an abortion. And that does cut into the bottom line of abortion providers and they do not like it.

Please Vote NO on Raised Bill No. 835.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherrill Betterini, Rocky Hill

2/6/2021