



Dear Members of the Public Health Committee:

The CT Freedom Alliance, LLC writes to **oppose** Senate Bill 835, *An Act Concerning Deceptive Advertising Practices of Limited Services Pregnancy Centers*. This bill represents a substantial attack on individual rights and freedom of speech. It punishes businesses for what it characterizes as “deceptive” advertising practices, without defining the term “deceptive.” Who, precisely, is the arbiter of what is “deceptive” is also unclear. Apparently the Attorney General would be able to bring a petition in court to seek relief for allegedly deceptive advertising, and the court—or a jury—would be left to decide that question. The obvious problem with this is that you would be left with several different versions of what is “deceptive.”

The larger problem is that this is a clear infringement on the First Amendment rights of the pregnancy centers and their employees. This bill effectively muzzles these businesses so that they cannot continue the important work of providing pregnant women in distress with options. Instead, it has the effect of offering women only one option: the option to terminate their pregnancy. If you truly believe in “choice,” you will allow women to hear both sides; you will, in fact, allow them to know that there truly is a “choice.” No woman should be forced or coerced into making a decision about her body or her child that will have far-reaching consequences for the rest of her life. If you truly “believe women,” if you truly believe that women are intelligent enough to discern fact from fiction, if you believe that freedom of speech means that every voice should be heard, then you will oppose S.B. 835.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony in opposition to this bill.