

To Whom It May Concern,

Attached is my testimony in opposition of S.B. No. 835

I am currently a nurse at Care Net Pregnancy Resource Center in New London. I am a registered nurse trained in performing ultrasound for the purpose of determining viability and gestational age of a fetus. Care Net is a medically licensed clinic. We have our services clearly stated on our website and clients are informed of the services we offer when they call and when they are in for their appointments. Deception is not taking place here. Most of our clients come to us by word of mouth advertising. This alone indicates that our clients are very satisfied with what we have to offer them.

We offer women the opportunity to make an informed decision. They are given information on adoption, parenting and any questions they have regarding abortions are answered with accurate information. Some women come to us because they are scared and don't know what to do. We provide them with choices-more than one. We can provide them a pregnancy test and ultrasound to determine age at no charge to them. The initial appointment normally takes 1 ½ hours if they choose to have an ultrasound done. There is no major delay taking place in an appointment that lasts such a short time. No woman has ever been turned away because they were abortion minded. They are given information if they ask for it, they are given an approximate gestational age if they want it, they are provided an opportunity to see the ultrasound images if they so choose. Options are there for them.

NARAL was deceptive when they falsified and twisted the truth in their 2018 report when they did not screenshot the whole page of our website and only used the top portion cutting off our disclaimer. The fact is Connecticut already has a law in place regarding deceptive advertising: Connecticut Regulation 42-110b-18 states, in part:

"It shall be an unfair or deceptive act or practice to: (a) misrepresent the owner, manufacturer, distributor, source of geographical origin of merchandise or services; provided however, that nothing contained herein shall prohibit a supplier from labeling merchandise received from others and sold by him with his own brand, trade name, trademark, or other designation customarily used by him; (b) misrepresent the age, model, grade, style or standard of merchandise or services; (c) misrepresent the sponsorship, endorsement, approval, or certification of merchandise or services; (d) misrepresent the affiliation, connection or association of any merchandise, services or business establishment.

<https://portal.ct.gov/DCP/Common-Elements/Consumer-Facts-and-Contacts/Advertising-Misleading-or-False>, February 9, 2021

This law is already in place. Bill S.B. 835 should not be pursued any further since regulation is in place against false advertising. Surely there are more important things for our lawmakers to

discuss during this national pandemic when families are already struggling to get by. We offer so many more services to our communities than abortions. It would be detrimental to make centers close that are dedicated to helping families survive.

It is unsubstantiated to say women are being delayed or refused reproductive rights because our resource center focuses on resources. Yes, we offer choices and options. We offer supplies and support in one of our country's greatest times of need. We are clear in our advertising in what services we do offer and what we do not offer-there is absolutely no deception. Clients are free to come and go as they prefer, they are always offered choices. No one is ever turned away even if they tell us they just want a pregnancy test and ultrasound to confirm their pregnancy and find out how far along they are so they can decide on an abortion or not. Each client is treated with the same respect as any other.

I have to ask why our freedom of speech is being hindered here. Is it because we are faith based and rely on donations to help reach out to our community? Should our freedom of religion and our freedom of speech be denied because our center chooses to not offer abortions based on that freedom but instead choose other options which succeeds in helping many many families get the support they need?

Thank you,

Belinda Donovan, RN BSN