

TO PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE – SB 835 Feb.10, 2021

My name is Edward Gales from Westbrook CT. Thank you for allowing me to give testimony at this virtual Public Hearing on SB835.

I will state that I believe that Life begins at conception and that the unborn baby has the Right to Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.

I fail to understand the logic that this Bill brings to the table. Stifling the Free Speech of pregnancy centers **actually restricts the choice** that women have during a crisis pregnancy. Women need to have options when faced with a crisis pregnancy, and the pregnancy resource centers give them an alternative option to explore. This Bill is not pro-choice. This bill is actually anti-choice.

I have visited several pregnancy resource centers. One, the Crisis Pregnancy Center in Unionville. As a member of the CareNet system, they have been at the same location giving assistance to women for over 30+years. They not only offer counseling, but diapers, wipes, baby clothing, cribs, car seats, grocery gift cards, adoption connections, referrals for pre-natal care, and most important, offering a real celebration of not only the life of their unborn baby, but of the lives of the mom and dads who are requesting assistance. They are professional, compassionate, and caring.

Another PRC that I have visited is the Hartford Women's Center. They are located in the same commercial condominium complex as the abortion clinic, the Hartford GYN Center. The signage is controlled by the Condo Association. Their President is a medical physician, and they offer to moms and dads in a crisis pregnancy, counseling, classes, ultrasounds, adoption referrals, clothing, baby needs, and other necessities in a caring and compassionate atmosphere and manner. Their literature, signage, and offices are not deceptive.

However, if we are discussing deception, consider the “double-speak” that abortion clinics offer a client: a baby is a “fetus”; an abortion is a “pregnancy termination”; abortion is “reproductive rights”; a woman has control over her own body...yes, perhaps for a tattoo, but that doesn’t include the body of the baby in the womb, a separate human being. I would state that they should be honest and say it is a baby, a life that is being ended. If we are discussing “choice”, what about the choice of the unborn baby (a separate human being) to live? Why not add these deceptions of abortion clinics such as Planned Parenthood CT and the Hartford GYN Center to Bill 835??

Further, there is another factor that you must take into consideration: **the Cost of this Legislation.**

Consider that the City of Hartford last year established a similar ordinance. In 2018, the US Supreme Court had previously ruled against a similar law in CA. The Connecticut Court, in its wisdom, ruled in favor of the plaintiffs and crafted a settlement in favor of the plaintiffs which made the City’s ordinance ineffective. For a City that is budget-strapped, it is inconceivable to spend the time, effort, and taxpayer’s money, on ordinances which are politically-motivated, but are not legally-rooted. What a waste!!

When the State of Connecticut has \$90 Billion of Unfunded State Liabilities, does it make prudent fiscal sense to spend the time, effort, and budget of the Attorney General’s Office for enforcement, and the tax-payers money on a bill that is not legally-rooted? I am one of those taxpayers, and it would not be prudent, nor fiscally responsible to consider this Bill.

I urge you to vote NO on SB 835, the bill attacking the free speech of pregnancy center advertising. Thank you for your consideration.