

February 9, 2021

Personal Testimony of John Juhasz residing at 3 Pond Road Wilton, CT to the Public Health Committee for its Public Hearing on February 10, 2021 regarding raised bill SB 835

Dear Chairpersons Abrams and Steinberg and Honorable Members of the Public Health Committee

I am writing to ask you to desist from further consideration of SB 835 concerning restrictions on so-called limited services pregnancy centers in Connecticut. I have read the text of the proposed bill and I understand that this proposal is nearly identical to legislation considered by your committee each of the last few years and subjected to public hearing each time. Thankfully, this Committee did not recommend that these bills proceed in the past. If this proposed legislation is reviewed on its merits, I trust that the same conclusion will be reached. Namely, that it is without merit.

I understand that its aim is to protect pregnant women from supposed deceptive and misleading practices by certain pregnancy service providers. That would be commendable except that there is no evidence that any person has been misled by such service providers. Rather, it appears that the proponents of this bill are seeking to slander and harass those providers whose aim is to provide real options to pregnant women. At best, this is a clear case of viewpoint discrimination. How else to explain that a statement such as "Pregnant? We can help" is presumed deceptive unless the speaker intends to offer an abortion.

SB 835 is also simply poorly conceived legislation which only adds further confusion and is liable to litigation. As you know, there are already statutes in place that govern the promotion of healthcare services and the necessary qualifications and certifications of the providers. Of course, everyone should be held to the same standard. Apparently, only service providers who do not offer abortion or contraceptive services are presumed to deceive under this proposal. The suggestion that the staff of these centers is unqualified and seeking to deceive women regarding their reproductive choices is blatantly false and deeply offensive to these dedicated, compassionate and skilled persons. The premise of deception in these proposals is spurious and adds nothing to the health interests of women and children in our State.

Finally, I find it regrettable that our legislators should spend any time on this issue when similar legislation has already been adjudicated by the US Supreme Court and we have so many other pressing real public health needs in Connecticut. It is already legally dead on arrival. I am certain that the citizens of this state do not want to squander public resources on pointless litigation of poorly conceived and unjust laws. I respectfully request that you desist from further consideration of these proposed bills as lacking any merit for public health policy to the people of Connecticut who you so generously and ably serve.

Respectfully yours,  
John Juhasz  
3 Pond Road  
Wilton