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Public Health Committee
Hartford, CT

February 9, 2021

Dear Members of the Public Health Committee,

I am writing to encourage you to vote "NO" on Bill SB 835.

I believe this bill is misguided when I review the services CT Pregnancy Centers offer women and men in their communities who find themselves pregnant, especially unexpectedly. If there are violations of false advertising, laws exist to regulate that and I note in the bill, it is unclear what concretely constitutes "false advertising" for such centers.

When I consider the work of once such center in my community over many years, Care Net Pregnancy Resource Center of Southeastern CT, I am impressed with the compassion and support staff provide to all their clients, both women and men, free of charge. Informed consent is at the heart of Care Net's practice: staff present all the existing options from the various types of abortion, to adoption, to parenting. This approach is also detailed on the center's website where disclaimers are clear about not offering abortions on site or referrals for abortion, if that is one's choice. In fact, the center's services go beyond this to include post-abortion support and parenting support.

Many in the community who might find themselves conflicted about abortion because of their religious or other convictions, are in particular need of a space where they can talk through their concerns and options in a non-judgmental, confidential, and supportive atmosphere. I don't know of any other service in the community which offers such a space. Care Net Pregnancy Resource Center has broad base community support not only from many individuals, but also businesses, service clubs, and churches of varying denominations. That the center has been offering its services free of charge for 26 years is powerful testimony to this community support.

As a mental health professional with more than 40 years of experience in various countries, I see Pregnancy Centers like Care Net in New London to be essential contributors to the reproductive health sector.

Respectfully submitted,

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[WFMH](#) Representative to the United Nations