

February 8, 2021

To the members of the Public Health Committee,

Attached is my testimony in opposition of S.B. No. 835. I am a client coach at Hope Pregnancy Center in Cheshire. A client coach is assigned to meet with a client to educate and support a women during her decision process, possible pregnancy and post pregnancy. It is my experience that the clients and all who call HPC looking for information are treated with unbiased respect. Having been trained through CareNet and with the staff at HPC, I encountered only women and men that care about expectant women physically, emotionally and spiritually.

HPC provides women with not only education to make an informed decision but also support through coaching for a year, maternity clothes, baby equipment, diapers and formula. Women can also connect with other support groups within HPC and in other towns that meet the women's needs. For instance we partner with Young Lives in Danbury that holds a support group and fun activities for teen moms.

HPC offers accurate information to clients about abortion, adoption and birth. From there, the client is given the freedom to make a decision they feel is best for them. There is not a time when a client is deceived about the services they will receive at HPC, whether it is on the website, on the phone or in a coaching session.

Hope Pregnancy Center in Cheshire is a loving, giving unbiased place where women can find a listening ear, accurate information and support no matter the situation they are in.

Thank you,
Lissa Merchant
Hope Pregnancy Center coach