

Testimony for Public Hearing Committee on Public Health February 10, 2021

**S.B. 835 AN ACT CONCERNING DECEPTIVE ADVERTISING PRACTICES OF LIMITED SERVICES PREGNANCY CENTERS.**

Dear Senator Abrams, Representative Steinberg, and Members of the Public Health Committee,

My name is Evelyn Michael and I live in North Haven. I am a student at the University of Connecticut. I'd like to testify strongly against S.B. 835: An Act Concerning Deceptive Advertising Practices of Limited Services Pregnancy Centers.

I visited a number of times with the Caring Families ultrasound van at the UConn Storrs campus. I was there speaking with the medical personnel on board, affiliated pro-life students, women who received care, and passers-by for a couple of hours one particular day. People were politely offered extra information and flyers, and their acceptance or refusal was always honored. The booklets and flyers, which I flipped through, contained information about STDs, various birth control methods, and the medical facts of what pregnancy and abortion both entail for a woman's health. They looked pretty comprehensive and thorough to me. Not a single person there was forcing anyone into abstinence or pressuring anyone to not have an abortion. Yes, abortion is not brought up explicitly, but certainly no one is coerced away from making their own personal decisions at the end of the day. I only felt positive and loving support from all the volunteers. If I was pregnant, I would love to receive the type of love, support, encouragement, and acceptance that the professionals onboard and surrounding students consistently exuded. I was watching the ladies who stepped out. All came out with smiles.

I, as a student who cares deeply that other young women like me are given as many options as possible for them to prosper with their health and families, ask that S.B. 835 be immediately dropped. Pregnancy centers across this State have helped thousands of women in their time of need and accusing them of false advertising simply because they do not refer for abortions is a more manipulative form of restricting free speech and reproductive choice in actuality. If we are truly pro-choice then we should not bind pregnancy centers with unfair and unnecessary regulations, because they are truly serving women by giving them more options.

Sincerely,

Evelyn Michael

