

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

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

Senator Abrams, Representative Steinberg, and distinguished members of the Public Health Committee,

My name is Katrina Orsini and I live in Naugatuck. I testify in strong support of S.B. 835: An Act Concerning Deceptive Advertising Practices of Limited Services Pregnancy Centers.

I am a design historian and museum professional with a specialty in reproductive and obstetric design. I am well aware of the amount of deception and coercion present in the history of obstetric and gynecological care. We cannot let such practices continue in our state. This bill acknowledges such deception; it searches to create transparency for people who need time sensitive health care. The citizens of this state have the right to and deserve the dignity of health care without unnecessary confusion. Crisis pregnancy centers are a direct threat to this notion.

Crisis pregnancy centers, or CPC's, have not been shy about their intentions. They intentionally choose locations in low income communities, in communities of color, and near colleges and universities. They intentionally choose municipalities with existing reproductive healthcare providers, often even locating themselves down the street or directly across from a clinic. This con they run can be seen through their own words in Figure 1 below, in which a CPC in Norwich states via social media that they have "placed [their] pregnancy center as close to Planned Parenthood as possible" to "save babies and save souls. Especially the abortionist's." The abortionists they refer to here, who certainly do not need saving, are medical professionals regulated by the state's rigorous medical standards, unlike the unregulated CPC's. When patients enter these locals in search of medical care, they provide personal, private information expecting the confidentiality provided by HIPAA. At anti-choice CPC's, patient-provider confidentiality is not legally required, putting people's health further at risk for exploitation. CPC's, whether they purport to care about the needs of individuals, are an extension of the anti-abortion movement, hidden behind the vernacular and rhetoric of healthcare.

I am proud that Connecticut has always been a model for the protections and rights provided by *Roe*. It is time to build upon that legacy and keep this state a safe place for the

people who call it home. An easy way to do so is to ensure no one is misled or lied to when they are seeking medical care. That is all this bill seeks to do: to provide clarity and protect against coercive advertising practices. My concern, and yours, should lie with individuals and families seeking pregnancy-related care in the Nutmeg state. I understand that any organization can provide some services, but it should be clear and entirely legible what those services are. It is a threat to the public health of this state when people are being deceived, delayed, or blocked in finding the time-sensitive and essential reproductive healthcare they need. Therefore, I strongly support S.B. 835 to limit the deceptive advertising practices of crisis pregnancy centers in our state. I urge the committee to move forward with the bill.

Thank you for your time,
Katrina Orsini



Pathways Pregnancy Center Norwich CT



Sep 16, 2019 · 🌐

Here's why we placed our pregnancy center as close to Planned Parenthood as possible; we want to save babies and save souls. Especially the abortionist's.



Figure 1
Screen capture of a Facebook Post from a CPC in Norwich, CT