

February 9, 2021

Public Health Committee of
The Connecticut General Assembly
Legislative Office Building, Rm. 3000
Hartford, CT 06106

TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE:

MY NAME IS RACHELE PATRIGNELLI, AND I AM WRITING IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO S.B. 835.

Here's why:

WHEN DID IT BECOME 'DECEPTIVE' TO OFFER HELP TO THOSE IN NEED?

WHEN DID IT BECOME 'FALSE ADVERTISING' TO NOT ADVERTISE SERVICES THAT YOU DO NOT PROVIDE?

I believe this bill to be a direct attack on pregnancy centers – and on our freedom of speech and religious liberties. The abortion industry would have you believe that the words 'pregnancy' and 'choice' are synonymous with 'abortion', but they still cannot make that choice for us.

Pregnancy centers of Connecticut provide invaluable services to our communities, to women and couples who find themselves ill-prepared for pregnancy and parenthood. Pregnancy centers are very clear and transparent about the services they offer.

Some of these services include (taken directly from websites of CT Pregnancy Centers):

- Referrals for medical support, financial, legal and employment resources, housing, counseling
- Information about pregnancy, parenting, adoption, child safety programs, personal development
- Ultrasounds
- Parenting Support Program, to equip expecting parents with the educational and material assistance they need to provide quality care for their children. Classes include:
 - What to expect in each trimester
 - Childbirth prep
 - Breastfeeding
 - Health and nutrition
 - Bringing home baby
 - Parenting
 - Boundaries with kids
 - Co-Parenting
 - Fatherhood Lessons

These are vital services one cannot receive from state agencies offering handouts. Pregnancy centers fill a void in our communities, and the communities that they are part of support them: volunteering, and donating material resources such as diapers, formula and baby clothes.

Pregnancy centers are charitable organizations providing families with a healthy foundation. They should be supported by the state, not penalized for 'deceptive' advertising for not offering a specific service.

But is this really about misleading advertising, or a strategy to force pregnancy centers into providing or referring for abortions? If so, it is discriminatory, unconstitutional, and a violation of the First Amendment.

I STRONGLY URGE YOU TO REJECT THIS BILL AND RETHINK THE CONSEQUENCES AND DANGEROUS PRECEDENT YOU WOULD SET IN GIVING THE ATTORNEY GENERAL THIS AUTHORITY.

In closing, I would add that I visited the Planned Parenthood website. Most of their services involve contraception and abortion, and I find it very misleading and deceptive that they use the word 'Parenthood' in the title of their organization.

Sincerely,

Rachele Patrignelli

Rachele Patrignelli

Cheshire, CT