

February 9, 2021

Testimony in support of SB 835, An Act Concerning Deceptive Advertising Practices of Limited Services Pregnancy Centers

Dear Distinguished members of the Public Health Committee:

I am writing in support of SB 835, *An Act Concerning Deceptive Advertising Practices of Limited Services Pregnancy Centers* for the simple reason that deception has no place as a business practice, and should not be tolerated by the State of Connecticut, whatever the product or service being advertised or promoted. But this is especially true when the deception can motivate consumer decisions that will have substantial and irreversible consequences.

There are few decisions as consequential as a woman's decision about whether or not to terminate a pregnancy. It is morally reprehensible for organizations, whether for-profit or not, to mislead pregnant women about their healthcare options. And that is exactly what so-called crisis pregnancy centers do.

As explained in the American Medical Association's Journal of Ethics, "Because the religious ideology of these centers' owners and employees takes priority over the health and well-being of the women seeking care at these centers, **women do not receive comprehensive, accurate, evidence-based clinical information about all available options.** Although crisis pregnancy centers enjoy First Amendment rights protections, **their propagation of misinformation should be regarded as an ethical violation that undermines women's health.**"

If truth-in-advertising laws have halted deceptive advertising for cereal, yogurt and energy drinks, surely the same ethical constraints should apply to deceptively promoting services concerning women's reproductive rights. The fact that they don't is why the Public Health Committee must favorably vote SB 835 out of committee and push for its passage in the House and Senate.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Perloe
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