

To the members of the Public Health Committee,

My name is Arelis Rivera García and I am writing in strong opposition to S.B. 835.

I am 32 years old and a mother of two. My son has 9 years old and my daughter is only two years old. I'm originally from Puerto Rico but I came to United States when I was 18 years old to working and support my family. It was difficult because while I was working I was learning a new language. Also there were places that close the doors on me but also places where open the doors.

When I was 22 years old I got pregnant . At that time, I met my family from Hope Pregnancy Center of Cheshire. My sister took me to this place and it was a big relief .At that time, I received a lot of information about pregnancy and I decided and made my own decision of keeping my child. I love the empathy the always gave me because they respect my beliefs and my culture . This mean a lot for me.

I received a big basket with a lot of baby stuff. I also received diapers, wipes a cribs and even a car seat. I was in need of all of those supplies and when I received it, I was extremely happy and grateful. Hope Pregnancy not only support me with personal stuff also support emotionally . Sometimes you just need a person who listen to you without judgment and believe me this ladies are the best doing this.

When I find out I was pregnant the second time, I went back to Hope and it was like the time never passed by. It was nice to come again and they treat me like family. It was different people but again it was great to be back. I got a lot of information and they never try to convince me to keep child. This was my own decision. Every time I go, I feel like home. I have been going for three years.

I received a lot of things for my baby but the difference now is that I get to sit with my coach Lorreta and spend time talking about my week and about my children. This is the time for myself and I enjoy watching videos that helps me understand my children. I really feel Maggie worry about me and my family. Also, she always helps me connecting to different places that helps people in need.

The unconditional love and support that I always received from this ladies it just unbelievable. They always have a smile in there faces that helps me forget about my problem and just look the life as it is beautiful. Also, for Thanksgiving and Christmas, I have the best things for me a my family. It was awesome to have this gifts for my children and the food. I will never forget the impact that this had made on my life.

We need more places like this in our communities with the door always open to help mother and there families.

Sincerely,
Arelis Rivera García