

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.

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

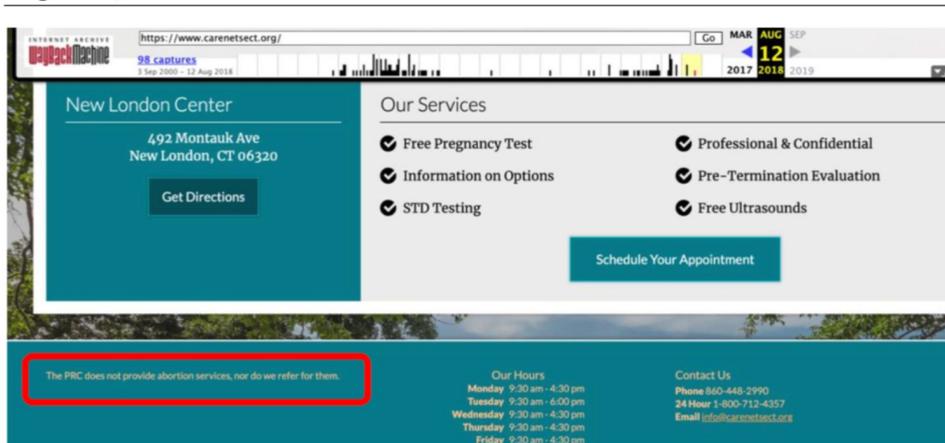
My name is Alexis Sher and I live in West Simsbury. I am also a senior at Wesleyan University and a volunteer clinic escort at Hartford GYN Center. I'm here to testify in strong support of *S.B. 835 An Act Concerning Deceptive Advertising Practices of Limited Services Pregnancy Centers*.

I'd like to begin by underscoring the **sole** purpose of this bill: to ensure that Connecticut residents seeking pregnancy-related care can do so without the barriers of confusion, deception, or shame. Contrary to what some legislators have expressed, this bill is not about abortion, the separation of church and state, or crisis pregnancy centers' religious beliefs. It is about ensuring that the advertisements CPCs put out in the public sphere are transparent and honest.

Many of us here today are aware of the Hartford city ordinance that was enacted in 2017. Before explaining the changes I personally witnessed after the ordinance was passed, I'd like to reiterate that the bill was found to be constitutionally sound and remains intact. After it was passed, I witnessed multiple Hartford-based CPCs alter their online advertisements to explicitly state that they do not provide or refer for abortions. Please see below for two examples of these changes pre- and post- HB 7070:

Care Net's Website - Locations in Bridgeport, Cheshire, Danbury, Middletown, New Haven, New London, Stamford, Torrington, Unionville, Waterbury, and Willimantic, CT

August 12, 2018



Internet Archive Wayback Machine captures 38 captures from 1 Nov 2009 to 12 Aug 2018. URL: https://www.carenetsect.org/

New London Center
492 Montauk Ave
New London, CT 06320
[Get Directions](#)

Our Services

- ✓ Free Pregnancy Test
- ✓ Information on Options
- ✓ STD Testing
- ✓ Professional & Confidential
- ✓ Pre-Termination Evaluation
- ✓ Free Ultrasounds

[Schedule Your Appointment](#)

The PRC does not provide abortion services, nor do we refer for them.

Our Hours
Monday 9:30 am - 4:30 pm
Tuesday 9:30 am - 6:00 pm
Wednesday 9:30 am - 4:30 pm
Thursday 9:30 am - 4:30 pm
Friday 9:30 am - 4:30 pm

Contact Us
Phone 860-448-2990
24 Hour 1-800-712-4357
Email info@carenetsect.org

May 16, 2019

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492 Montauk Ave
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Phone 860-448-2990
24 Hour 1-800-712-4357
Email info@abcwomenscenter.org

ABC Women's Center's Website - Middletown, CT

January 17, 2019

Internet Archive Wayback Machine <https://abcwomenscenter.org/> 72 captures 23 Apr 2008 - 13 May 2019

abc WOMEN'S CENTER

AM I PREGNANT?+ YOUR OPTIONS+ STUDENTS FAQ CONTACT US+ PARTNER

Abortion
Considering abortion? ABC Women's Center provides information on abortion procedures and risks. Because abortion is a medical procedure, it's important that you are educated on your options to ensure that you are making an informed decision regarding your next steps. If you have questions about abortion, our staff is here to help you answer them.

Adoption
Thinking about what is best for you and for your unborn baby is important. Adoption may be an option for you as you make a plan for your child's life. In the last decade, the adoption process has changed significantly, giving birth mothers more options and flexibility. If you have questions about the adoption process, our staff is here to listen.

Parenting
If you are considering parenting, we are here to support you. Our staff knows that children don't come with instruction manuals. That's why we provide resources at our center to help mothers and fathers grow in their parenting skills. Let us help you on your parenting journey. Reach out to us today to learn more about how we can help.

May 16, 2019

abc WOMEN'S CENTER

TEXT: 860-325-2880 CALL: (860) 344-9292 [MAKE AN APPOINTMENT](#)

AM I PREGNANT?+ YOUR OPTIONS+ STUDENTS FAQ CONTACT US+ PARTNER

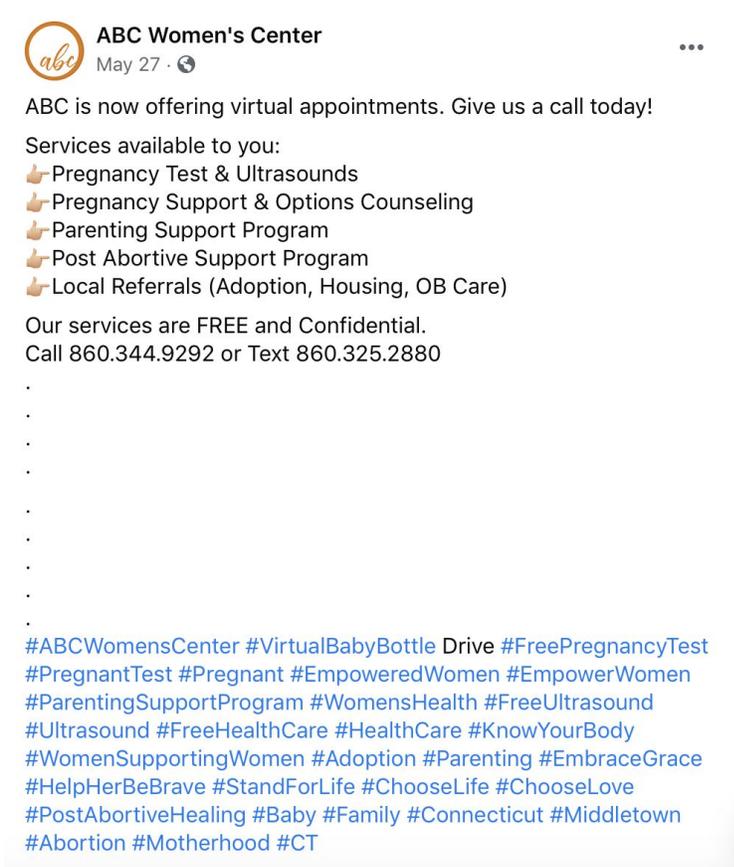
Abortion
Facing an unplanned pregnancy? If so, you may be considering abortion as an option. Although we do not refer for abortions, we can provide you with important information regarding different types of abortion, as well as associated risks.

Adoption
Thinking about what is best for you and for your unborn baby is important. Adoption may be an option for you as you make a plan for your child's life. In the last decade, the adoption process has changed significantly, giving birth mothers more options and flexibility. If you have questions about the adoption process, our staff is here to listen.

Parenting
If you are considering parenting, we are here to support you. Our staff knows that children don't come with instruction manuals. That's why we provide resources at our center to help mothers and fathers grow in their parenting skills. Let us help you on your parenting journey. Reach out to us today to learn more about how we can help.

Like the Hartford city ordinance, this state-wide bill is about transparency and honesty in advertising. If a CPC is honoring this practice, then this legislation will not impact them in the slightest.

Before closing, I'd like to address a final point: the increased threat that CPCs' deceptive advertising practices pose during a public health crisis like the one we are currently in. Throughout the pandemic, I have tracked CPCs' advertisements and social media presence. Many have continued their operations during the COVID-19 pandemic, which is not the problem. The problem is that in a time already wrought with misinformation, deceptive or misleading advertising is yet another harmful barrier that may delay or prevent access to essential healthcare altogether. Please see below for two examples of advertisements that Connecticut CPCs posted on social media throughout the pandemic:



 **ABC Women's Center** May 27 · 🌐

ABC is now offering virtual appointments. Give us a call today!

Services available to you:

- 👉 Pregnancy Test & Ultrasounds
- 👉 Pregnancy Support & Options Counseling
- 👉 Parenting Support Program
- 👉 Post Abortive Support Program
- 👉 Local Referrals (Adoption, Housing, OB Care)

Our services are FREE and Confidential.
Call 860.344.9292 or Text 860.325.2880

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[#ABCWomensCenter](#) [#VirtualBabyBottle](#) [Drive](#) [#FreePregnancyTest](#)
[#PregnantTest](#) [#Pregnant](#) [#EmpoweredWomen](#) [#EmpowerWomen](#)
[#ParentingSupportProgram](#) [#WomensHealth](#) [#FreeUltrasound](#)
[#Ultrasound](#) [#FreeHealthCare](#) [#HealthCare](#) [#KnowYourBody](#)
[#WomenSupportingWomen](#) [#Adoption](#) [#Parenting](#) [#EmbraceGrace](#)
[#HelpHerBeBrave](#) [#StandForLife](#) [#ChooseLife](#) [#ChooseLove](#)
[#PostAbortiveHealing](#) [#Baby](#) [#Family](#) [#Connecticut](#) [#Middletown](#)
[#Abortion](#) [#Motherhood](#) [#CT](#)



Care Net PRC

April 2 · 🌐



Experiencing an unplanned pregnancy can be one of the most difficult times in your life. It can bring about feelings of doubt, stress, and a lot of undue anxiety. Facing a pregnancy decision during this particular season can be even harder.

Even if your pregnancy was planned, you may be wondering if you should continue your pregnancy or if an abortion or the abortion pill is a safe option for you.

We can help. If you or someone you know is facing a pregnancy decision right now, give us a call or send us a message today.

Unplanned pregnancy and COVID-19

(and what you should know)



The bottom line is that it is a threat to public health when people are being deceived, delayed, or blocked from finding time-sensitive reproductive healthcare. That is why this committee should be doing everything in its power to take preventive steps now. In conclusion, 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 S.B. 835 . Thank you for your time.

Alexis B. Sher

5 Summerwood Road

West Simsbury, CT 06092

