

Dear Public Health Committee Members:

Testimony Opposing Raised Senate Bill No. 835

From: Kate Suzio, 35 Lydale Place, Meriden CT 06450 Tel: 203-499-7486

Dear Public Health Committee Members,

I urge you to Oppose Raised Senate Bill No.835, "An Act Concerning Deceptive Advertising Practices of Limited Services Pregnancy Centers". For over 35 years I have volunteered at, and am now a director at, a busy crisis pregnancy center in my community, along with 20 other dedicated and caring volunteers. Therefore, I look from the inside perspective of years of service at my center, which is one of 24 pregnancy care centers in CT. The mission shared by ALL is simple: free, caring, non-judgmental support for thousands of pregnant women and their babies over the last 40 to 50 years. Word-of-mouth from satisfied and empowered mothers is the primary advertisement that encourages over 100 families to seek help every month at our center. It is NOT "Deceptive Advertising" that brings pregnant women to us for help.

The language of RSB835 presumes that "Deceptive Advertising by CPC's is rampant and obvious to everyone. The first 2 ½ pages, out of 4 pages, of this Act define 11 words or phrases; NONE of these phrases are "Deceptive Advertising" or "Corrective Actions". So, WHAT LIES would be identified and prosecuted by the Atty. General? No complaints or claims about services at CPC's have been brought to the Atty. General or the Consumer Protection Dept. over the past 40 years. In fact, many respected social service agencies within the communities refer needy clients to CPC's for help through their pregnancies and beyond. And, of course, CPC's refer many women back to these agencies for resources, such as WIC, Community Health Center, food pantries, and the housing authority. Moms and their babies come to trust and depend on our volunteers as "family".

Where did the false claims of "Deceptive Advertising" originate? Obviously this narrow, unnecessary regulatory legislation against the free services offered to women and their babies in unexpected pregnancies is based on a "turf war" by major abortion providers and proponents: NARAL, Planned Parenthood, Pro-Choice CT, etc. They view CPC's as competition and as a threat to their "market share" and most profitable abortion services. There is no case history in CT of fake advertising over decades of service by dedicated CPC's to many thousands of families. Hard cases, in fact no cases, make bad law. The Public Health Committee, the legislators, and the Atty. General all face huge responsibilities this session like the continuing, high deaths (almost 5000,000 this past year) and a budget deficit of \$150 billion! These overwhelming issues certainly overshadow the fake claim of "Deceptive Advertising". Crisis pregnancy centers here in CT freely contribute so much to the health, welfare, and future of thousands of needy women and their babies.

Respectfully submitted,

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