

Secular Connecticut

***Representing the interests of the non-religious
in the Constitution State***

S.B.835 – Support – Protect Vulnerable Consumers from Deception

Public Health Committee

Testimony – February 10, 2021

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Chairs and members of the Committee, my name is Luther Weeks. Testifying for [Secular Connecticut](#). We represent the interests of the 42% of Connecticut voters that are non-religious. Our positions are based on the U.S. Constitution's guarantee of separation of church and state, along with [Humanist values](#), guided by science and religion.

Secular Connecticut supports S.B.835. We note that the bill does not mention religion and applaud that it applies equally to all.

All consumers should expect entities with names like “Clinic”, “Hospital”, or “Pregnancy Center” etc. should clearly identify when they do not provide comprehensive service or advice based on science, including commonly accepted medical practice. Such facilities that instead provide limited advice, limited services, or any advice or service based on non-standard, non-accepted medical practice should be properly labeled and advertised such, so that the public can tell the difference between their service and a science-based comprehensive service.

This is similar to the ways we limit advertising and insurance claims for non-medically approved/tested pills, potions, treatments, and procedures.

Pregnant women, under the stresses of their situation, especially those without the means to pay, are particularly vulnerable to confusion between such a facility and a medically based facility.

No entity medical, or otherwise, needs to provide every treatment, yet all such facilities advertising advice should clearly identify any limits on options they will discuss and any treatments for which they will not provide information or not offer referrals. No entity should be permitted to provide misleading advertising that incorrectly leaves the impression that it is staffed by medical professionals or offering comprehensive medical advice or tests when they do not. Facilities should clearly inform the public the level of medical professionals that are available on site and the qualifications of anyone who counsels, gives advice, tests, or treats them.

Section 2 could be strengthened to clearly limit, prohibit, and penalize inappropriate in-person solicitation outside the facility, where staff or volunteers often approach individuals using false information and intimidation.

Thank you