

March 2, 2026

**Testimony of Peter Wolfgang, President,  
Family Institute of Connecticut Action in favor  
of HB 5309, AN ACT CONCERNING THE  
PROVISION OF NOTICE TO A PARENT OR  
GUARDIAN OF A MINOR CHILD WHO SEEKS  
TO RECEIVE PREGNANCY-RELATED HEALTH  
CARE SERVICES.**



**Testimony in Support of Parental Notification Prior to a  
Minor's Abortion**

My name is Peter Wolfgang and I am the President of Family Institute of Connecticut Action.

Connecticut policy currently allows minors to obtain abortion care **without parental notification**. That places our state outside the mainstream of American law and practice. According to Guttmacher's January 2026 survey of state laws, **38 states require parental involvement** in a minor's abortion decision—through consent, notification, or both.

A parental notification law would not be radical; it would align Connecticut with the majority of states that have concluded parents generally should not be cut out of serious medical decisions involving their children.

The public strongly supports parental notification

This is not a partisan fringe issue. National polling shows that **most Americans support requiring notification** to a parent or legal guardian when the patient is under 18.

For example, Pew Research Center reports that **about seven-in-ten U.S. adults (70%)** say doctors should be required to notify a parent or guardian if the young pregnant woman seeking an abortion is under 18.

A Quinnipiac University poll from May, 2022 found that **70% of Connecticut voters** support requiring parental notification before anyone under 16 years old can get an abortion, including **59% of Democratic voters, 80% of Republican voters and 75% of independent voters**.

That level of support reflects a basic moral intuition: parents are usually the people most responsible for their child's welfare, best positioned to provide care, and most accountable if something goes wrong.

Parental notification helps protect minors from coercion, abuse, and trafficking

A parental notification framework—paired with a meaningful judicial bypass—also functions as a safeguard against coercion, including exploitation by older boyfriends, abusers, and traffickers.

Major medical guidance recognizes that coercion around pregnancy outcomes is real. ACOG describes “reproductive and sexual coercion” as a form of control that can include pressuring pregnancy decisions, including outcomes around abortion.

And trafficking survivors’ experiences underscore why additional safeguards matter. The AMA Journal of Ethics summarizes a U.S. survey of sex trafficking survivors reporting:

- **71.2%** reported at least one unwanted pregnancy while being exploited,
- **55.2%** reported at least one abortion,
- **29.9%** reported multiple abortions, and
- **about half** of those who had an abortion indicated they were **forced** to have at least one abortion.

These are not abstract concerns. When adults exploit children sexually, secrecy is often a key tool of control. A policy that treats abortion as a purely confidential transaction for minors—without any required parental notice or independent review—can unintentionally make it easier for exploiters to conceal crimes and continue abuse.

To improve the bill and make it more balanced and effective, it should include a judicial bypass remedy

Supporting parental notification does **not** mean ignoring the reality of abusive homes. That is why the strong national norm is **parental involvement + judicial bypass**—allowing a minor to seek confidential court authorization when notification is unsafe or not in her best interests. Guttmacher notes that most states with parental involvement requirements provide judicial bypass procedures.

In short, parental notification is a **common-sense, widely supported safeguard** that brings Connecticut into alignment with most of the country, strengthens family support where it exists, and creates a critical checkpoint for minors facing coercion, abuse, or exploitation.

I respectfully urge the Committee to advance legislation requiring **parental notification prior to a minor’s abortion**.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Abortion rights & confidentiality page from CT GOV:

[https://portal.ct.gov/reproductiverights/rights-and-confidentiality?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com&language=en\\_US](https://portal.ct.gov/reproductiverights/rights-and-confidentiality?utm_source=chatgpt.com&language=en_US)

Medical Treatment for Minors OLR Report:

<https://www.cga.ct.gov/ps95/rpt/olr/htm/95-r-0617.htm>

Guttmacher Report:

<https://www.guttmacher.org/state-policy/explore/minors-access-abortion-care>

Pew Research:

[https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2022/05/06/americans-views-on-whether-and-in-what-circumstances-abortion-should-be-legal/?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2022/05/06/americans-views-on-whether-and-in-what-circumstances-abortion-should-be-legal/?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

ACOG Report:

[https://www.acog.org/clinical/clinical-guidance/committee-opinion/articles/2013/02/reproductive-and-sexual-coercion?utm\\_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.acog.org/clinical/clinical-guidance/committee-opinion/articles/2013/02/reproductive-and-sexual-coercion?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

Journal of Ethics:

<https://journalofethics.ama-assn.org/sites/journalofethics.ama-assn.org/files/2018-06/joe-1701.pdf>