



March 2, 2026

The Honorable Sen. Winfield, Rep. Stafstrom, and Judiciary Committee Members
300 Capitol Ave, Hartford, CT 06106

Submitted electronically

Re: SUPPORT for S.B. 295 - An Act Concerning State Law Protections for Health Care Providers and Patients Related to the Provision of a Legally Protected Health Care Activity

Dear Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom, and Distinguished Members of the Judiciary Committee,

The Abortion Coalition for Telemedicine (ACT) writes in strong support of S.B. 295, which protects Connecticut telehealth abortion providers from extremist overreach and ensures patients have access to essential healthcare, regardless of where they live.

As the leading national organization advocating for telehealth abortion provision and access, ACT works with state advocates and lawmakers to draft and enact telehealth shield laws that offer critical legal protections to telehealth abortion providers. ACT's co-founder and Medical Strategy Director, Dr. Maggie Carpenter, was the first telehealth abortion provider to be charged criminally in Louisiana and civilly sued in Texas for allegedly treating state residents via telehealth. Without New York's strong telehealth shield law that ACT's founders helped enact, Dr. Carpenter would be awaiting trial in a Louisiana jail. The impact of legal protections like those in S.B. 295 cannot be overstated.

In 2022, Connecticut led the nation in enacting the first-of-its-kind shield law, paving the way for other states to enact comprehensive shield laws that protect telehealth abortion providers regardless of a patient's location. Explicit telehealth protections like those in S.B. 295 have helped sustain abortion access for hundreds of thousands of patients trapped in states where abortion is banned. In the post-*Roe* legal and healthcare landscape, access to safe, affordable, private telehealth abortion care is a lifeline for vulnerable patients unable to safely travel for care.

S.B. 295 builds upon Connecticut's existing shield law, reaffirming the state's commitment to protecting all of Connecticut providers and the patients they treat – including those living in states whose own state governments have tried to ban essential healthcare. The bill's explicit protection of telehealth provision regardless of a patient's location mirrors language enacted in eight states, including California, Colorado, Maine, Massachusetts, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington.

As Connecticut considers S.B. 295, we are witnessing a continued legal assault on telehealth

abortion providers, patients, and medication abortion, which now accounts for 63% of all abortions in the U.S. In 2025 more than a dozen states introduced bills that would make abortion a homicide and subject pregnant people to murder charges for accessing care. These attacks underscore the urgent need for robust shield laws like S.B. 295 that defend against this new era of criminalization, protect providers from out-of-state prosecution, safeguard patient privacy, and ensure access to medication abortion. While we cannot prevent anti-abortion states from targeting Connecticut abortion providers altogether, Connecticut must act to align state law with the most comprehensive and protective shield laws.

ACT strongly urges the Judiciary Committee and CT General Assembly to support S.B. 295. By further bolstering Connecticut's Reproductive Freedom Defense Act and the state's shield protections with these added provisions for telehealth providers, Connecticut will be able to offer a critical layer of defense for its dedicated and compassionate reproductive health care workforce seeking to respond to the national public health emergency that is our post-*Roe* reality.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important bill.

Sincerely,

Lizzy Hinkley
Legal Director, The Abortion Coalition for Telemedicine (ACT)