

## Testimony for Connecticut Joint Judiciary Committee

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

My name is Dr. Iyanna Liles. I am a board-certified OB/GYN physician licensed to practice medicine in Connecticut for the last 11 years and am the Vice Chair for the Connecticut section of the American College of Obstetricians Gynecologists (ACOG), which represents 1,068 OB/GYN physicians and partners in women's health answering the call of our profession in our state.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the Connecticut section of ACOG in support of 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.

Connecticut has been a leader in protecting and expanding access to abortion and reproductive care for decades and the Legislature has an opportunity to build on our strong history with the passage of SB 295. This bill would bolster Connecticut's existing shield law to ensure that abortion providers in Connecticut can continue to provide abortion care to their patients regardless of the patient's zip code. The bill would also allow abortion and gender affirming care providers to list the facility instead of their personal information on prescription labels. This bill would allow physicians to provide this necessary, evidence-based care in a timely manner with assurances that the state of Connecticut will protect them no matter where the patient resides. This legislation would offer a critical layer of confidentiality and anonymity for providers of reproductive health care and gender-affirming health care services by allowing them to remove their individual names from prescription labels.

Since the *Dobbs* decision, medication abortion has become more important than ever in ensuring patients, even those in restrictive states, can get access to abortion care. According to the Society for Family Planning, telehealth abortions provided under shield laws make up nearly all abortions occurring within states with total abortion bans.<sup>1</sup> SB 295 would not only protect the

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<sup>1</sup> <https://societyfp.org/research/wecount/wecount-june-2025-data/>

abortion workforce in Connecticut but would also support patients who cannot get access to care in their own community.

Abortion care is a safe, essential part of reproductive health care. This includes medication abortion even when provided through telehealth. Mifepristone is safe not just when it is dispensed in a health care facility but also when it is dispensed by mail or certified pharmacy after the patient has been evaluated and counseled via telehealth. According to ACOG's evidence-based clinical guidance, "telehealth models for medication abortion have been shown to maintain high rates of safety and efficacy without requiring in-person assessment." The overwhelming weight of scientific evidence and two decades of medical practice show that mifepristone is safe and effective, and that its strong safety profile persists whether distributed in person or by mail.

SB 295 would also offer the same telehealth protections to gender affirming care providers. Lawmakers across the country are attempting to push gender affirming care out of reach and criminalize those who provide the care. The extension of Connecticut's protections to the telehealth provision of gender affirming care can be particularly important for gender diverse patients who might have had poor past experiences with in-person care. By protecting Connecticut's abortion and gender affirming care workforce, the legislature will be supporting patients across our state and the country who are seeking this care.

ACOG strongly supports the passage of SB 295 by the Joint Judiciary Committee and the Connecticut General Assembly. By further bolstering Connecticut's Reproductive Freedom Defense Act and our 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.

Iyanna Liles, MD FACOG