

Name: Cait Murray

Title: Board Member

Organization or Agency: REACH Fund of CT

Topic: SB00295 - AAC STATE LAW PROTECTIONS FOR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS AND PATIENTS RELATED TO THE PROVISION OF A LEGALLY PROTECTED HEALTH CARE ACTIVITY.

Supports

Testimony:

Good afternoon Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom, and members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Cait Murray, and I am submitting testimony in support of S.B. 295 in my capacity as a board member of the REACH Fund of Connecticut.

In a time when state-level restrictions on abortion and gender-affirming care are stripping people of essential health care, telehealth has become a critical lifeline—connecting patients to the care they need regardless of where they live. Connecticut has an opportunity to ensure that providers in our state can continue to safely support pregnant patients across the country through telehealth, but they need clear and strong legal protections to do so.

S.B. 295 would expand Connecticut's provider shield law to ensure that abortion and gender-affirming care providers are protected from hostile out-of-state prosecution when providing lawful care via telehealth, regardless of where a patient resides. These protections are essential as other states attempt to extend their restrictive laws beyond their borders and threaten providers who are delivering evidence-based care.

Connecticut was the first state in the nation to pass a provider shield law following the upheaval caused by the Supreme Court's decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*. That leadership reflected our state's commitment to protecting both patients and the providers who care for them. Expanding these protections is a necessary next step to ensure Connecticut providers can continue offering essential health care without fear of politically motivated legal threats from other states.

Thank you for your consideration, and I respectfully urge you to support S.B. 295.