

Senator Anwar, Representative McCarthy Vahey, and Distinguished Members of the Public Health Committee,

My name is Dr. Savannah Kaszubinski. I currently reside in West Hartford and am an OBGYN who serves patients in Farmington and Hartford. **Thank you for allowing me to testify in support of H.B. 5516 An Act Concerning Reproductive Rights.** This bill would protect health care providers who offer the standard of care and medically accurate information to their patients about reproductive and gender-affirming healthcare.

I am an OBGYN who offers full spectrum abortion and contraceptive services to my patients. I prioritized this in my career specifically, but not everyone who becomes an OBGYN opts to do the same. Religious or moral objection to abortion does not limit people from pursuing a career as an OBGYN. However, every single OBGYN who graduates from an accredited residency program has to meet a set of standard competencies established by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education. In relation to abortion the following competencies are required: [4.11.i.2. Residents must be involved in educating patients on the surgical and medical therapeutic methods related to the provision of abortions.](#)

[4.11.i.3. Residents must participate in the management of complications of abortions.](#)

This is regardless of religious affiliation of either the resident or the institution that the resident trains at. These standards are required to be taught to all OBGYN residents to become board certified. OBGYNs should be protected, regardless of their institution, of providing care they are required to be competent in.

I see patients who are referred to the clinic for abortion services from religiously affiliated institutions. Patients may initially seek care from these institutions due to ease of access. This is especially prevalent for patients in rural communities with limited options. They often are not made aware of the restrictions of the institution and are not apprised of what medically accurate information they are not receiving. [This is reflected in the literature where patients are not always able to identify a hospital is religiously affiliated and what breadth of services they do not provide.](#) All patients have the right to accurate information about their reproductive health and to be counseled on the full spectrum of options available.

H.B. 5516 would ensure that all of our state's providers, regardless of their employer or hospital affiliation, are able to provide evidenced-based, safe, and medically-accurate information without fear of disciplinary action. Denying patients information about their health can cause delays in treatment and endanger their lives. This bill is not proposing the government mandate institutions and providers to counsel patients or dictate what services they provide. Rather, it frees providers to give information to patients they are ethically obligated to do. I respectfully urge the Public Health Committee and Connecticut General Assembly to vote favorably for H.B. 5516. Thank you for your time and consideration of this important bill.

Thank you,

Dr. Savannah Kaszubinski