



Luke A. Bronin
Mayor

March 20, 2018

Chairman Steinberg, Chairwoman Gerratana, Chairwoman Somers, and members of the Public Health Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of **H.B. 5416**, An Act Concerning Deceptive Advertising Practices of Limited Services Pregnancy Centers.

This legislation is rooted in a very simple principle: women deserve to be told the truth – especially when they’re making choices about their own health and wellbeing. Specifically, the bill would protect clients from “false, misleading, or deceptive” advertising from facilities that provide services to pregnant women.

In response to an apparent effort to mislead women, the City of Hartford enacted a similar ordinance based on the same principle. The Hartford GYN Center, the only independent, state-licensed family planning clinic in Connecticut, has given women in Hartford and Greater Hartford access to a wide range of reproductive healthcare services since 1978. Last year, a “crisis pregnancy center” called the Hartford Women’s Center opened in an adjacent office building, just across from the Hartford GYN Center.

That alone isn’t necessarily a problem – the Women’s Center certainly has a right to provide the services it wants. However, we heard a number of complaints about women who felt the Women’s Center tried to deceive them. For example, we heard that as women walked in for appointments at the GYN Center, they were encouraged to visit the Women’s Center instead. We also discovered the Women’s Center was touting the fact that it sought to “lure” women who were trying to find the GYN Center.

Regardless of your views on abortion, we should all agree that dishonest conduct is wrong. The legislation before you today would prohibit the kind of deception women in Hartford have been exposed to, while doing nothing to infringe on first-amendment rights. I urge you to support H.B. 5416.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Luke A. Bronin", written over a horizontal line.

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