

**Testimony for Public Hearing  
Committee on Public Health  
March 9, 2020**

**Jasmine Patel, MD  
2020 Zonal Avenue, IRD 512  
Los Angeles, CA 90033**

**SB 144 AN ACT CONCERNING DECEPTIVE PRACTICES OF LIMITED SERVICES  
PREGNANCY CENTERS**

Senator Abrams, Representative Steinberg and distinguished members of the Public Health Committee,

My name is Dr. Jasmine Patel and I was a physician at Hartford Hospital, the Hospital of Central Connecticut, and the University of Connecticut Health Center for four years between 2014 and 2018. My experience with a patient that was harmed by a limited service pregnancy center is why I testify in strong support of S.B. 144 An Act Concerning Deceptive Advertising Practices of Limited Services Pregnancy Centers.

Betty was a young woman whom I met as a consultant for pregnant patients in the Emergency Room at Hartford Hospital. She came in for abdominal pain and her pregnancy was visibly showing. She revealed to me that she was hiding her pregnancy from her family and had been seeing a women's center, a crisis pregnancy center, in Hartford because she wanted a termination. She told me she had gone every few weeks for the last few months but was not given any instructions on how to have an abortion yet. Performing her ultrasound, I was able to determine her fetus was now past the legal limit for abortion. I had to tell her that even though she had clearly indicated her desire to terminate months prior, now she had no choice in the matter because she had been misled and pushed past the legal limit. As I watched tears stream down her face, my heart broke that HER life and dreams had not been valued and she was blocked from getting the medical care she needed.

In Connecticut, most fake women's health centers operate in municipalities with existing comprehensive reproductive health care centers. Sometimes fake women's health centers are even located down the street or directly across from a clinic and use similar names and colors to intentionally confuse patients. For example, the fake women's health center that opened directly across a small walkway from the Hartford GYN Center, a family planning clinic, is called the Hartford Women's Center and uses similar colors and fonts for its signage. It frequently has volunteers outside directing patients seeking abortion to their door instead. In order for patients to be able to differentiate between centers who do and do not offer the full range of pregnancy options, it is important that clear and honest advertising of services is the standard practice.

As an obstetrician/gynecologist, I have dedicated my life to ensuring that my patients have the best comprehensive women's healthcare. With pregnancy options decision making, timely medical care is crucial for a woman's safety and choice. Having seen a Connecticut woman's

reproductive freedom taken away from her, I urge you to not allow this to happen to other Connecticut women. Please take the necessary step to regulate deceptive advertising practices to ensure no one in our state faces deception or delays when seeking time-sensitive comprehensive reproductive health care. I strongly support S.B. 144, and I urge the committee to move forward with this crucial policy to protect those seeking care.

Thank you for your time.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "JPatel". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Jasmine Patel, MD**  
**2020 Zonal Avenue, IRD 512**  
**Los Angeles, CA 90033**