



116 Grove Street, Torrington, CT 06790

**Testimony  
Opposed to**

*S. B. 144 "An Act Concerning Deceptive Advertising Practices of Limited Services  
Pregnancy Centers"*

Before the Public Health Committee

March 9, 2020

Members of the Public Health Committee, my name is David Reynolds, Chairman and founder of the Two Hearts Pregnancy Care Center located in Torrington Connecticut. I am here today to speak in opposition to Senate Bill 144 *An Act Concerning Deceptive Advertising Practices of Limited Services Pregnancy Centers*. This proposed bill is based on completely inaccurate and misleading information about pregnancy resource centers in our state and is part of a national campaign to discredit the work that these centers perform. This legislation is not actually driven by concerns over false and misleading advertising, but by an ideological conflict between pregnancy resource centers, that do not provide abortion services, and centers that do provide or refer for abortions. *The word "abortion" is the linchpin in determining who is covered by this proposed legislation and who is not.* Anyone arguing that this bill is not based on an organizations viewpoint on abortion has not closely read the bill.

Every pregnancy resource center operates differently and is an independent organization. I would briefly like to take this opportunity to tell you about our center. Two Hearts Pregnancy Care Center is a community based non-profit organization that services women as they find themselves facing an unplanned pregnancy, having economic difficulties providing for their newly born children or trying to leave an abusive relationship with their children. Since opening in 2012, Two Hearts has provided emotional support, parenting skills, and supplies to hundreds of women and their children. Two Hearts has a working relationship with many social service agencies in Torrington. Two Hearts makes referrals to these organizations and they make referrals to Two Hearts. Two Hearts receives no state or federal financial aid and is funded totally by donations and fundraising activities. In 2019, Two Hearts serviced 192 women and their children and had 1,900 client visits.

Two Hearts **is not** an organization that lies to women in need or that falsely or deceptively advertises it services to mislead pregnant women looking for help. Despite this fact we are listed as a *"fake clinic"* by NARAL CT, as is every other pregnancy resource center in the state. A large part of the women we have serviced have come to Two Hearts based on referrals from other social service organizations, family members and friends. This high number of referrals shows that people in the community support and trust Two Hearts. If we practiced any of the dubious activities that proponents of this bill claim, the referral numbers would be drastically lower. Two Hearts spends almost no funds on advertising.

I mentioned earlier that this legislation is more about an ideological conflict between the pregnancy resource centers and the organizations who support this legislation, such as NARAL CT and Planned Parenthood. Proof of this statement can be found in Section 1(7) where *limited services pregnancy center* is defined as centers that do not provide referrals for abortions or emergency contraception. This automatically excludes any center, such as Planned Parenthood

centers, from being covered by this proposed legislation because they perform or refer for abortions. *If any pregnancy care center in Connecticut added abortion referrals to its list of services it would no longer be covered by this proposed legislation. If this proposed bill is adopted, the state would be incorporating "viewpoint discrimination" into state law, opening the legislation up to a federal legal challenge.*

Additionally, what constitutes false advertising is not clearly defined in this legislation, making centers vulnerable to harassing legal suits which would exhaust financial resources so badly needed to aid the women and children they serve. The bill provides the Attorney General, without even a complaint, to take unilateral action to investigate a center, order compliance with his findings and finally bring court action. If a center attempts to contest the Attorney General's order the legal cost could very well shut the center down.

Finally, legal actions across the nation over the past several years have almost entirely ruled these type of laws unconstitutional. In several of these court cases, lack of substantiated evidence of the harm done to women was one of the major reasons the courts ruled against the laws. In other words, just like in Connecticut, there has been a complete lack of evidence that the centers are intentionally misleading women.

Two Hearts and many other centers I have interacted with do not practice misleading or deceptive advertising. Like Two Hearts, they treat the women seeking assistance with compassion and caring support. I believe that an act of true deception, with a complete lack of concern for the women we serve, is being practiced by the organizations promoting this legislation.

I urge the members of the Public Health Committee to oppose S.B. 144.

David Reynolds  
Chairman, Two Hearts Pregnancy Care Center

Attachments: Two Hearts Brochure



## Who Are We?

Two Hearts Pregnancy Care Center is a Catholic organization servicing women and men from throughout northwestern Connecticut encountering an unplanned pregnancy or facing difficult economic challenges in providing for their newborn child.

At Two Hearts, volunteers make the difference. Two Hearts is staffed and supported almost exclusively by volunteers who give generously of their time and talents. Please consider assisting us as we seek to bring the light of Christ's love to those we serve.

You can make a significant difference in the life of a child by volunteering a small portion of your time. Training is provided and hours are flexible.

### Donors

Two Hearts PCC is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. We rely on the generous support of individual contributors.

## Testimonials

Two Hearts is happy to be able to help the women, children, and families in our community. Our clients are grateful for the services we provide and appreciate the assistance we offer. Read below to hear how Two Hearts has impacted the families we've helped.

"Thanks for all the help given to me. I feel very grateful. That whenever I go, you and your helpers are very friendly and attentive." -Y.K.

"Thank you for the baby supplies, the friendship, for caring, and for the love and support." -F.D.

"Thank you for the diapers, wipes, classes, and baby food. Thank you for the warmth, attention, and professionalism from all volunteers and workers that I always received. I definitely recommend this program to other moms." -A.A.

Two Hearts Pregnancy Care Center



Pregnant?  
Need  
Assistance

Caring for Your Newborn  
Child ?

We Can Help!

Caring Support



Accurate

Information



Free Resources



Two Hearts PCC  
116 Grove Street  
Torrington, CT 06790  
24 hour phone line:  
860-482-0672

www.TwoHeartsCenter.com



## Our Purpose

Two Hearts Pregnancy Care Center is a ministry committed to empowering individuals, through education, comfort and assistance, to make positive life choices related to their sexuality and childbearing, consistent with Catholic teachings concerning the sanctity of human life.

We are a community-based, nonprofit organization dedicated to reaching out to women facing unplanned pregnancies, or difficult economic situations while attempting to raise their child.

## Our Services:

- ◆ Free pregnancy testing
- ◆ 24- hour support
- ◆ Educational materials
- ◆ Adoption information
- ◆ Education on fetal development
- ◆ Factual information about abortion
- ◆ Baby clothes and baby products
- ◆ Referral to childbirth prep classes
- ◆ Social service referrals
- ◆ Post-abortive support for women and men
- ◆ Emotional and spiritual support

### Two Hearts will not provide:

- abortion services (surgical or drug induced) or referrals for such services
- birth control or referrals for such services

## Q&A

**Q:** Will it cost me anything to use the services at Two Hearts PCC?

**A:** No, our services are free of charge.

**Q:** Are services confidential?

**A:** Yes, unless in certain circumstances, when due to age or in the interest of the client, we may be required by law to report to proper authorities.



**Q:** What if I just want to talk?

**A:** Then we just want to listen. If you need someone to listen to you, offer ideas, or talk through decisions, we are here to help you in whatever way we can.

**Q:** How do I set up an appointment?

**A:** Call us at 860-482-0672 - 24 hours a day

