

Below is testimony written by a pro-life member of MCFL who testified in front of the Joint Committee on Public Health in favor of one of MCFL's sponsored bills.

Testimony on H. 2039

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee: My name is [*name omitted for anonymity*] and I am from Worcester. I am here representing myself in support of H 2039, An Act to advance the safety of women seeking to terminate a pregnancy

I collected 270 signatures, standing outside of supermarkets to get the public policy question on the ballot. I can tell you that after hearing why I was collecting signatures, the response of the average citizen was generally one of shock, surprise, and dismay. Over and over people consistently responded with statements like "You've got to be kidding! How come they're not?" Many people then went on to name those facilities they knew to be inspected to keep people safe. I can recall a gentleman who noted, "They inspect elevators for safety." Another said, "My vet's office is inspected. I have to get my dog licensed." They could easily see that women going in to a clinic deserve to go in to a clinic that is licensed and has been inspected since other facilities of lesser import are held to no less a standard.

On the issue of staff training and emergency equipment, the response was no different. Again it was one of shock and disbelief. The citizens of Worcester wanted to know why the staff are not trained in emergency measures. One woman noted that even airports have defibrillators. A young man said his gym had a defibrillator. They believe as I do that the 16 facilities in question should have emergency equipment available if they're doing surgical abortions.

The people who signed the papers for the public policy question were both pro-choice and pro-life. They saw this as an issue of protecting the safety of women going in for a surgical abortion. In November 65% of the people of the 16th Worcester district voted in favor of the public policy question.

In my career as a nurse I have worked in staff education and as a basic life support instructor taught CPR. It only takes several hours to train a group of 4-8 individuals with no experience in basic resuscitation measures. CPR courses are even offered online. CPR re-certification takes even less time. It is done annually or biannually depending on the certifying body so the requirement would not impose a heavy burden on any facility. Documentation of training is minimal. It is the standard of care to have staff trained in emergency procedures in every other clinic setting.

In summary Mr. Chairman, the public are in favor of this bill, emergency equipment is now commonly found in public areas, and I know that staff training would not be taxing. I ask you to support H 2039 or to report it out favorably.