

Hon. Katie Muth,
Chair, Senate Democratic Policy Committee
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Hon. Ryan Bizarro
Chair, House Democratic Policy Committee
PO Box 202003
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September 6, 2022

Sen. Muth and Rep. Bizarro:

We are writing to address your September 6, 2022 hearing on Pregnancy Centers. We are directors of pregnancy resource centers across Pennsylvania. Since we were not invited to speak at this hearing regarding our centers, we want to take this opportunity to tell you about who we are, what we do, and how we serve women and their families here in the state.

We stand ready to serve women so that no woman feels alone, coerced, or so hopeless that she assumes there are no choices but to end her child's life through abortion. Pregnancy resource centers have served women free of charge for decades and will continue to love and serve the women and children of our state.

There are 190+ pregnancy resource centers in Pennsylvania that combine compassionate care with practical support and valuable education for women and families struggling with an unplanned pregnancy.

Currently, in the state of PA, pregnancy centers outnumber abortion clinics 9 to 1. Closing or hindering these services would be an enormous detriment to our communities and the women and families in them. The combination of medical, educational, and support services pregnancy centers provide in one place, for free, are not provided by other community agencies. In short, they are irreplaceable to the tens of thousands of women who use them.

In 2019 alone, pregnancy centers provided services and materials valued at more than \$5.6 million to the state of Pennsylvania, serving 60,882 women, men, youth and families.¹

\$3.2 million in medical services:

- 12,645 free pregnancy tests
- 9,111 free ultrasounds performed by registered nurses/medical sonographers
- 10,723 total STD/STI tests performed by registered nurses (5,777 patients tested - 72% female, 28% male)
- Many pregnancy center locations in Pennsylvania provide medical care related to pregnancy and are staffed with licensed medical providers.

\$1.8 million in family services:

- 19,829 free consultations with new clients
- 41,053 students attended sexual risk avoidance presentations
- 6,583 clients received free parenting education (85% female, 15% male)
- 492 clients received free after-abortion support and recovery (99% female, 1% male)

¹ Report published in July 2021.

\$608,144 in material items:

- 91,023 total free baby items given to families in need
- 31,259 free packs of diapers
- 13,168 free packs of baby wipes
- 45,318 free new & used baby clothing outfits
- 562 free new car seats
- 716 free new & used strollers

This was all made possible by 483 total staff, 25% of whom were licensed medical professionals, as well as 1,813 total volunteers, 12% of whom were licensed medical professionals.

Women deserve support - For women who do not feel prepared to become mothers, pregnancy resource centers can help. We exist to ensure there is support when women need it most. Every mother has the right to love and support during an unexpected pregnancy. Pregnancy Centers support women wherever they are in their pregnancy journey and beyond.

Here is a snapshot of some of the women served by our centers:

Gina - "The 3 ladies I met today are some of the most genuine, caring, nicest people I have ever met! I was so nervous and they really put my mind at ease and made me feel like I mattered! The ultrasound technician was amazing and really took her time with us. If you are pregnant and scared, do not hesitate to call. 5 stars!"

Ava - "The friendliest and most accepting staff I have seen! The nurses and clinicians make sure you feel safe and loved. Definitely would go back and recommend it to anyone who needs these services!"

Danielle - "Great experience! Staff was very kind and helpful. They gave me my first ultrasound, printed out several copies of pictures, provided me with the proof of pregnancy form that I needed, did std testing, and also supplied me with prenatal pills. My experience was wonderful and I would recommend them to anyone in need. Everything was astonishingly free and the services are of great quality."

From a former pregnancy resource center director:

"I received an after-hours call last year. I was in the grocery store. On the other end was a scared young woman who explained that she took the abortion pill. I asked when she took it because there is only a short 72hr window to yield the most success in saving the baby during that time. After 72 hours the mifepristone has the opportunity to have irreversible damage to the fragile baby.

The young woman said that she called the abortion clinic earlier asking if there was any chance of reversing this. She was advised to go to the emergency room. I told her to keep me posted on her visit and I also provided her with the abortion pill reversal hotline. Meanwhile, I contacted one of the on-call doctors for abortion pill reversal and gave her a heads up. She contacted the hotline to let them know that she will assist this young woman.

Ultimately, the emergency room staff told her that they could not help her save her baby.

I advised the on-call abortion pill reversal doctor. She made time to see her that evening. Time was running out.

The young lady made her way over to the doctor's office that evening. She needed a special treatment as she was allergic to the general pill that would be given for the reversal.

Later that week I brought her into the office to talk to her about a plan for pregnancy. It was then that I discovered she had many issues at home. Because she chose life, she was now facing homelessness. Her mother did not want her to live under her roof with a baby. We were able to place her into a maternity home.

She received ongoing support from our pregnancy center, the maternity home and the doctor who performed the reversal. Mom and baby are doing well today.”

From 2016-2020, pro-life pregnancy centers nationwide partnered with pregnant women who were considering abortion or abortion vulnerable to save more than 800,000 lives.

Pregnancy Centers are good for Pennsylvania. Pregnancy Centers form a vital network of care for all those who face unplanned pregnancy. These life transforming centers strengthen families and care for the next generation.

We welcome each of you to contact Pennsylvania Life Exchange's representative, Sarah Bowen, if you have any questions about our work. You may reach her at sarah@promiseoflifefnetwork.org or 724-794-3325 ext. 1401. The pregnancy center closest to you would be happy to give you a tour of their facilities to give you a clear picture of who we are and what we do.

Signed,

Pennsylvania Life Exchange, representing Pennsylvania pregnancy centers

CC: House Democratic Policy Committee
Senate Democratic Policy Committee