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This bill would renew state funding to Crisis Pregnancy Centers, or CPCs, which was removed during the 2023 legislative session. CPCs are anti-abortion organizations whose primary goal is to dissuade pregnant people from getting abortions. CPCs not only refuse to provide or refer for abortion care, which is a prerequisite to receiving grant money under this bill, but they also largely do not provide or refer for prenatal care. As of 2021, 95.6% of Minnesota CPCs did not provide prenatal care, and 54.4% did not refer for prenatal care.¹ The result is that CPCs delay or prevent pregnant people from getting the health care they need, whether that be abortion care or prenatal care.

CPCs make false and misleading claims. As of 2021, over 63% of Minnesota CPCs made false and biased claims.² 29% of Minnesota CPCs promoted so-called “abortion pill reversal,” which is a dangerous and unproven intervention that the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists says is “unethical” and “not based on science.”³

Although many CPCs present as though they are medical offices, the vast majority of CPCs do not have medical staff. As of 2021, only 9% of Minnesota CPCs claimed to employ a physician, and only 20% claimed to employ a registered nurse.⁴ Research indicates that when there are licensed medical professionals at CPCs, most are engaged part-time or as volunteers and are sometimes licensed in unrelated specialties.⁵ At least one Minnesota CPC’s medical professional on staff was an optometrist.⁶

Because CPCs present as medical offices, they collect vast amounts of sensitive personal information from their clients. Many CPCs claim that this data is protected under HIPAA, but because there is generally no licensed medical staff, neither HIPAA nor the Minnesota Health Records Act applies. This means CPCs collect personal health data with no obligation to keep it confidential, which is particularly concerning given the current climate of criminalization of pregnancy outcomes. This is not just hypothetical; in May 2024, Heartbeat International, one of the largest national CPC networks with over 50 CPCs in Minnesota, leaked the private health data of several of its clients.⁷

Finally, the state should not fund CPCs because CPCs’ use of the funding is not adequately regulated, and there have been many reports of CPCs misusing taxpayer money.⁸ For example, in

¹ The Alliance, *Designed to Deceive: A Study of the Crisis Pregnancy Center Industry in Nine States*, 51 (Feb. 1, 2022), https://alliancestateadvocates.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/107/Alliance_CPC_Report_FINAL2-1-22.pdf.

² *Id.* at 50.

³ *Id.* at 51.

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ Jessica Valenti, *EXCLUSIVE: Health Data Breach at America’s Largest Crisis Pregnancy Org*, Abortion, Every Day (May 30, 2024), <https://jessica.substack.com/p/exclusive-health-data-breach-at-americas>.

⁸ Reproductive Health and Freedom Watch, *Why Is the Billion-Dollar Unregulated Pregnancy Clinic Industry Receiving Increasing Taxpayer Dollars?* (July 2024), https://reproductivehealthfreedom.us/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/July-2024_Memo_Taxpayer-Funding-to-UPC-Industry_updated-1-1.pdf.

Minnesota, one former recipient of Positive Abortion Alternatives funding received \$75,000, but allocated only 7% of its budget to services for pregnant people.⁹ Another recipient received approximately \$65,000 per year but served fewer than 20 clients per year.¹⁰

Funding should be given to regulated organizations that support pregnant people with material resources, but it shouldn't have a prohibition on discussing, providing, or referring to abortion. This bill will divert money away from unbiased and qualified health care providers and toward ideological anti-abortion organizations that delay and prevent pregnant people from receiving real health care.

⁹ The Alliance, *Designed to Deceive: A Study of the Crisis Pregnancy Center Industry in Nine States*, 50 (Feb. 1, 2022), https://alliancestateadvocates.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/107/Alliance_CPC_Report_FINAL2-1-22.pdf.

¹⁰ *Id.*