
JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING PREGNANCY RESOURCE CENTERS

Model Resolution & Policy Guide
For the 2015 Legislative Year



Changing Law to Protect Human Life, State by State

INTRODUCTION

*“[The pregnancy resource center] offered me hope and assurance....”*¹

*“The support and love the center showed me gave me the validation I was searching for all along.... It was about empowerment, guidance and support.... For the first time, I felt like I had choices and that I could make a genuine, confident decision.”*²

*“They sat down with me and helped me go over all my options, and they really listened to my needs. I didn’t feel judged; I just felt cared for.”*³

*“I was able to honestly express my fears and concerns. My peer counselor walked me through all of my options.... [The pregnancy resource center] became my source of strength as well as information.”*⁴

*“At the center, they sat down with me, they listened to me, and they helped me think through all of my available options. I was so thankful for how much information they had to offer....”*⁵

*“I saw a sign that read, ‘Considering Abortion? Pregnancy Care Centers: Caring, Confidential, Trusted.’ It gave me a sense of comfort I hadn’t felt in weeks.”*⁶

The life-affirming impact of pregnancy resource centers (“PRCs”) on the women and the communities they serve is already considerable. Each year, the reach and influence of PRCs grows as more centers open, as public opinion on abortion increasingly shifts to a pro-life ethic, and as PRCs receive more favorable attention for their important work. Thousands of PRCs operate across the country, serving women with compassion and integrity. In 2010, PRCs served over 2.3 million people.¹ Notably, the services provided by PRCs saved communities across the

¹ Family Research Council, “A Passion to Serve, A Vision for Life (2009),” available at <http://www.apassiontoserve.org/> (last visited Aug. 25, 2014) (*Tia, Ma-chi and Ma-chiya’s Story*).

² *Id.* at 9 (*Megan and Ava’s Story*).

³ *Id.* at 11 (*Tina and Isabella’s Story*).

⁴ Care Net, “Success Stories: Jeannette, Miguel, Steven Michael,” available at <http://www.care-net.org/ourwork/story.php?id=11> (last visited Aug. 25, 2014).

⁵ Care Net, “Success Stories: Sarah’s story,” available at <http://www.care-net.org/ourwork/story.php> (last visited Aug. 25, 2014).

⁶ “A Passion to Serve: A Vision for Life,” *supra*, at 9 (*Megan and Ava’s Story*).

nation over \$100 million, according to conservative estimates. Further, 71,000 volunteers at PRCs performed an estimated 5,705,000 uncompensated hours of work.⁷

Perhaps there is no better indicator of the positive impact that PRCs are having by supporting women emotionally and financially, by protecting women from the adverse health consequences of abortion, and by helping to reduce the number of abortions performed each year than the increasing vitriol directed toward these centers by pro-abortion advocacy groups. These groups refer to them as “fake centers” and produce kits for activists to target and “expose” PRCs with negative publicity and protests. Even they, in their zeal to promote abortion-on-demand, cannot ignore the very real and increasingly powerful impact PRCs are having on women and on public opinion about abortion.

Pro-life legislators around the country continue to support this important work. In recent years, in the face of continuing economic concerns and state budget shortfalls, a number of states still considered measures to provide funding to organizations providing abortion alternatives, principally PRCs. This was accomplished through legislation creating “Choose Life” specialty license plate programs or providing direct taxpayer subsidies to PRCs.

Support for PRCs is nonpartisan. Both Democrats and Republicans commend the work of PRCs. For example, Representative Daniel Lipinski (D-Ill.) has observed the successful role PRCs have played in improving the lives of women, communities, and the culture as a whole stating, “The success rates and national expansion of these pregnancy care centers are a testament to their invaluable work in the lives of communities and individuals over the years. These networks provide services that are often unavailable elsewhere to expectant mothers.”

However, a small number of states have recently considered measures directly attacking the mission of or seeking to impose unnecessary regulations on PRCs. Although these state legislative efforts have been unsuccessful, there has been a notable increase in such measures since 2004. Having failed to gain traction for their efforts at the state level, abortion advocates have recently shifted their attention to proposing county, city, and other local ordinances attacking pregnancy centers. Such local laws have been enacted in Baltimore, Maryland, Montgomery County, Maryland, New York City, Austin, Texas, and San Francisco, California.

Thankfully, PRCs and their supporters have been largely successful in defeating state legislation and local ordinances often introduced at the behest of pro-abortion advocates and designed to undermine and ultimately close down PRCs. For example, in 2010, AUL worked with pro-life and pro-family advocates in Virginia to defeat (in both the House of Delegates and the Senate) a

⁷ Family Research Council, “A Passion to Serve: How Pregnancy Resource Centers Empower Women, Help Families and Strengthen Communities (Second Edition) (2011),” *available at* <http://apassiontoserve.org/> (last visited Aug. 25, 2014).

NARAL-inspired measure seeking to impose unnecessary and confusing regulations on PRCs. Instead, both houses later adopted AUL's model resolution commending the work of pregnancy centers.

To help educate legislators and the public on the positive impact of PRCs, Americans United for Life has developed this joint resolution honoring the work of PRCs. For more information and drafting assistance, please contact AUL's Legislative Coordinator at (202) 289-1478 or Legislation@AUL.org.

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JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING PREGNANCY RESOURCE CENTERS

JOINT RESOLUTION No. _____
By Representatives/Senators _____

WHEREAS, the life-affirming impact of pregnancy resource centers on the women, men, children, and communities they serve is considerable and growing;

WHEREAS, pregnancy resource centers serve women in [*Insert name of State*] and across the United States with integrity and compassion;

WHEREAS, more than 2,500 pregnancy resource centers across the United States provide comprehensive care to women and men facing unplanned pregnancies, including resources to meet their physical, psychological, emotional, and spiritual needs;

WHEREAS, pregnancy resource centers offer women free, confidential, and compassionate services, including pregnancy tests, peer counseling, 24-hour telephone hotlines, childbirth and parenting classes, referrals to community health care, and other support services;

WHEREAS, many medical pregnancy resource centers offer ultrasounds and other medical services;

WHEREAS, many pregnancy resource centers provide information on adoption and adoption referrals to pregnant women;

WHEREAS, pregnancy resource centers encourage women to make positive life choices by equipping them with complete and accurate information regarding their pregnancy options and the development of their unborn children;

WHEREAS, pregnancy resource centers provide women with compassionate and confidential peer counseling in a nonjudgmental manner regardless of their pregnancy outcomes;

WHEREAS, pregnancy resource centers provide important support and resources for women who choose childbirth over abortion;

WHEREAS, pregnancy resource centers ensure that women are receiving prenatal information and services that lead to the birth of healthy infants;

WHEREAS, many pregnancy resource centers provide grief assistance for women and men who regret the loss of their children from past choices they have made;

WHEREAS, many pregnancy resource centers work to prevent unplanned pregnancies by teaching effective abstinence education in public schools;

WHEREAS, both federal and state governments are increasingly recognizing the valuable services of pregnancy resource centers through the designation of public funds for such organizations; *[and]*

WHEREAS, pregnancy resource centers operate primarily through reliance on the voluntary donations and time of individuals who are committed to caring for the needs of women and promoting and protecting life. *[; and]*

[OPTIONAL (consider adding only in states where PRCs have been publically accused by a legislator, abortion-advocacy group, or another party of false advertising or other deceptive practices): WHEREAS, pregnancy resource centers provide full disclosure, in both their advertisements and direct contact with women, of the types of services they provide.]

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE *[LEGISLATURE]* OF THE STATE OF *[INSERT NAME OF STATE]*:

Section 1. That the *[Legislature]* strongly supports pregnancy resource centers in their unique, positive contributions to the individual lives of women, men, and babies—both born and unborn.

Section 2. That the *[Legislature]* commends the compassionate work of tens of thousands of volunteers and paid staff at pregnancy resource centers in *[Insert name of State]* and across the United States.

Section 3. That the *[Legislature]* strongly encourages the Congress of the United States and other federal and state government agencies to grant pregnancy resource centers assistance for medical equipment and abstinence education in a manner that does not compromise the mission or religious integrity of these organizations.

Section 4. That the *[Legislature]* disapproves of the actions of any national, state, or local groups attempting to prevent pregnancy resource centers from effectively serving women and men facing unplanned pregnancies.

Section 5. That the Secretary of State of *[Insert name of State]* transmit a copy of this resolution to each pregnancy resource center in *[Insert name of State]*, to the Governor, to the President of the United States, and to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives of the United States Congress.

More detailed information about legislative efforts related to pregnancy resource centers can be found in AUL's annual publication *Defending Life*.

Defending Life 2014: The Women's Protection Project is available online at AUL.org.

For further information regarding this or other AUL policy guides, please contact:

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