



NARAL  
Pro-Choice Washington



## PRESS RELEASE

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## Washington House of Representatives Misses Opportunity to Protect Women's Health

### *Limited Service Pregnancy Center Accountability Act (HB 1366) Expires Without A Floor Vote*

Olympia, WA – A bill that would have addressed serious harm to women caused by limited service pregnancy centers has not moved forward in the state legislature. HB 1366, the Limited Service Pregnancy Center Accountability Act, was not brought to the House floor for a vote before the 5pm cut-off for bills to pass from their house of origin today. The measure would have required limited service pregnancy centers to provide women with accurate information about their services, to deliver pregnancy test results immediately, and to protect the privacy of women's medical information.

While women's health advocates are extremely disappointed that the House has chosen to put off taking action to address the deceptive practices of some limited service pregnancy centers, advocates say they're buoyed because House leaders have expressed a preference for passing this bill in 2012.

"It is extremely disappointing that the House of Representatives did not move forward with this bill this year," said Elaine Rose, CEO, Planned Parenthood Votes! Washington. "We need commonsense protections to ensure women seeking pregnancy care are not delayed, misled or harmed. We know Washingtonians want these policies in place and will work with the legislature next year to make sure this is accomplished."

"It is frustrating that this bill and its women's health protections will not be moving forward this session," said Lauren Simonds, executive director of NARAL Pro-Choice Washington. "But we are very grateful for the strong support of the bill's co-sponsors in both chambers and we look forward to working with these legislators next year to get this important legislation passed."

Limited service pregnancy centers, also known as crisis pregnancy centers, offer pregnancy tests and sometimes ultrasound imaging or sexually transmitted infection testing, but no other medical care. Women, often low-income and without health insurance, go to these centers seeking medical care and unbiased pregnancy options counseling. Instead, they get false or misleading information about reproductive health care, their pregnancy test results are withheld, and they are denied needed referrals for reproductive health care. They also have no assurance that their medical privacy will be protected. There are at least 46 such centers operating in Washington in 21 counties and 33 of the state's legislative districts.

**The Legislation would have:**

- Required the centers to protect the privacy of health care information collected from persons seeking services.
- Required limited service pregnancy centers to provide pregnancy test results immediately.
- Required a limited service pregnancy center to disclose that the center does not provide services or referrals for abortion or comprehensive birth control and that it does not provide medical care for pregnant women.

At the House hearing in January, Jennifer Adams testified that her access to prenatal care was delayed when a limited service pregnancy center refused to provide her a copy of her own medical record. This is [just one of many examples](#) of how women's health is put at risk by these centers. Without this legislation, the centers will continue to endanger women's health, infringe on patients' rights, and limit women's health care options.

A broad coalition of organizations, including Planned Parenthood, Legal Voice, NARAL Pro-Choice Washington, NOW and the ACLU of Washington, backed the bill this year. Polling shows that 70%-88% of voters in Washington support the common sense provisions of the bill. This support is found statewide across party, age, gender, and religious affiliation.

Coalition partners plan to work with legislators next year to pass a bill that will offer essential protections for women seeking pregnancy care.

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[Planned Parenthood Votes! Washington](#) (PPVW) is an independent, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization educating Washingtonians and policy-makers about reproductive health issues. PPVW lobbies and educates to advance Planned Parenthood's mission and also engages in limited electoral activities.

[Legal Voice](#) is a nonprofit women's rights legal organization that pursues justice for all women and girls in the Northwest through ground-breaking litigation, legislative advocacy, and educational tools to help individuals understand their rights.

[NARAL Pro-Choice Washington](#) is a grassroots pro-choice political advocacy organization. NARAL works to protect every woman's right to access the full range of reproductive health options, including preventing unintended pregnancy, bearing healthy children, and choosing legal abortion.

The [ACLU](#) of Washington is a non-profit, non-partisan membership organization devoted to protecting the civil liberties of all people in Washington and extending rights to groups that historically have been denied equal treatment.