

# For Immediate Release

## May 2022

*To speak with Ms. Foster and/or Ms. Sterlace, email [info@feministsforlife.org](mailto:info@feministsforlife.org) or [info@fclny.org](mailto:info@fclny.org). Ms. Sterlace can also be reached at 716.864.1454.*

### [Women Deserve Better Than S470/A5499](#)

The purported purposes of bills S470/A5499 include helping New York public health administrators better understand and address the unmet health and resource needs of pregnant women, but the true intentions behind this legislation is far more sinister. A5499 has already passed the New York State Assembly and is currently stuck in committee on the Senate side.

The status of pregnant women in New York is dismal. Studies show that especially minority, underprivileged pregnant females face a dearth of diverse and vital health and resource services.

According to Feminists for Life of America President Serrin M. Foster, **"These bills are discriminatory and inadequate. The impacts of S470/A5499 are potentially harmful to pregnant women and families. If signed into law, pregnancy resource centers would be burdened with red tape and regulatory nonsense, which would cripple them and their ability to serve the most vulnerable. This proposed legislation is anti-choice and anti-woman, and will likely result in less, rather than more, resources and support for pregnant women in New York."**

Feminists Choosing Life of New York Executive Director Michele Sterlace states, **"The bills aim to examine the impact of only non-abortion related pregnancy resource centers, and exclude examining their impact on women's health. The bills also do not address centers that provide or refer for abortions, including whether these centers provide any information concerning abortion alternatives or accurate, non-coercive information regarding abortion."**

Unlike the majority of states, New York does not require, among other things, that women receive information regarding pregnancy-related life-affirming options. Georgia, for example, requires abortion providers to have materials available that "list agencies that provide alternatives to abortion," in addition to information concerning fetal development.

**"Abortion providers in New York offer few to no resources to pregnant women regarding abortion alternatives, including information and referrals to material support that help poor women bring pregnancies to term,"** says Sterlace.

Foster also points out, **"In New York, pregnancy resource centers are privately funded, unlike in states with pregnancy resource center funds, such as Florida and Texas. Unlike Planned Parenthood's centers, which receive more than a half billion dollars from the government, New York's pregnancy resource centers are privately funded, mostly by small donations."**

Both FFL and FCLNY agree that S470/A5499, as written, discriminatorily impacts and deprives minority, underserved pregnant women of essential reproductive health services.

Foster, who was raised as a child in Upstate New York, claims, **"Resources that support marital, single, and partnered parenthood; or kinship care and guardianship; or open, closed, and semi-**

**open adoption are crucial. Pregnancy resource centers give a gift of a lifetime. This draconian effort targets women who seek to explore these choices and find resources that support their choice."**

FFL explains: Pregnancy resource centers are there to help women navigate their options. Many of these centers have staff or volunteers who speak more than one language.

Financial services available include:

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, previously known as food stamps)
- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)
- WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) Nutrition Program
- Medicaid

Direct services available include:

- Clothing, housing, furniture, and temporary shelter
- Medical care, including high-risk pregnancy services and help for victims of domestic violence

Other services available include:

- Guidance in informing the child's father and her parents
- Legal assistance, including obtaining child support
- Help with employment, education, domestic violence, and addictions
- Childbirth, breastfeeding, and parenting classes
- Postpartum counseling and assistance
- Adoption counseling

**"Ask yourself," Foster adds. "If these centers are forced to close, where will pregnant women go for all of these services?"**

Sterlace concludes, **"New York abortion policy gives women a fundamental right to some abortions, but it also provides women with the fundamental right to bring their pregnancies to term, and that often means helping pregnant women with vital, non-abortion related resources."**

