

# **Attorney General Raoul Applauds House Committee Passage Of Legislation To Address Deceptive Practices By Crisis Pregnancy Centers**

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CHICAGO - Attorney General Kwame Raoul applauded a House committee's passage of his legislation to hold crisis pregnancy centers that engage in deceptive practices accountable.

Illinois law establishes the fundamental rights of individuals to make autonomous decisions about their reproductive health. There have been reports in Illinois and nationwide of limited services pregnancy centers, often referred to as "crisis pregnancy centers," using deceptive and misleading practices to spread false information and interfere with patients' timely access to the full range of reproductive care.

"I experienced deceptive crisis pregnancy center tactics firsthand on a visit to tour a Planned Parenthood health center in Illinois. People who appeared as though they might work there were outside attempting to divert us away from the health center," Raoul said. "Patients report going to crisis pregnancy centers – sometimes even receiving exams and ultrasounds – thinking they were visiting a different clinic that offers the full range of reproductive care. This is an extreme violation of trust and patient privacy that should not occur in our state."

Senate Bill 1909, sponsored by Rep. Terra Costa Howard, was approved by the House Health Care Availability & Accessibility Committee and will now be considered by the full House.

"These fake clinics were set up specifically to deceive patients who are seeking reproductive healthcare," said Rep. Howard. "These so-called clinics actually put patients' health at risk by interfering with their access to comprehensive care, and it's time to hold them accountable for their deceptive practices."

While crisis pregnancy centers' advertising may offer general pregnancy-related services, these facilities do not offer the full range of reproductive care, and the mission of most crisis pregnancy centers is to convince pregnant people to carry to term and not have an abortion. Many provide misleading information overstating the risks associated with abortion, including conveying false claims that abortion causes cancer or infertility.

Some are located near clinics that do provide comprehensive reproductive care and use names similar to clinics to misdirect patients and prevent them from accessing the full range of information and care. Crisis pregnancy centers do not provide abortions or referrals for abortions. Many do not provide contraceptives or comprehensive prenatal care. They often do not have any medical professionals on-site, and they do not necessarily disclose any of these limitations in their online or in-person materials. They also may not keep medical records and personal information private and confidential.

In addition to initiating SB 1909, Attorney General Raoul has offered recommendations to patients seeking reproductive care to ensure they can access comprehensive health services. Patients should check to be certain that they are entering the correct facility because crisis pregnancy centers may be located near abortion clinics and use similar names to divert women away from abortion providers. They should also make sure the facility they plan to visit offers the full range of reproductive care options if that is what they seek.