

## 4. Qualified Oversight in Reproductive Care Act

### Issue Overview

**Unregulated Pregnancy Clinics (UPCs) often present themselves as free medical clinics to mislead clients seeking abortion.** Their primary goal is to prevent clients, through persuasion, misinformation, or delay, from having an abortion.<sup>81</sup> While these organizations have the right to oppose abortion, most use misleading tactics, including ads, signs, and websites presenting their facilities as conventional medical clinics, even, at times, as abortion providers.<sup>82,83</sup> Inside, they often resemble medical offices, with waiting rooms and exam rooms outfitted with medical equipment, and staff in lab coats and scrubs. Clients must often fill out intake forms that ask for private health information.<sup>84</sup>

**The vast majority of UPCs advertise medical or quasi-medical services.** Nearly all offer free pregnancy tests<sup>85</sup> readily available at any pharmacy. Between one-quarter<sup>86</sup> and one-half<sup>87</sup> advertise free STD/STI tests, and approximately three-quarters advertise free ultrasounds,<sup>88</sup> typically performed by someone presenting as a medical professional.

**Some UPCs have off-site doctors listed as medical directors or employ on-site RNs or LPNs, but they do not diagnose medical conditions, write prescriptions, or refer people for treatment.** Because most of these centers are not regulated as conventional medical clinics, they are not required to follow standard rules on client confidentiality, medical accuracy, or even basic sanitation.<sup>89</sup>

**The state has a responsibility to protect people from misleading or unethical practices.** The Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine and the North American Society for Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology jointly stated support for this policy position: “[We] urge all governmental, regulatory (e.g., medical and nursing boards), and accrediting bodies with responsibility for enforcing medical and ethical practice standards to ensure that health care professionals providing services at CPCs and services delivered at CPCs adhere to established standards of care.”<sup>90</sup> Similarly, the American Medical Association “urges the development of effective oversight for entities offering pregnancy-related health services and counseling.”<sup>91</sup>