



NATIONAL LATINA INSTITUTE FOR REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

**Testimony to the
Committee on Women's Issues
The Council of the City of New York**

Re: Int. 0371-2010: Limited Service Pregnancy Centers

**Prepared By:
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health**

November 16, 2010

Thank you for the opportunity to testify concerning Limited Service Pregnancy Center, NYC Introduction legislation # 0371-2010. I am Debora Upegui-Hernández, and I am the Senior Researcher Associate at the National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health. I am here today to support this local law to amend the administrative code of the City of New York in relation to Limited-Service Pregnancy Centers. The mission of NLIRH is to ensure the fundamental human right to reproductive health and justice for Latinas, their families and their communities through public education, community mobilization and policy advocacy. Latinas face a unique and complex array of reproductive health and rights issues that are exacerbated by poverty, gender, racial and ethnic discrimination and xenophobia. These circumstances make it especially difficult for Latinas to access reproductive health care services, including the full range of available reproductive health technologies and abortion services. As a social justice organization, we believe that in order to substantially improve the reproductive health of Latinas and protect their rights to exercise reproductive freedom, NLIRH must locate reproductive health and rights issues within a broader social justice framework that seeks to bring an end to poverty and discrimination and affirms human dignity and the right to self-determination.

The National Latina Institute is thrilled to support this piece of legislation. Limited-service pregnancy centers, or crisis pregnancy centers, use deception and misinformation to bring women in the door, and this legislation will make sure that women know what awaits them through the doors of these establishments. This legislation will be particularly helpful for immigrant women, who are particularly vulnerable as they learn to navigate the network of low-cost care in the United States. It will also be helpful for young Latinas, who might turn to limited-services pregnancy centers assuming that they will provide a wide range of services.

When women seek care related to a pregnancy – unintended or otherwise – they deserve to be met with knowledgeable providers who are able to talk to them about their options without biases and who are able to respect the decisions women make as the best option for themselves and their families. If there are no trained and certified medical personnel at a so-called clinic, women deserve to know. If these centers offer nothing but pregnancy tests and ultrasounds,

New York City
50 Broad Street, Suite 1937
New York, NY 10004
Phone: 212-422-2553 | Fax: 212-422-2556

Washington, DC
1901 L Street NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: 202-621-1435 | Fax: 202-393-8584



NATIONAL LATINA INSTITUTE FOR REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

women deserve to know. The fierce opposition to this legislation by the owners of limited-service centers should serve as the strongest form of evidence yet that these establishments rely on lies and misinformation to get vulnerable women through their doors. Women in New York City deserve better, and the National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health hopes that this legislation passes and is able to serve as a model for cities and states across the country.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of this important piece of legislation.

Contact:

Debora Upegui-Hernández
Senior Research Associate
debora@latinainstitute.org
(212) 422- 2553

New York City
50 Broad Street, Suite 1937
New York, NY 10004
Phone: 212-422-2553 | Fax: 212-422-2556

Washington, DC
1901 L Street NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: 202-621-1435 | Fax: 202-393-8584