

SB 975

Senate Finance Committee

March 6, 2024

Unfavorable

My name is Linda King, I am the executive director of the Care Net Pregnancy Center of Frederick, Maryland. I am providing testimony in opposition to SB 975, and am asking this committee for an unfavorable report. We have served the community for over 40 years, providing support to pregnant women who would otherwise fall through the cracks.

Our center, located in the heart of historic downtown Frederick, has been the victim of repeated acts of violence.

Most recently, on Wednesday, May 4th, 2023, the staff arrived at the center to the disturbing scene of graffiti spray painted on the front of our building. Phrases such as: "Not A Real Clinic," "End Forced Motherhood," "Pro-Abortion Go 2 PP Instead," and "Abortion is a Right" were spray painted in black and red paint. This happened after the SCOTUS leak of a draft opinion regarding Roe V Wade. This shocking display of hatred and violence was frightening, but we continued to serve our clients that day.





With the added threat for violence if Roe V Wade was overturned, we quickly needed to take steps to enhance our security measures. In the days that followed the assault on our property, we added the following security measures to protect our clients, volunteers, and staff:

- Armed Guards for a 2 week period
- Installation of 6 security cameras
- Protective film over the door and windows of the lobby
- Installation of a panic arm on the entrance door
- Installation of ground floor window sensors

The cost of expanding security was significant. All of our services are provided free of charge and we are primarily funded through churches and individuals, receiving no government money. We are here to serve our clients and would vastly prefer not to have to siphon money away from our clients to enhance our security.

Unfortunately, this is not the first time our center has been vandalized. We were previously vandalized twice in 2014 in the same manner.

In March of 2014 a brick was thrown through the entrance door shattering the glass, and the same kind of graffiti was spray painted at the entrance, on our sign and various parts of the building.



In September 2014 we once again faced vandalism with more graffiti spray painted on the entrance area and side of our building.

In spite of these tactics, we will not be deterred from doing what we've been doing for 41 years in the Frederick community. Our doors remain open to women and men making a pregnancy decision. Whether they need limited medical services to confirm pregnancy, compassionate education about their options, or helpful classes on pregnancy, parenting, and life skills; we are here for the women, men and families in Frederick.

When people understand what we do, they understand that we are a valuable part of our community. Over the last five years, 100% of our clients have been satisfied with the care and service they received.

In closing, I am asking for an unfavorable vote on SB 975.

Sincerely,

Linda King

Executive Director

Care Net Pregnancy Center of Frederick

707 N. Market Street, Frederick, MD 21701