



Legislative Testimony
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**Written Testimony Opposing
Senate Bill 298, An Act Concerning Burial
and Cremation in Cases of Spontaneous Fetal Demise**

Senator Gerratana, Senator Somers, Representative Steinberg, and distinguished members of the Public Health Committee:

My name is Kaley Lentini, and I am legislative counsel for the American Civil Liberties Union of Connecticut (ACLU-CT). I am submitting this testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 298, An Act Concerning Burial and Cremation in Cases of Spontaneous Fetal Demise.

The ACLU-CT strongly supports reproductive freedom and bodily autonomy for all people. We oppose this bill due to its potential to coerce, shame, or intimidate someone who has experienced a miscarriage or made the personal decision to end a pregnancy. As written, this bill's definition of "spontaneous fetal demise" is broad enough to encompass both miscarriage and abortion. Its requirement for health care providers to issue a state-crafted notification to someone who has decided to have an abortion about fetal burial and cremation options is a thinly veiled attempt to stigmatize and shame women who seek abortion care, as it sends a message that the state views fetuses as people.

Similarly, this bill has the potential to shame and stigmatize people who experience a miscarriage. Miscarriage is deeply personal, and each person who experiences a miscarriage will have different beliefs and wishes for how to handle fetal remains.

This bill is also medically unnecessary. Hospitals already have policies regarding counseling on miscarriages and the treatment of fetal remains.

While some people who experience a miscarriage or choose to terminate a pregnancy may also choose to seek cremation or burial of fetal remains, these decisions are deeply personal.

They should not be the result of coercion or intimidation, which this bill has the potential to instigate.

We strongly urge this committee to oppose Senate Bill 298.