

For media inquiries, please contact:

**Lisa Battisfore** at Reproductive Transparency Now via email ([lisa@reprotransparency.org](mailto:lisa@reprotransparency.org)) or phone (773-234-6004)

**Ed Gogol** at McHenry County Citizens for Choice via phone (815-596-0892)

---

**MEDIA ADVISORY:** Saturday, October 28, 2023

**Protest at 10:00 AM TODAY**

## **Pro-choice groups to protest fake clinics in McHenry County this Saturday**

**Pro-choice groups will be protesting anti-abortion “crisis pregnancy centers” (CPCs), or “fake clinics,” today, October 28, 2023, from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM, near Focus Women’s Center in McHenry, IL (409 N. Front Street, Route 31).**

“If you’re pregnant and want accessibility to all your options, including abortion care, don’t go there!” said Dee Darling, president of McHenry County NOW. “It’s time we expose these fake clinics in our county – they’ll do anything to stop you from getting the abortion you may need and want. Instead, you can find safe and confidential referrals to verified healthcare providers at [ineedana.com](http://ineedana.com) or [plannedparenthood.org](http://plannedparenthood.org).”

Although it is listed as a “women’s health clinic” on Google, [Focus Women’s Center](#) is really an anti-abortion nonprofit organization operated by Women’s Help Services in Johnsburg, IL. Focus Women’s Center is just one of [nearly 100 anti-abortion CPCs](#) in the state of Illinois.

“Anti-abortion CPCs have one goal: to prevent as many abortions as possible, without regard for the needs of their clients,” said Lisa Battisfore, president of Reproductive Transparency Now. “What I find especially troubling about Focus Women’s Center is how they have so cunningly crafted their website to appear as if they are an unbiased medical care provider, yet they are concealing their staunchly anti-abortion position.”

In case there is any doubt about Focus Women’s Center’s position on reproductive healthcare and bodily autonomy, look no further than the statement that its Executive Director made last month in a [recent Care Net blog post](#) regarding [Illinois SB1564](#), an amendment to the Health Care Right of Conscience Act: “We are faith-based and that informs everything that we do...There are no medical benefits to abortion.”

It is worth noting that Focus Women’s Center – one of several plaintiffs in the federal court challenge against SB1564 that [was filed](#) in March 2017 – is being represented by Alliance Defending Freedom, an organization that has been designated as [an anti-LGBTQ hate group](#) by the Southern Poverty Law Center.

“It’s tragic that these fake clinics deny us our basic human right to make our own medical decisions,” said Mary Ewert, president of McHenry County Citizens for Choice. “Sometimes you need to terminate a pregnancy. You might be too young, too old, too sick, too poor, or already have all the kids you can manage. You might be in an abusive relationship. Whatever. It’s your body and your life. If you choose abortion, all you need feel is relief. Abortion is medical care. And it’s a lot safer than carrying to term and giving birth.”

Today’s protest is sponsored by McHenry County National Organization for Women ([mchenryconow.org](http://mchenryconow.org)), McHenry County Citizens for Choice ([mcccprochoice.org](http://mcccprochoice.org)), Toby’s Fund for Reproductive Health Equity ([mccctobysfund.org](http://mccctobysfund.org)), Illinois National Organization for Women ([ilnow.org](http://ilnow.org)), and Reproductive Transparency Now ([reprotransparency.org](http://reprotransparency.org)).

###