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WLP Statement on Pennsylvania's New Program to Support Pregnant & Parenting Pennsylvanians

The new program is supported with funding previously sent to controversial anti-abortion organization Real Alternatives and "crisis pregnancy centers"

January 26, 2024 // PENNSYLVANIA – The Shapiro Administration announced the grantees that will administer a broad range of evidence-based support for pregnant and parenting Pennsylvanians as part of a new state-based Women's Service Program.

The new program is funded with money saved from the Shapiro Administration's decision to not renew a state contract with Real Alternatives, an anti-abortion organization that administered funds to a network of anti-abortion "crisis pregnancy centers" (CPCs).

In 2017, former Auditor General Eugene DePasquale issued [a statement](#) asserting Real Alternatives had engaged in "illegal and secretive skimming of public tax dollars." In 2020, the watchdog group Campaign for Accountability [called on](#) Pennsylvania officials to terminate the Real Alternatives contract and filed a [27-page public complaint](#) itemizing serious allegations of misusing public funds.

Real Alternatives has now been defunded in Michigan and Pennsylvania.

"We're grateful the Shapiro Administration finally pulled Pennsylvania out of the grim business of funding anti-abortion careerists and an industry that exploits pregnant people," said Tara Murtha, Director of Strategic Communications at Women's Law Project. "Today, we're celebrating the Administration's landmark investment into legitimate medical services and compassionate, comprehensive support for pregnant and parenting Pennsylvanians."

Grantees will provide prenatal care, early detection and prevention screenings, parenting programs, menstrual products, STI testing, and referrals for other types of assistance as needed.

The funding did not cover any medical care when sent to CPCs. [A 2021 report](#) co-authored by Women's Law Project as part of [The Alliance](#) found that 1% of CPCs in Pennsylvania provided prenatal care. A 2022 follow-up analysis found that 69% of CPCs in Pennsylvania promoted false and misleading claims and 41% promoted so-called "[abortion pill reversal](#)," an experimental anti-abortion medical intervention with no clinical evidence of safety or efficacy.

"All women deserve comprehensive, empathetic care and counsel – especially when they are pregnant or adjusting to the change of being a parent and caring for a new child," [said](#) Val Arkoosh, Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services.

A list of grantees and counties they serve can be found [here](#).

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