

Thank you for reaching out to me for comment on the letter from the Freedom from Religion Foundation. I must tell you that this letter is rife with disinformation and outright falsehoods. I will provide a response to the specific questions you had, but first let me say at the outset, as I said in my remarks at the budget committee hearing last month, Hope Life Center is not requesting a contract or partnership with the county on providing services to pregnant women in our county. I made very clear that we do not seek any financial remuneration for providing these services. My only point was that the county wants to spend \$775,000 of tax levy on services to 50 women, while Hope provided the same essential core services to 139 women in Marathon County at ZERO cost to taxpayers (and ZERO cost to the 139 clients.) If the county finds it impossible to continue to provide this discretionary service, there is an agency that stands ready to serve, and is already serving.

In regard to your first question: Hope has never told any of its clients that “abortion causes breast cancer and sterility”. However, it should be noted that numerous meta-studies have shown a **link** between abortion and breast cancer. I cite just two articles with link below. This is information that any responsible health care provider should share with their patients. I emphasize that a “link” is not that same as “cause”.

A new study, completed in January and released at the end of April, finds that women who have had abortions are 180 percent more likely to develop breast cancer, confirming evidence found in a number of similar studies around the world. <https://thenewamerican.com/new-study-confirms-evidence-of-abortion-breast-cancer-link/>

The moderately strong association identified between abortion and breast cancer explains in part the spread of the breast cancer epidemic to South Asia as it has become Westernized. Continuing denial of the abortion-breast cancer association can only ensure that the acknowledged worldwide breast cancer epidemic will continue to worsen, costing many millions of women their lives over the next several decades. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30831018/>

In regard to your question about the effectiveness of condoms as a method of birth control or in the prevention of STIs, I cite Planned Parenthood’s own website, and the Centers for Disease Control:

The chances of getting pregnant with a condom depend on the type you use. Condoms that go on the penis work 85% of the time. This means 15 out of 100 people who use them as their only form of birth control get pregnant each year. <https://www.plannedparenthood.org/learn/ask-experts/what-are-the-chances-of-getting-pregnant-with-a-condom>

[C]ondom use cannot provide absolute protection against any STD. The most reliable ways to avoid transmission of STDs are to abstain from sexual activity, or to be in a long-term mutually monogamous relationship with an uninfected partner. However, many infected persons may be unaware of their infection because STDs often are asymptomatic and unrecognized. <https://www.cdc.gov/condomeffectiveness/brief.html>

While our carefully trained BSN registered nurses have never made any “specious assertions” or engaged in disinformation, we do answer questions truthfully when they are asked by our clients. We believe in providing complete information to our clients so they can make an informed choice about their sexual lifestyle practices.

As to your second question: While the FFRF may assert that it is unconstitutional for the county to partner with a faith-based organization, I would dispute that. The county has provided funding to several agencies that have a faith-based or religious component. This is very common and does not impose on constitutional rights or restrictions. However, the point is moot in that we are not asking to partner with the county. And on the charge that Hope does not reliably provide scientifically accurate medical information, I can only say, the FFRF has never been to our clinic to meet our staff and see the information we dispense, all of which is carefully reviewed for its accuracy and truthfulness. All of our literature comes from reliable sources like the CDC, and the county health department. If you have further questions, do not hesitate to ask. Thank you.