



**STUDENT GOVERNMENT ASSEMBLY OF METROPOLITAN STATE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER**  
**9<sup>th</sup> SESSION**  
**April 9, 2021**

**SR 21 - 04**

**A Resolution Condemning the Spread of Medical Misinformation and Supporting Safe Access to Abortion**

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COLLABORATED WITH: Assistant Director for CMEI: Dave Bourassa, MSU Student Conduct Office: Director of Student Accountability & Behavioral Intervention Thomas Ragland and Student Conduct and Behavioral Intervention Coordinator Josh Oakland, Auraria Higher Education Center Interim Tenant Relations Coordinator and Director of The Tivoli Student Union: Angela LeValley, Student Advisory Committee to Auraria Board Chair and CU Denver Student Government Senator: Marlena Fay, CCD Student Government Assembly, SACAB Representative: Mariam Osman, The Phoenix Center of Auraria: Katherine Miller and Em Alves

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ENDORSED BY:

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ABSTRACT:

Metropolitan State University of Denver has an obligation to protect their students from predatory organizations that trick, intimidate, and coerce students. Failing to do so makes campus unsafe and puts students at risk, especially young, low-income, and/or students of color. Metropolitan State University of Denver must prioritize their students' health and safety and denounce Alternatives Pregnancy Center (an Anti-Abortion Counseling Center stationed near campus that parks their "mobile clinic" on campus) and their dangerous and unethical tactics and promote the Health Center at Auraria's comprehensive reproductive health services.

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1 WHEREAS

- 2 The Brazen Project is a nonpartisan, Colorado-based, student-led initiative to end abortion  
3 stigma on college campuses by empowering students to speak up and speak out about  
4 abortion boldly and without shame. They work at 3 campuses across the state: Auraria, CU



5 Boulder, and CSU. They envision a Colorado where anyone who wants or needs an abortion  
6 can access one in a safe, affordable, and timely manner without stigma or shame.

7 WHEREAS

8 Anti-Abortion Counseling Centers (also known as Crisis Pregnancy Centers or Fake Clinics)  
9 are anti-choice organizations that pose as legitimate and comprehensive reproductive  
10 health centers. They are unlicensed, unregulated, and unethical. They trick people into  
11 thinking they are comprehensive reproductive health centers by mimicking the look,  
12 language, and even building interior of local comprehensive reproductive health centers.

13 WHEREAS

14 They weaponize abortion stigma and medical disinformation to coerce people out of  
15 accessing abortions; target low-income people, people of color, and young people; and  
16 pose a general threat to public health and safety.

17 WHEREAS

18 Abortion is a highly stigmatized topic. This stigma operates in a cycle: when people are  
19 shamed for accessing or providing abortions, abortions go underreported and public  
20 discourse about abortion is suppressed. This leads to the idea that abortion is rare, even  
21 though 1 in 4 women have an abortion by the time they're 45. When abortion is seen as  
22 rare, it perpetuates the idea that people who access or provide abortions are deviant. This  
23 leads to discrimination against people who access or provide abortions, which causes  
24 people to fear being shamed for accessing or providing abortions, leading to underreporting  
25 and suppression of discourse. This cycle leads to medical ignorance, state control over  
26 women, trans, and non-binary peoples' bodies, and violence against people who access or  
27 provide abortions.

28 WHEREAS

29 Anti-Abortion Counseling Centers perpetuate abortion stigma by shaming people seeking,  
30 or even considering, abortion by using medical disinformation (like telling people abortions  
31 cause breast cancer); comparing abortion to murder; using intimidation tactics (like showing  
32 inaccurate and graphic images of aborted fetuses) and framing carrying the pregnancy to  
33 term as the only option.

34 WHEREAS

35 In addition to stigma, Anti-Abortion Counseling Centers use deception and disinformation to  
36 meet their goal of coercing people out of getting abortions. Alternatives Pregnancy Center  
37 (the Anti-Abortion Counseling Center nearest to campus located on 1440 Blake St) claims to  
38 "offer you a full range of resources and support,"<sup>1</sup> including counseling you through the  
39 options of "Raising the baby. Making an adoption plan. Getting pills for plan B. Getting an  
40 abortion." In actuality, Alternatives Pregnancy Center does not provide, refer, or support  
41 abortion or Plan B. Alternatives Pregnancy Center also offers STI testing and treatment, but  
42 opposes contraception (like condoms and birth control pills), pre-marital sex, non-  
43 heterosexual sex, and non-monogamous sex. Instead, they endorse 'natural family planning'

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<sup>1</sup>References:

[Pregnant? You Have Alternatives – Free Pregnancy Test](#)



44 (i.e. ovulation tracking and withdrawal) and “protect[ing] your health by saving all sexual  
45 activity for marriage. Making this choice can also be one of the most powerful things you do  
46 for your **self-respect** and your relationships.”<sup>2</sup>

47 WHEREAS

48 Alternatives Pregnancy Center also offers Abortion Pill Reversal. Abortion Pill Reversal is the  
49 ingestion of a progesterone pill to “reverse” the effects of the first abortion pill,  
50 Mifepristone. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists describes the  
51 treatment as “unproven and unethical”<sup>2</sup> and claims of efficacy as “not based on science”<sup>ii</sup>  
52 because the few experiments that have been conducted “do not meet clinical standards”<sup>ii</sup>:

- 53 a. In a 2012 experiment,  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the women who got the reversal treatment continued  
54 their pregnancy. The study had a sample size of 6, was not supervised by an  
55 institutional review board (IRB) or an ethical review committee, and had no control  
56 group<sup>i</sup>
- 57 b. Additionally, in 2019 researchers had to stop a study of 12 women after 3 required  
58 ambulance transport to the hospital, concluding that not only does it lack sufficient  
59 evidence to support but it can cause harm to those who take it.<sup>3</sup>

60 WHEREAS

61 Anti-Abortion Counseling Centers target low-income people, people of color, and young  
62 people by establishing centers in low-income, Black and Brown neighborhoods and near  
63 college campuses and by offering free pregnancy testing and ultrasounds.

64 WHEREAS

65 Metropolitan State University of Denver is “one of the most diverse student bodies in  
66 Colorado.”<sup>iii</sup> The average age of undergraduate students is 25, 80% have jobs, about half are  
67 first generation, about a third are eligible for the Pell Grant, and almost half are people of  
68 color.<sup>iii</sup> Alternatives Pregnancy Center is especially dangerous to Metropolitan State  
69 University of Denver students specifically because they are so diverse. Not only is  
70 Metropolitan State University of Denver leadership obligated to protect their diverse  
71 student population from systemic racism and other forms of oppression because it is the  
72 right thing to do, they are also obligated to do so because they have committed to do so.

73 WHEREAS

74 Last year (2020), the University’s Board of Trustees issued an anti-racism resolution that  
75 included a pledge to “dismantle institutionalized racism and bring together civic, industry,  
76 public and nonprofit leaders, activists, academics and our community to address the most  
77 pressing issues of racial justice.”<sup>4</sup> Failing to uphold this commitment not only delegitimizes  
78 the board’s commitment to anti-racism, it also perpetuates the historical and current  
79 hostile environment of higher education in the United States uniquely experienced by  
80 people of color, which deprives them of equal opportunity to reach their full academic  
81 potential.

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<sup>2</sup> [You Have Alternatives - STD Testing Treatment](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Medication Abortion Reversal Is Not Supported by Science](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Safety Problems Lead to Early End for Study of ‘Abortion Pill Reversal’](#)

<sup>4</sup> [About MSU Denver | About MSU Denver](#)



82 WHEREAS

83 In addition to posing a danger to students (especially young, low-income, and students of  
84 color), Alternatives Pregnancy Center is unnecessary, since Metropolitan State University of  
85 Denver students already have access to a reproductive health services center through the  
86 Health Center at Auraria<sup>5, f</sup> Unlike Alternatives Pregnancy Center, the Health Center at  
87 Auraria is staffed with licensed medical professionals and is subject to HIPAA laws.

88 WHEREAS

89 The Phoenix Center of Auraria has been contacted multiple times by the Alternatives  
90 Pregnancy Center's Denver Campus Outreach Manager and been "harassed" throughout  
91 past semesters, asking to be included in their list of referrals for survivors of interpersonal  
92 violence. The Phoenix Center has denied their requests because they know they are not a  
93 comprehensive health center and don't feel comfortable referring their clients to them.

94 WHEREAS

95 Meetings with Dave Bourassa, the then Interim Director of Student Orgs, detailed the  
96 Alternatives Student Organization's problematic history of being in violation of the Student  
97 Organizations Officer Handbook's Fronting Policy, in accordance to AHEC: Student  
98 Organizations and Departments may not reserve space for other organizations to provide  
99 access to Auraria Campus property or for the purpose of lower rates. The organization or  
100 department who holds the reservation must be primarily responsible for planning,  
101 implementing, and financing the event<sup>6</sup>.

102 WHEREAS

103 First, there were semesters in which it was evident that the student organization was not  
104 student led or student-driven, they would request space from AHEC without enough funds  
105 in their organization account and when Dave asked the student reps to tell him more about  
106 their planned event to determine if he could sign-off on their request, they didn't know  
107 about the event in question and didn't know how to answer his questions. Second,  
108 whenever they'd sponsor the Alternatives mobile clinic/van, there wasn't always a student  
109 representative present, which is in violation of the fronting policy<sup>6</sup>. Third, due to this, they  
110 had to change faculty advisors every year, and this exemplifies how being an advisor for this  
111 group has historically been high maintenance and difficult job, due to the lack of  
112 transparency between the Alternatives Downtown office and their student group.

113 WHEREAS

114 It is unclear to both the Office of Student Organizations or AHEC which services were  
115 routinely being performed or advertised to students accessing the Alternatives mobile  
116 clinic, or which were advertised by representatives of the student organization to get  
117 students through the door. University leadership should be held accountable for what  
118 information is targeted to students, especially medical information that can negatively  
119 impact a student's health and wellness.

120 WHEREAS

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<sup>5</sup> [Medical Services](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Student Organizations Officer Handbook 2019](#)



121 The Alternatives MSU Denver student organization has not been registered since the Spring  
122 of 2018, despite that there is evidence of them continuing to park in event/vendor space on  
123 campus from Spring 2019. When Alternatives was a registered student organization, they  
124 made use of a non-sales commercial partnership through AHEC. According to information  
125 from Angela LeValley, the Interim Tenant Relations Coordinator and the Tivoli Student  
126 Union Director, the latest documented date of them parking on campus was in 2019. AHEC  
127 believes they had out-of-date information and were under the impression that Alternatives  
128 was still a registered student organization.

129 WHEREAS

130 Alternatives Pregnancy Center has been breaking AHEC policy, MSU Denver's Office of  
131 Student Conduct and AHEC must take preemptive measures to prevent this from happening  
132 again, regardless of the student organization or their sponsored third party. Alternatives  
133 Pregnancy Center's student organization could be in violation of Article III: Proscribed  
134 Conduct A. Conduct – Rules and Regulations, item 1C of the Student Code of Conduct (2020-  
135 2021): Furnishing false information to any University or campus official, faculty member,  
136 law enforcement official, or office<sup>7</sup>

137 WHEREAS

138 If all students are held accountable for verifying the validity of their sources in their  
139 academic writing, then all student organizations should also be accountable for sharing and  
140 distributing information that is accurate and research-based.

141 WHEREAS

142 Additionally, according to Josh Oakland, Student Conduct and Behavioral Intervention  
143 Coordinator, if this resolution is adopted, it would be part of the Student Orgs/RSO policies,  
144 which if people failed to comply with it, they would fall under their Failure to Comply policy  
145 in the Student Code of Conduct. From there, they could use our conduct process to address  
146 the potential violation. This empowers Student Conduct to hold student groups accountable  
147 for the false medical information they may spread.

148 WHEREAS

149 Metropolitan State University of Denver Student Government stands in solidarity with all  
150 students on campus seeking reproductive and abortion care or sex education.

151 WHEREAS

152 Metropolitan State University of Denver Student Government is committed to ending the  
153 abortion stigma cycle and ensuring all students on campus seeking reproductive and  
154 abortion care or sex education are given medically accurate information.

155 WHEREAS

156 Metropolitan State University of Denver Student Government is working with all student  
157 organizations advocating in support of comprehensive reproductive health care to ensure  
158 the dissemination of medically accurate and stigma-free information to all students  
159 concerning equal and safe access to abortion procedures.

160 WHEREAS

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<sup>7</sup> [Student Code of Conduct 2020-2021](#)



161 Metropolitan State University of Denver Student Government is committed to setting an  
162 example to other institutions of higher education ending the abortion stigma cycle on  
163 campus.

164 WHEREAS

165 The Board of Directors of the Auraria Higher Education Center, acting through its Chief  
166 Executive Officer, reserves the right to exclude from the Auraria Campus those persons  
167 whose conduct is deemed (a) detrimental to the well-being of the employees, students, or  
168 visitors on the Auraria Campus, or (b) incompatible with its function as a center of higher  
169 education or the missions of its constituent institutions<sup>8</sup>

170 THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY FURTHER RESOLVED

171 **Section 1:** Metropolitan State University of Denver Student Government condemns the  
172 distribution of medical misinformation, as well as any organization or entity distributing  
173 such misinformation.

174 **Section 1.1:** Metropolitan State University of Denver Student Government demands that  
175 the Alternatives Pregnancy Center “mobile clinic” not be granted access by the Auraria  
176 Higher Education Center to parking on vendor or sponsored RSOs event space on the  
177 Auraria campus.

178 **Section 1.2:** Metropolitan State University of Denver Student Government demands  
179 that the Alternatives Pregnancy Center be barred from obtaining Registered  
180 Student Organization status effective immediately.

181 **Section 2:** Metropolitan State University of Denver supports the bodily autonomy of all  
182 persons, including access to abortion and other reproductive-related services.

183 **Section 3:** Metropolitan State University of Denver Student Government demands the  
184 Office of Student Conduct to change Student Codes of Conduct Policy to include a section  
185 that prohibits Registered Student Organizations from distributing misleading medical  
186 information on campus; wherein all Registered Student Organizations (including any  
187 sponsored third party service organizations) that give medical advice, discuss medical  
188 procedures, or otherwise provide medical information to students must give medically  
189 accurate and stigma-free information. This includes any informational pamphlets or  
190 materials given or advertised to students. Medically accurate and stigma free information  
191 shall be defined as any information confirmed and backed by the World Health Organization  
192 on their website.

193 **Section 3.1:** Metropolitan State University of Denver Student Government demands the  
194 Office of Student Organizations within the Center for Multicultural Engagement and  
195 Inclusion to uphold the change within the Student Organization Advisor Handbook.

196 **Section 4:** Metropolitan State University of Denver Student Government demands the  
197 Auraria Higher Education Center Chief of Operations ban the Alternatives Pregnancy Center  
198 mobile clinic from parking on campus.

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<sup>8</sup> [Banning or Exclusion of Persons from the Auraria Campus](#)



3-0-0 (Y-N-A)  
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**PASSAGE**

April 9, 2021  
**DATE**

*Alondra Bañuelos*  
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**SPEAKER OF THE SENATE, Alondra Bañuelos**

April 13, 2021  
**DATE**

*BK Weart*  
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**PRESIDENT, Braedan Weart**

April 15, 2021  
**DATE**

**Tags:** Diversity, Cultural Awareness, Equity, CMEI, AHEC, The Phoenix Center of Auraria, Reproductive Justice, Student Conduct, Student Organizations

**References:**

- <sup>1</sup> [Pregnant? You Have Alternatives – Free Pregnancy Test](#)
- <sup>2</sup> [You Have Alternatives - STD Testing Treatment](#)
- <sup>3</sup> [Medication Abortion Reversal Is Not Supported by Science](#)
- <sup>4</sup> [Safety Problems Lead to Early End for Study of ‘Abortion Pill Reversal’](#)
- <sup>5</sup> [About MSU Denver | About MSU Denver](#)
- <sup>6</sup> [Medical Services](#)
- <sup>7</sup> [Student Organizations Officer Handbook 2019](#)
- <sup>8</sup> [Banning or Exclusion of Persons from the Auraria Campus](#)