
Planned Parenthood of Maryland

Oppose

House Bill 1162 – Health – Abortions- Reporting Requirements

House Health and Government Operations Committee

March 13, 2020

Planned Parenthood of Maryland opposes *House Bill 1162 – Health – Abortions – Reporting Requirements*. The bill requires the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) to implement a system for the collection of abortion data. We oppose HB 1162 for the following primary reasons:

- **Public Health Data is Already Available:** The bill presumes that there is no information available about pregnancy and abortion rates in Maryland. However, the Guttmacher Institute routinely collects this information and calculates pregnancy-related rates in every state.
- **Public Health Survey Data is More Accurate:** When analyzing pregnancy-related data, the Guttmacher Institute does not use data from mandated state abortion reporting systems. According to Guttmacher, “abortions are almost always underreported to the state surveillance systems.”¹ Instead, Guttmacher uses its own survey data.
- **Intimidating to Patients:** Women’s fears about the confidentiality of abortion services are very real. Some opponents to abortion have publicized confidential and highly personal information about abortion on websites or to the press. Unfortunately, this creates a uniquely hostile environment for our patients. It is unlike any other environment in which individuals seek medical services. Mandated reporting for abortion services, especially since there are no such mandates for other types of medical procedure, would only add to the concerns of women seeking abortion services;
- **Threat to Providers:** Given the real threat of intimidation of abortion providers, it is concerning that there are pathways within this bill that could be used to publicly identify individual physicians who provide abortions.

Planned Parenthood of Maryland requests an unfavorable report on HB 1162.

¹ Unintended Pregnancy Rates at the State Level: Estimates for 2002, 2004, 2006, and 2008. Guttmacher Institute.