

## **OPPOSE HB0937 - TESTIMONY BY SAVANNAH ACKERMAN**

As a lifelong Maryland resident I oppose HB0937, the Abortion Care Access Act, sponsored by Delegate Ariana Kelly and other delegates. I would much rather see time and taxpayer funds going to improve the systematic injustices that contribute to women feeling they need to have an abortion, even if they do not want one. Why not work to improve maternal mortality rates, health care inequality, access to pediatricians. Why not make it easier for women to have children if they want to. I know a woman who stayed away from getting a lump examined because she didn't have healthcare. A year later she found out she had breast cancer, I am sure there are women in that same boat who need prenatal care but do not have access to it or proper information about it. I know a woman who had to find someone to pay for her uber to the hospital to deliver her child, why aren't we working to improve the situations of women who want to have children? I have insurance and am still paying off the nearly \$800 it cost me to deliver my daughter.

I am involved with Democrats for Life of Maryland and have been closely following some gruesome abortion injuries to women which occurred at a late-term abortion facility in Bethesda, Maryland during 2020. That is a practice owned and operated by a licensed physician. We are concerned that HB0937, which would loosen restrictions on who can provide abortions, will lead to more threats to women's health as more abortions are left to the oversight of non-physicians. We are one of 3 states that do not report abortion statistics. How many women are being harmed but no one will speak out because we need to present abortion as "safe".

In addition, I object to the proposed establishment of an Abortion Care Clinical Training Program in the Maryland Department of Health, and the annual appropriation of \$3.5 million to fund it. I do not support my tax dollars going towards an institution that uses eradication of the lower class as a 'solution' to poverty. I ask why there is not a proposal for a well-funded comprehensive pregnancy and post-pregnancy aid program for women with crisis pregnancies instead? I am also concerned that this bill would protect abortion providers from civil damages or criminal penalties, which is yet another preference for protecting abortionists rather than women. These issues point to a need for more, not fewer, restrictions on abortion for better protection of women's health in the state of Maryland.

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