



**Unfavorable
HB 50**

Public Health – Abortion, Artificial Insemination, and Sterilization – Requirement

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On behalf of the Board of Directors of Maryland Right to Life, I strongly oppose House Bill 50 and urge your unfavorable report.

This bill is unconstitutional and profoundly anti-American. By passing this bill, the Maryland General Assembly will be breaking its contract with the people of Maryland and the members of this Assembly will be breaking their sworn oath to defend the Constitution both of this state and of the United States.

Our federal and state Constitutions guarantee the free exercise of religion for all citizens. The Declaration of Rights prohibits the legislature from infringing on religious freedoms which are the natural right of the people, pre-existing and independent of government.

This bill attempts to deny the citizens of Maryland, Equal Protection under the law and Constitution and force hospitals and medical providers to participate in controversial procedures in violation of their religious, moral or ethical beliefs- which are an integral part of their business mission or ministry.

State and federal laws are necessary to ensure that the freedom of conscience is truly protected. Without comprehensive protection, healthcare rights of conscience may be violated in various ways, such as harassment, demotion, salary reduction, transfer, termination, loss of staffing privileges, denial of aid or benefits, and refusal to license or refusal to certify.

The consequence of this legislation, whether intended or unintended, will be the mass exodus of medical professionals and skilled workers from the health care industry. The bill will create widespread medical scarcity, particularly in underserved areas where people are most in need.

A unique human life begins at the moment of conception, with the joining of female and male gametes. Many physicians and other health care workers, for moral or religious reasons, do not want to participate in any process that results in the termination of human life, including abortion, In Vitro Fertilization, embryonic or fetal tissue research, healthcare rationing, assisted suicide or euthanasia.

Protecting freedom of religion and conscience is common sense. Conscience protections do not ban any procedure or prescription and do not mandate any particular belief or morality. Freedom of conscience simply provides American men and women the guarantees that this country was built upon: the right to be free from coercion. Protecting conscience helps ensure that healthcare providers enter and remain in their professions, helping to meet the rising demand for quality health care.

For these reasons we strongly object to this legislation and urge your unfavorable report