
BILL NO: House Bill 50
TITLE: Public Health Abortion, Artificial Insemination, and Sterilization Requirement
COMMITTEE: Health and Government Operations
HEARING DATE: March 11, 2022
POSITION: **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS**

House Bill 50 would require hospitals that do not perform sterilization, abortion or artificial insemination procedures to inform patients where they can obtain those health services. We support HB 50 as we think it is important for patients seeking care to know and have access to all possible services.

We understand that some hospitals do not perform these procedures, likely due to religious affiliation or ethical directives. This bill does not affect an individual practitioner's decision on whether to provide these services. But at the least, it would require these institutions to provide useful and important referral for those procedures they do not perform. This will ensure that patients have the full array of options to make informed decisions and to know where to seek services if necessary or desired.

It is our understanding that the sponsor will be offering technical amendments to clarify the bill's intent to require hospitals to either provide or refer for abortion care, artificial insemination, and sterilization services. We support clarifying language offered by the sponsor.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report in House Bill 50 with amendments.

The Women's Law Center of Maryland is a private, non-profit, legal services organization that serves as a leading voice for justice and fairness for women. It advocates for the rights of women through legal assistance to individuals and strategic initiatives to achieve systemic change, working to ensure physical safety, economic security, and bodily autonomy for women in Maryland.