



COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

February 11, 2022

Chair Shane E. Pendergrass
House Office Building
6 Bladen St.
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Letter in Support of HB 937

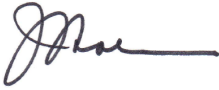
As a Commissioner of the Montgomery County Commission for Women, I write to express our strong support of HB 937, the Abortion Care Access Act, and urge the Committee to issue a favorable report on this bill. The Commission is a 15-member advisory board appointed by the County Executive to advise it, the County Council, and county, state and federal government on matters affecting women and girls. We represent the interests of all the women in our County who constitute more than half of the residents of Montgomery County. Support for this legislation falls squarely within the Montgomery County Commission for Women's strategic priority of supporting and increasing financial security for women.

Several years ago, I helped a lifelong friend through a very traumatic event in her life which resulted in an abortion. We had to drive many miles to find a physician who would actually perform the abortion without fear of reprisal. Her abortion could have easily been performed near her home had we had access to a qualified advanced practice clinician (APCs). In fact, fewer than half of all Maryland jurisdictions currently have an abortion care provider because Maryland has an antiquated physician-only law that prohibits advanced practice clinicians such as nurse practitioners, midwives and physician assistants from providing abortions.

Advanced practice clinicians already provide a large portion of primary health care to reproductive-aged women and to families as a whole. They are in medical practices throughout the state of Maryland. They care for patients in diverse settings and more likely to provide care in rural and underserved populations. It goes without saying that APCs are extremely critical to the expansion of health care access in Maryland.

As the nation awaits a U.S. Supreme Court ruling that could significantly erode abortion rights, state laws on the issue have taken on a whole new meaning. And in Maryland, it is even more critical that HB 937 is passed this year. I urge a favorable report.

Sincerely,



Jan Molino
Montgomery County Commission for Women

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