

February 22, 2022

Legislation: HB 937 – Abortion Care Access Act

Position: Support

Since 1973 when Roe v. Wade became the law of the land, there have been intentional actions that challenge and restrict safe and accessible abortion care. And over the last decade, we have seen a resurgence of restrictive access with states seeking to strip away women's liberty and power over their bodies, making it difficult and virtually impossible to seek the health care they need. As Roe v. Wade hangs in the balance, this is an issue about access and protecting Marylanders' rights. To ensure we remove barriers and improve the availability of safe and accessible abortion care, I urge a favorable vote on **HB 937**, which will increase the number of providers who offer these services.

As a public health professional with a passion for women's health, at the very core of safe and accessible abortion care is the availability of qualified providers. The [American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists \(ACOG\)](#) supports women's access to safe abortion care and recommends to institutionalize training, destigmatize abortion care as a critical aspect of women's reproductive health and expand the availability of qualified providers. Creating, funding and sustaining the Abortion Care Clinical Training Program, will yield equitable outcomes for women's reproductive health, expand access and availability to culturally competent providers and protect access to safe abortion care.

According to the [Guttmacher Institute](#), from 2014 to 2017, there was no change in the number of clinics that provide safe abortion care in our state. And in 2017, 71% of Maryland counties had no clinics that provided abortion care, while almost a third of Maryland women lived in those counties. Safe and accessible abortion care is health care. The consequences of restricting access to safe abortion care would be catastrophic, resulting in unsafe abortions and affecting those most vulnerable in our state. Restricting safe and accessible abortion care would result in death, infertility and severe health complications.

Maryland has an opportunity to lead and protect the health and safety of women. This piece of legislation, **HB 937**, paired with HB 952 and HB 1171 will increase access to safe abortion care and bring us closer to gender parity over our reproductive health and individual rights.

I urge a favorable vote on **HB 937** that will establish sustainable funding, access to qualified providers and protect women's rights.

Thank you for your consideration.

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