

Committees: Appropriations

Testimony on: HB477

Position: Favorable

10 February 2023

Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Chang, and the members of the Appropriations Committee,

The University of Maryland, Student Government Association supports HB477 in requiring public higher education institutions, with assistance (when requested) from the Maryland Department of Health, to consult students in order to develop a reproductive health services plan. This bill is significant because it ensures health access for Maryland's college students.

My name is Caroline Thorne and I serve as the Director of Government Affairs for the University of Maryland's Student Government Association. On behalf of our SGA, I respectfully request a favorable report of House Bill 477 to ensure college students have access to reproductive health services.

Lack of access to reproductive health care is an issue which distinctively impacts college students. Unwanted and unplanned pregnancies can prevent individuals from completing their education, leaving students with loan debt, lack of degrees and fewer opportunities to advance their careers or education. This issue particularly impacts women. Having access to reproductive health care, including contraceptives, birth control, and accurate information on preventing STDs or unwanted pregnancies is essential to ensuring students' well being on campus.

This bill is important, because it requires institutions to provide on campus healthcare, or create an in depth referral plan with wrap around services. This includes transportation, one of the [factors cited](#) by the NIH as preventing female college students from accessing these important services. Additionally, these plans would be created in consultation with students, increasing their motivation and engagement with reproductive health on campus.

I respectfully request a favorable vote on HB477.

Thank you,



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