



MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND
WOMEN'S DEMOCRATIC CLUB

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**Senate Bill 0527, Community Colleges – Contraception – Access Requirements
Education, Energy, and Environment Committee – February 14, 2024
SUPPORT**

Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony concerning an important priority of the **Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club (WDC)** for the 2024 legislative session. WDC is one of Maryland's largest and most active Democratic clubs with hundreds of politically active members, including many elected officials.

WDC urges the passage of [SB527](#). This bill requires each community college to develop and implement a plan to provide students with access to over-the-counter contraception, on or before December 1, 2024. This plan must cover 24-hour access to all FDA approved contraception, including emergency contraception (EC); prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted infections; and HIV prevention. These services can be provided through the student health center, on-campus retail establishments, vending machines, or by referral to a network of off-campus providers in reasonable proximity, in which case the plan must address transportation access.

No woman should be forced to give birth. [Many community college campuses have little to no access to essential reproductive healthcare resources.](#) In cases of sexual assault, unprotected or coerced sex, and failed birth control, on-campus access to emergency contraception is an important way for students to maintain bodily autonomy and prevent unwanted pregnancy in a timely and private manner. Access off-campus presents barriers such as limited health center pharmacy hours, transportation challenges, high pharmacy costs, pharmacies not stocking EC on the shelf, enforcing outdated age restrictions, or refusing to sell EC outright.

The recent Federal Supreme Court Dobbs decision that overturned Roe vs. Wade, which had guaranteed women's reproductive care rights for fifty years, makes it imperative that the State take action to protect these rights for all women. Sexually active young women are particularly vulnerable. Many community college campuses have little to no access to essential reproductive healthcare resources. Young women are leading a nation-wide movement to provide comprehensive reproductive care on community college campuses.

We ask for your support for SB0527 and strongly urge a favorable Committee report.

Tazeen Ahmad
WDC President

Stephanie Castro
WDC Reproductive Health &
Justice Committee

Cynthia Rubenstein
Co-Chair, WDC Advocacy