



BILL NO: Senate Bill 947
TITLE: Abortion Care Access Grant Program and Fund - Establishment
COMMITTEE: Finance
HEARING DATE: March 6, 2024
POSITION: **SUPPORT**

The Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV) is the state domestic violence coalition that brings together victim service providers, allied professionals, and concerned individuals for the common purpose of reducing intimate partner and family violence and its harmful effects on our citizens. **MNADV urges the Senate Finance Committee to issue a favorable report on SB 947.**

Between 6-22% of women terminate their pregnancies because they're in an abusive relationship.¹ One of the most common reasons why survivors struggle to leave their abuser is because they have children in common. When a survivor is denied an abortion, they remain tethered to their abusive partner, whereas survivors who choose to terminate an unwanted pregnancy have a reduced risk of experiencing violence over time.² Additionally, survivors frequently experience forms of abuse that put them at an increased risk for unintended pregnancy, such as birth control sabotage, sexual assault, and reproductive coercion.³ 2.1 million women in the U.S. have become pregnant as a result of rape by an intimate partner,⁴ and, in one study, 16% of survivors with rape-related pregnancies chose to get an abortion.⁵ Access to abortions can be a matter of life or death for survivors of domestic violence because experiencing abuse while pregnant puts survivors at a much higher risk of being killed by their abuser.⁶

This bill establishes the Abortion Care Access Grant Program under the Department of Health. The program would provide for grants and community-based organizations to support access to abortion care in Maryland. The grants could be used by abortion providers to ensure patients and provider staff are secure and that resources are available to support abortion care and wrap-around services.

For the above stated reasons, the **Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence urges a favorable report on SB 947.**

¹ <https://ncadv.org/blog/posts/ncadv-denounces-law-restricting-abortion-in-texas>

² <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4182793/>

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<https://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/userfiles/file/HealthCare/Reproductive%20Health%20Guidelines.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.guttmacher.org/gpr/2016/07/understanding-intimate-partner-violence-sexual-and-reproductive-health-and-rights-issue>

⁵ <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/211678.pdf>

⁶ https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/70764/WHO_RHR_11.35_eng.pdf?sequence=1

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