



Opposition Statement SB217

Health Occupations Boards – Membership Alteration and Sunset Extensions

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Maryland Right to Life

On behalf of our over 200,000 followers, Maryland Right to Life opposes this legislation which extends the provisions of the Maryland Program Evaluation Act from the years 2025 and 2026 to the years 2030 and 2031 for certain Health Occupations. We request an amendment to clearly state that this legislation would not be used to further promote and provide abortion and abortion related services nor be used to seek increased funding for abortion and abortion related services. Without the amendment, we request an unfavorable report for SB217.

Maryland Right to Life opposes SB217 in that the State, through the Maryland Program Evaluation Act, interferes in the independent operations of the State Boards for healthcare professionals. In this case, we are particularly concerned with the State Board of Pharmacy and the State Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists. Marylanders should be able to trust that their medications and counseling needs are in the hands of the professionals with the best possible educational standards for those particular healthcare specialties and that all standards exist for the protection and best outcomes of the client. The Maryland General Assembly has steadily passed legislation that lowers standards of care by expanding scope of practice and decreasing or removing licensing requirements for multiple healthcare occupations. Maryland Right to Life recognizes that the abortion industry uses these lax standards to prey on women and girls with a workforce that is less educated and less skilled in medical practice.

We oppose any bill that lowers the standards of practice of any health care provider or occupation without excluding abortion and abortion funding. Scarcity of health care professionals is not a reasonable excuse to lower standards of practice. This bill extends the interference of the State in the operations of medical boards and allow the continued promotion of abortion and abortion services over any other service that might be in the best interest of the women and girls of Maryland.

Maintain and/or adopt reasonable health and safety standards. The Abortion Care Access Act and now the Reproductive Freedom Amendment put profits over patients in the name of “access” and “reproductive freedom.” Health Occupations Boards need to have the independence to evaluate their healthcare professionals based on science and best medical practices for the client and not based on profits or an ideological agenda.

“D-I-Y Abortion drugs – Legislators allow reckless public health policies that authorize the unregulated proliferation of chemical abortion pills where women and girls are prescribed these lethal pills via telehealth without the benefit of a physician’s examination. The State Board of Pharmacy needs to have the independent ability to evaluate the risks and benefits how these pills are dispensed and determine what is best practice for the public.



Professional Counselors and Therapists must be allowed to provide individual, client-centered treatment without the interference of non-science based ideology. The State Board of Professional Counselors and Therapists must be able to act independently to evaluate its members based on client outcomes and not pre-determined opinions and ideologies from the State. Abortion services should not be seen as the first line of treatment for a pregnant woman seeking mental health services.

State concerns must be for the protection of the patients from harm and not for the determination of treatment pathways. Treatment pathways are determined by the healthcare professional with the patient.

For these reasons, Maryland Right to Life respectfully asks for an amendment to exclude this bill being used in any way for abortion purposes, referrals or otherwise nor for any type of increased funding. We ask that the Maryland Program Evaluation Act be prevented from incorporating an abortion-minded agenda into their evaluations of Health Occupations Boards and allow the term to expire. Without an amendment, we ask for an unfavorable report on SB217.