

HOUSE BILL 49

J1
HB 108/25 – HGO

(PRE-FILED)

6lr1189

By: **Delegate Metzgar**

Requested: October 14, 2025

Introduced and read first time: January 14, 2026

Assigned to: Health

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Public Health – Abortion**
3 **(Heartbeat Bill)**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring that an abortion be performed by a physician, rather than a
5 qualified provider; repealing certain provisions of law related to State interference
6 with an abortion, regulations related to abortion, and liability or criminal
7 punishment for qualified providers who perform an abortion; prohibiting a physician
8 from knowingly performing, inducing, or attempting to perform or induce an abortion
9 under certain circumstances and subject to certain exceptions; establishing
10 requirements for performing or inducing an abortion on a pregnant woman;
11 requiring that certain requirements relating to the performance or inducement of
12 abortions be enforced exclusively through private civil actions; authorizing any
13 person, other than an officer or employee of the State or a local governmental entity
14 in the State, to bring certain civil actions; providing for sovereign, governmental, and
15 official immunity under certain circumstances; and generally relating to abortions.

16 BY repealing

17 Article – Health – General

18 The part designation “Part II. Abortion Procedures” immediately preceding Section
19 20–207; Section 20–209; the part designation “Part III. Information”
20 immediately preceding Section 20–211; and the part designation “Part IV.
21 Effect of Refusal to Participate or Refer” immediately preceding Section
22 20–214

23 Annotated Code of Maryland

24 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

25 BY adding to

26 Article – Health – General

27 Section 20–202 and 20–204 through 20–212

28 Annotated Code of Maryland

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



(2023 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
Article – Health – General
Section 20–207, 20–208, and 20–214
Annotated Code of Maryland
(2023 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
That the part designation “Part II. Abortion Procedures” immediately preceding Section
20–207; the part designation “Part III. Information” immediately preceding Section
20–211; and the part designation “Part IV. Effect of Refusal to Participate or Refer”
immediately preceding Section 20–214 of Article – Health – General of the Annotated Code
of Maryland be repealed.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Laws of Maryland read
as follows:

Article – Health – General

[20–207.] 20–201.

(A) In [Part II of] this subtitle[, “qualified provider”] **THE FOLLOWING WORDS
HAVE THE MEANINGS INDICATED.**

(B) **“FETAL HEARTBEAT” MEANS CARDIAC ACTIVITY OR THE STEADY AND
REPETITIVE RHYTHMIC CONTRACTION OF THE FETAL HEART WITHIN THE
GESTATIONAL SAC.**

(C) **“GESTATIONAL AGE” MEANS THE AMOUNT OF TIME THAT HAS ELAPSED
FROM THE FIRST DAY OF THE PREGNANT WOMAN’S LAST MENSTRUAL PERIOD.**

(D) **“GESTATIONAL SAC” MEANS THE STRUCTURE THAT COMPRISES THE
EXTRAEMBRYONIC MEMBRANES THAT ENVELOP A BABY AND THAT IS TYPICALLY
VISIBLE BY ULTRASOUND AFTER THE FOURTH WEEK OF PREGNANCY.**

(E) **“PHYSICIAN” means an individual[:**

(1) Who] **WHO** is licensed[, certified, or otherwise authorized by law] to
practice **MEDICINE** in the State[; and

(2) For whom the performance of an abortion is within the scope of the
individual’s license or certification] **UNDER TITLE 14 OF THE HEALTH OCCUPATIONS
ARTICLE.**

(F) “PREGNANCY” MEANS THE HUMAN FEMALE REPRODUCTIVE CONDITION
THAT:

(1) BEGINS WITH FERTILIZATION;

(2) OCCURS WHEN THE WOMAN IS CARRYING THE DEVELOPING BABY;
AND

(3) IS CALCULATED FROM THE FIRST DAY OF THE WOMAN’S LAST
MENSTRUAL PERIOD.

(G) “STANDARD MEDICAL PRACTICE” MEANS THE DEGREE OF SKILL, CARE,
AND DILIGENCE THAT AN OBSTETRICIAN OF ORDINARY JUDGMENT, LEARNING, AND
SKILL WOULD EMPLOY IN SIMILAR CIRCUMSTANCES.

20–202.

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FINDS, ACCORDING TO CONTEMPORARY MEDICAL
RESEARCH, THAT:

(1) FETAL HEARTBEAT HAS BECOME A KEY MEDICAL PREDICTOR
THAT A BABY WILL REACH LIVE BIRTH;

(2) CARDIAC ACTIVITY BEGINS AT A BIOLOGICALLY IDENTIFIABLE
MOMENT IN TIME, NORMALLY WHEN THE FETAL HEART IS FORMED IN THE
GESTATIONAL SAC;

(3) THE STATE HAS A COMPELLING INTEREST FROM THE OUTSET OF
A WOMAN’S PREGNANCY IN PROTECTING THE HEALTH OF THE WOMAN AND THE LIFE
OF THE BABY; AND

(4) TO MAKE AN INFORMED CHOICE ABOUT WHETHER TO CONTINUE
HER PREGNANCY, THE PREGNANT WOMAN HAS A COMPELLING INTEREST IN
KNOWING THE LIKELIHOOD OF HER BABY SURVIVING TO FULL–TERM BIRTH BASED
ON THE PRESENCE OF CARDIAC ACTIVITY.

[20–208.] 20–203.

An abortion must be performed by a [qualified provider] PHYSICIAN.

20–204.

(A) FOR THE PURPOSES OF DETERMINING THE PRESENCE OF A FETAL
HEARTBEAT UNDER THIS SECTION, “STANDARD MEDICAL PRACTICE” INCLUDES

1 EMPLOYING THE APPROPRIATE MEANS OF DETECTING A HEARTBEAT BASED ON THE
2 ESTIMATED GESTATIONAL AGE OF THE BABY AND THE CONDITION OF THE WOMAN
3 AND HER PREGNANCY.

4 (B) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTIONS (D) AND (E) OF THIS SECTION, A
5 PHYSICIAN MAY NOT KNOWINGLY PERFORM OR INDUCE OR ATTEMPT TO PERFORM
6 OR INDUCE AN ABORTION ON A PREGNANT WOMAN:

7 (1) BEFORE A PHYSICIAN DETERMINES IN ACCORDANCE WITH
8 SUBSECTION (C) OF THIS SECTION WHETHER THE BABY HAS A DETECTABLE
9 HEARTBEAT; AND

10 (2) IF THE PHYSICIAN DETERMINES THAT THE BABY HAS A
11 DETECTABLE HEARTBEAT.

12 (C) (1) TO DETERMINE WHETHER A BABY HAS A DETECTABLE
13 HEARTBEAT, A PHYSICIAN SHALL USE A TEST THAT IS:

14 (I) CONSISTENT WITH THE PHYSICIAN'S GOOD FAITH AND
15 REASONABLE UNDERSTANDING OF STANDARD MEDICAL PRACTICE; AND

16 (II) APPROPRIATE FOR THE ESTIMATED GESTATIONAL AGE OF
17 THE BABY AND THE CONDITION OF THE PREGNANT WOMAN AND HER PREGNANCY.

18 (2) A PHYSICIAN MAKING A DETERMINATION UNDER PARAGRAPH (1)
19 OF THIS SUBSECTION SHALL RECORD IN THE PREGNANT WOMAN'S MEDICAL
20 RECORD:

21 (I) THE ESTIMATED GESTATIONAL AGE OF THE BABY;

22 (II) THE METHOD USED TO ESTIMATE THE GESTATIONAL AGE;

23 AND

24 (III) THE TEST USED FOR DETECTING A FETAL HEARTBEAT,
25 INCLUDING THE DATE, TIME, AND RESULTS OF THE TEST.

26 (D) SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION DOES NOT APPLY TO A PHYSICIAN
27 WHO PERFORMS OR INDUCES AN ABORTION IF THE PHYSICIAN:

28 (1) BELIEVES THAT A MEDICAL EMERGENCY EXISTS THAT PREVENTS
29 COMPLIANCE WITH SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION; AND

30 (2) COMPLIES WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF § 20-205 OF THIS

1 SUBTITLE.

2 (E) A PHYSICIAN IS NOT IN VIOLATION OF SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION
3 IF:

4 (1) THE PHYSICIAN COMPLIES WITH SUBSECTION (C) OF THIS
5 SECTION; AND

6 (2) THE METHOD USED TO TEST FOR THE PRESENCE OF A FETAL
7 HEARTBEAT DOES NOT DETECT A HEARTBEAT.

8 (F) THIS SECTION MAY NOT BE CONSTRUED TO:

9 (1) CREATE OR RECOGNIZE A RIGHT TO ABORTION BEFORE A FETAL
10 HEARTBEAT IS DETECTED;

11 (2) AUTHORIZE THE INITIATION OF A CAUSE OF ACTION AGAINST OR
12 THE PROSECUTION OF A WOMAN ON WHOM AN ABORTION IS PERFORMED OR
13 INDUCED OR ATTEMPTED TO BE PERFORMED OR INDUCED IN VIOLATION OF THIS
14 SECTION;

15 (3) WHOLLY OR PARTLY REPEAL, EITHER EXPRESSLY OR BY
16 IMPLICATION, ANY OTHER STATUTE THAT REGULATES OR PROHIBITS ABORTION; OR

17 (4) RESTRICT A POLITICAL SUBDIVISION FROM REGULATING OR
18 PROHIBITING ABORTION IN A MANNER THAT IS AT LEAST AS STRINGENT AS THE
19 LAWS OF THE STATE.

20 20-205.

21 (A) IF AN ABORTION IS PERFORMED OR INDUCED ON A PREGNANT WOMAN
22 BECAUSE OF A MEDICAL EMERGENCY, THE PHYSICIAN WHO PERFORMS OR INDUCES
23 THE ABORTION SHALL EXECUTE A WRITTEN DOCUMENT THAT:

24 (1) CERTIFIES THE ABORTION IS NECESSARY DUE TO A MEDICAL
25 EMERGENCY; AND

26 (2) SPECIFIES THE WOMAN'S MEDICAL CONDITION REQUIRING THE
27 ABORTION.

28 (B) A PHYSICIAN SHALL:

29 (1) INCLUDE THE DOCUMENT EXECUTED UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF

1 THIS SECTION IN THE PREGNANT WOMAN'S MEDICAL RECORD; AND

2 (2) MAINTAIN A COPY OF THE DOCUMENT IN THE PHYSICIAN'S
3 PRACTICE RECORDS.

4 (C) A PHYSICIAN WHO PERFORMS OR INDUCES AN ABORTION ON A
5 PREGNANT WOMAN SHALL:

6 (1) IF THE ABORTION IS PERFORMED OR INDUCED TO PRESERVE THE
7 HEALTH OF THE PREGNANT WOMAN, EXECUTE A WRITTEN DOCUMENT THAT:

8 (I) SPECIFIES THE MEDICAL CONDITION THE ABORTION IS
9 ASSERTED TO ADDRESS; AND

10 (II) PROVIDES THE MEDICAL RATIONALE FOR THE PHYSICIAN'S
11 CONCLUSION THAT THE ABORTION IS NECESSARY TO ADDRESS THE MEDICAL
12 CONDITION; OR

13 (2) FOR AN ABORTION OTHER THAN AN ABORTION DESCRIBED IN
14 ITEM (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION, SPECIFY IN A WRITTEN DOCUMENT THAT MATERNAL
15 HEALTH IS NOT A PURPOSE OF THE ABORTION.

16 (D) THE PHYSICIAN SHALL MAINTAIN A COPY OF A DOCUMENT EXECUTED
17 UNDER SUBSECTION (C) OF THIS SECTION IN THE PHYSICIAN'S PRACTICE RECORDS.

18 20-206.

19 (A) (1) NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER PROVISION OF LAW, THE
20 REQUIREMENTS OF §§ 20-204 AND 20-205 OF THIS SUBTITLE SHALL BE ENFORCED
21 EXCLUSIVELY THROUGH THE PRIVATE CIVIL ACTIONS ESTABLISHED IN § 20-207 OF
22 THIS SUBTITLE.

23 (2) ENFORCEMENT OF § 20-204 OR § 20-205 OF THIS SUBTITLE MAY
24 NOT BE TAKEN OR THREATENED BY THE STATE, A POLITICAL SUBDIVISION OF THE
25 STATE, A STATE'S ATTORNEY, OR AN EXECUTIVE OR ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER OR
26 EMPLOYEE OF THE STATE OR A POLITICAL SUBDIVISION OF THE STATE AGAINST
27 ANY PERSON, EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN § 20-207 OF THIS SUBTITLE.

28 (B) SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION MAY NOT BE CONSTRUED TO:

29 (1) LEGALIZE THE CONDUCT PROHIBITED BY THIS SUBTITLE;

30 (2) LIMIT IN ANY WAY OR AFFECT THE AVAILABILITY OF A REMEDY

1 ESTABLISHED BY § 20-207 OF THIS SUBTITLE; OR

2 (3) LIMIT THE ENFORCEABILITY OF ANY OTHER LAWS THAT
3 REGULATE OR PROHIBIT ABORTION.

4 20-207.

5 (A) ANY PERSON, OTHER THAN AN OFFICER OR EMPLOYEE OF THE STATE
6 OR A LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY IN THE STATE, MAY BRING A CIVIL ACTION
7 AGAINST ANY PERSON WHO:

8 (1) PERFORMS OR INDUCES AN ABORTION IN VIOLATION OF § 20-204
9 OR § 20-205 OF THIS SUBTITLE;

10 (2) KNOWINGLY ENGAGES IN CONDUCT THAT AIDS OR ABETS THE
11 PERFORMANCE OR INDUCEMENT OF AN ABORTION, INCLUDING PAYING FOR OR
12 REIMBURSING THE COSTS OF AN ABORTION THROUGH INSURANCE OR OTHERWISE,
13 IF THE ABORTION IS PERFORMED OR INDUCED IN VIOLATION OF § 20-204 OR §
14 20-205 OF THIS SUBTITLE, REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THE PERSON KNEW OR
15 SHOULD HAVE KNOWN THAT THE ABORTION WOULD BE PERFORMED OR INDUCED IN
16 VIOLATION OF § 20-204 OR § 20-205 OF THIS SUBTITLE; OR

17 (3) INTENDS TO ENGAGE IN THE CONDUCT DESCRIBED IN ITEM (1) OR
18 (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION.

19 (B) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (C) OF THIS SECTION, IF A
20 CLAIMANT PREVAILS IN AN ACTION BROUGHT UNDER THIS SECTION, THE COURT
21 SHALL AWARD:

22 (1) INJUNCTIVE RELIEF SUFFICIENT TO PREVENT THE DEFENDANT
23 FROM VIOLATING § 20-204 OR § 20-205 OF THIS SUBTITLE OR ENGAGING IN ACTS
24 THAT AID OR ABET VIOLATIONS OF § 20-204 OR § 20-205 OF THIS SUBTITLE;

25 (2) STATUTORY DAMAGES IN AN AMOUNT OF NOT LESS THAN \$10,000
26 FOR EACH ABORTION THAT THE DEFENDANT PERFORMED OR INDUCED IN
27 VIOLATION OF § 20-204 OR § 20-205 OF THIS SUBTITLE, AND FOR EACH ABORTION
28 PERFORMED OR INDUCED IN VIOLATION OF § 20-204 OR § 20-205 OF THIS SUBTITLE
29 THAT THE DEFENDANT AIDED OR ABETTED; AND

30 (3) COSTS AND ATTORNEY'S FEES.

31 (C) A COURT MAY NOT AWARD RELIEF UNDER THIS SECTION IN RESPONSE
32 TO A CIVIL ACTION BROUGHT UNDER SUBSECTION (A)(1) OR (2) OF THIS SECTION IF

1 THE DEFENDANT DEMONSTRATES THAT THE DEFENDANT PREVIOUSLY PAID THE
2 FULL AMOUNT OF STATUTORY DAMAGES UNDER SUBSECTION (B)(2) OF THIS
3 SECTION IN A PREVIOUS ACTION FOR:

4 (1) THE PARTICULAR ABORTION PERFORMED OR INDUCED IN
5 VIOLATION OF § 20-204 OR § 20-205 OF THIS SUBTITLE; OR

6 (2) THE PARTICULAR CONDUCT THAT AIDED OR ABETTED AN
7 ABORTION PERFORMED OR INDUCED IN VIOLATION OF § 20-204 OR § 20-205 OF
8 THIS SUBTITLE.

9 (D) NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER PROVISION OF LAW, A PERSON MAY
10 NOT BRING AN ACTION UNDER THIS SECTION AFTER 4 YEARS AFTER THE DATE THE
11 CAUSE OF ACTION AROSE.

12 (E) NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER PROVISION OF LAW, THE FOLLOWING
13 ARE NOT A DEFENSE TO AN ACTION BROUGHT UNDER THIS SECTION:

14 (1) IGNORANCE OR MISTAKE OF LAW;

15 (2) A DEFENDANT'S BELIEF THAT THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS
16 SUBTITLE ARE UNCONSTITUTIONAL;

17 (3) A DEFENDANT'S RELIANCE ON ANY COURT DECISION THAT HAS
18 BEEN OVERRULED ON APPEAL OR BY A SUBSEQUENT COURT, EVEN IF THAT COURT
19 DECISION HAD NOT BEEN OVERRULED WHEN THE DEFENDANT ENGAGED IN
20 CONDUCT THAT VIOLATES § 20-204 OR § 20-205 OF THIS SUBTITLE;

21 (4) A DEFENDANT'S RELIANCE ON ANY FEDERAL OR STATE COURT
22 DECISION THAT IS NOT BINDING ON THE COURT IN WHICH THE ACTION HAS BEEN
23 BROUGHT;

24 (5) NONMUTUAL ISSUE PRECLUSION OR NONMUTUAL CLAIM
25 PRECLUSION;

26 (6) THE CONSENT OF THE BABY'S MOTHER TO THE ABORTION; OR

27 (7) ANY CLAIM THAT THE ENFORCEMENT OF THIS SUBTITLE OR THE
28 IMPOSITION OF CIVIL LIABILITY AGAINST THE DEFENDANT WILL VIOLATE THE
29 CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS OF THIRD PARTIES, EXCEPT AS PROVIDED BY § 20-208 OF
30 THIS SUBTITLE.

31 (F) IT IS AN AFFIRMATIVE DEFENSE TO AN ACTION BROUGHT UNDER THIS

1 **SECTION IF:**

2 **(1) A PERSON SUED UNDER SUBSECTION (A)(2) OF THIS SECTION**
3 **REASONABLY BELIEVED, AFTER CONDUCTING A REASONABLE INVESTIGATION,**
4 **THAT THE PHYSICIAN PERFORMING OR INDUCING THE ABORTION HAD COMPLIED**
5 **OR WOULD COMPLY WITH § 20-204 OR § 20-205 OF THIS SUBTITLE; OR**

6 **(2) A PERSON SUED UNDER SUBSECTION (A)(3) OF THIS SECTION**
7 **REASONABLY BELIEVED, AFTER CONDUCTING A REASONABLE INVESTIGATION,**
8 **THAT THE PHYSICIAN PERFORMING OR INDUCING THE ABORTION WOULD COMPLY**
9 **WITH § 20-204 OR § 20-205 OF THIS SUBTITLE.**

10 **(G) THE DEFENDANT HAS THE BURDEN OF PROVING AN AFFIRMATIVE**
11 **DEFENSE UNDER SUBSECTION (F) OF THIS SECTION BY A PREPONDERANCE OF THE**
12 **EVIDENCE.**

13 **(H) THIS SECTION MAY NOT BE CONSTRUED TO IMPOSE LIABILITY ON ANY**
14 **SPEECH OR CONDUCT PROTECTED BY THE FIRST AMENDMENT OF THE U.S.**
15 **CONSTITUTION, AS MADE APPLICABLE TO THE STATES THROUGH THE U.S.**
16 **SUPREME COURT'S INTERPRETATION OF THE FOURTEENTH AMENDMENT OF THE**
17 **U.S. CONSTITUTION, OR BY ARTICLE 40 OF THE MARYLAND DECLARATION OF**
18 **RIGHTS.**

19 **(I) (1) NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER PROVISION OF LAW, THE STATE,**
20 **A STATE OFFICIAL, OR A STATE'S ATTORNEY MAY NOT INTERVENE IN AN ACTION**
21 **BROUGHT UNDER THIS SECTION.**

22 **(2) THIS SUBSECTION MAY NOT BE CONSTRUED TO PROHIBIT A**
23 **PERSON FROM FILING AN AMICUS CURIAE BRIEF IN AN ACTION.**

24 **(J) NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER PROVISION OF LAW, A COURT MAY NOT**
25 **AWARD COSTS OR ATTORNEY'S FEES UNDER THE MARYLAND RULES OF CIVIL**
26 **PROCEDURE OR ANY OTHER RULE ADOPTED BY THE SUPREME COURT OF**
27 **MARYLAND TO A DEFENDANT IN AN ACTION BROUGHT UNDER THIS SECTION.**

28 **(K) NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER PROVISION OF LAW, A CIVIL ACTION**
29 **UNDER THIS SECTION MAY NOT BE BROUGHT BY AN INDIVIDUAL WHO IMPREGNATED**
30 **THE ABORTION PATIENT THROUGH AN ACT OF RAPE, SEXUAL ASSAULT, INCEST, OR**
31 **ANY OTHER ACT PROHIBITED BY LAW.**

32 **(L) NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER PROVISION OF LAW, A CIVIL ACTION**
33 **BROUGHT UNDER THIS SECTION SHALL BE BROUGHT IN:**

1 **(1) THE COUNTY IN WHICH ALL OR A SUBSTANTIAL PART OF THE**
2 **EVENTS OR OMISSIONS GIVING RISE TO THE CLAIM OCCURRED;**

3 **(2) THE COUNTY OF RESIDENCE FOR ANY ONE OF THE INDIVIDUAL**
4 **DEFENDANTS AT THE TIME THE CAUSE OF ACTION OCCURRED;**

5 **(3) THE COUNTY OF THE PRINCIPAL OFFICE IN THE STATE OF ANY**
6 **ONE OF THE DEFENDANTS THAT IS NOT AN INDIVIDUAL; OR**

7 **(4) THE COUNTY OF RESIDENCE FOR THE CLAIMANT IF THE**
8 **CLAIMANT IS AN INDIVIDUAL RESIDING IN THE STATE.**

9 **(M) IF A CIVIL ACTION IS BROUGHT UNDER THIS SECTION IN ANY ONE OF**
10 **THE VENUES DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (L) OF THIS SECTION, THE ACTION MAY**
11 **NOT BE TRANSFERRED TO A DIFFERENT VENUE WITHOUT THE WRITTEN CONSENT**
12 **OF ALL PARTIES.**

13 **20–208.**

14 **(A) A DEFENDANT AGAINST WHOM AN ACTION IS BROUGHT UNDER § 20–207**
15 **OF THIS SUBTITLE DOES NOT HAVE STANDING TO ASSERT THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN**
16 **SEEKING AN ABORTION AS A DEFENSE TO LIABILITY UNDER THAT SECTION UNLESS:**

17 **(1) THE U.S. SUPREME COURT HOLDS THAT THE COURTS OF THE**
18 **STATE MUST CONFER STANDING ON THAT DEFENDANT TO ASSERT THE**
19 **THIRD–PARTY RIGHTS OF WOMEN SEEKING AN ABORTION IN STATE COURT AS A**
20 **MATTER OF FEDERAL CONSTITUTIONAL LAW; OR**

21 **(2) THE DEFENDANT HAS STANDING TO ASSERT THE RIGHTS OF**
22 **WOMEN SEEKING AN ABORTION UNDER THE TESTS FOR THIRD–PARTY STANDING**
23 **ESTABLISHED BY THE U.S. SUPREME COURT.**

24 **(B) (1) THIS SECTION MAY NOT BE CONSTRUED TO LIMIT OR PRECLUDE**
25 **A DEFENDANT FROM ASSERTING THE DEFENDANT’S PERSONAL CONSTITUTIONAL**
26 **RIGHTS AS A DEFENSE TO LIABILITY UNDER § 20–207 OF THIS SUBTITLE.**

27 **(2) A COURT MAY NOT AWARD RELIEF UNDER § 20–207 OF THIS**
28 **SUBTITLE IF THE CONDUCT FOR WHICH THE DEFENDANT HAS BEEN SUED WAS AN**
29 **EXERCISE OF STATE OR FEDERAL CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS THAT PERSONALLY**
30 **BELONG TO THE DEFENDANT.**

31 **[20–209.**

(a) In this section, “viable” means that stage when, in the best clinical judgment of the qualified provider based on the particular facts of the case before the qualified provider, there is a reasonable likelihood of the fetus’s sustained survival outside the womb.

(b) Except as otherwise provided in this subtitle, the State may not interfere with the decision of a woman to terminate a pregnancy:

(1) Before the fetus is viable; or

(2) At any time during the woman’s pregnancy, if:

(i) The termination procedure is necessary to protect the life or health of the woman; or

(ii) The fetus is affected by genetic defect or serious deformity or abnormality.

(c) The Department may adopt regulations that:

(1) Are both necessary and the least intrusive method to protect the life or health of the woman; and

(2) Are not inconsistent with established clinical practice.

(d) The qualified provider is not liable for civil damages or subject to a criminal penalty for a decision to perform an abortion under this section made in good faith and in the qualified provider’s best clinical judgment in accordance with accepted standards of clinical practice.]

20–209.

(A) A PERSON MAY NOT PERFORM OR INDUCE AN ABORTION ON A PREGNANT WOMAN IN THE STATE UNLESS THE ABORTION IS VOLUNTARY AND INFORMED.

(B) CONSENT TO AN ABORTION IS VOLUNTARY AND INFORMED ONLY IF:

(1) THE PHYSICIAN WHO IS TO PERFORM OR INDUCE THE ABORTION INFORMS THE PREGNANT WOMAN ON WHOM THE ABORTION IS TO BE PERFORMED OR INDUCED OF:

(I) THE PHYSICIAN’S NAME;

(II) THE PARTICULAR MEDICAL RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PARTICULAR ABORTION PROCEDURE TO BE EMPLOYED, INCLUDING, WHEN

MEDICALLY ACCURATE:

1. THE RISKS OF INFECTION AND HEMORRHAGE;

**2. THE POTENTIAL DANGER TO A SUBSEQUENT
PREGNANCY AND OF INFERTILITY; AND**

**3. THE POSSIBILITY OF INCREASED RISK OF BREAST
CANCER FOLLOWING AN INDUCED ABORTION AND THE NATURAL PROTECTIVE
EFFECT OF A COMPLETED PREGNANCY IN AVOIDING BREAST CANCER;**

**(III) THE PROBABLE GESTATIONAL AGE OF THE BABY AT THE
TIME THE ABORTION IS TO BE PERFORMED OR INDUCED; AND**

**(IV) THE MEDICAL RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH CARRYING THE
CHILD TO TERM;**

**(2) THE PHYSICIAN WHO IS TO PERFORM OR INDUCE THE ABORTION
OR THE PHYSICIAN'S AGENT INFORMS THE PREGNANT WOMAN THAT:**

**(I) MEDICAL ASSISTANCE BENEFITS MAY BE AVAILABLE FOR
PRENATAL CARE, CHILDBIRTH, AND NEONATAL CARE;**

**(II) THE FATHER IS LIABLE FOR ASSISTANCE IN THE SUPPORT
OF THE CHILD WITHOUT REGARD TO WHETHER THE FATHER HAS OFFERED TO PAY
FOR THE ABORTION; AND**

**(III) PUBLIC AND PRIVATE AGENCIES PROVIDE PREGNANCY
PREVENTION COUNSELING AND MEDICAL REFERRALS FOR OBTAINING PREGNANCY
PREVENTION MEDICATIONS OR DEVICES, INCLUDING EMERGENCY CONTRACEPTION
FOR VICTIMS OF RAPE OR INCEST;**

**(3) THE PHYSICIAN WHO IS TO PERFORM OR INDUCE THE ABORTION
OR THE PHYSICIAN'S AGENT:**

**(I) PROVIDES THE PREGNANT WOMAN WITH PRINTED
MATERIALS THAT DESCRIBE THE BABY AND LIST AGENCIES THAT OFFER
ALTERNATIVES TO ABORTION OR SONOGRAM SERVICES AT NO COST TO THE
PREGNANT WOMAN; AND**

(II) INFORMS THE PREGNANT WOMAN THAT THOSE MATERIALS:

1. HAVE BEEN PROVIDED BY THE DEPARTMENT;

1 2. ARE ACCESSIBLE ON A WEBSITE SPONSORED BY THE
2 DEPARTMENT;

3 3. DESCRIBE THE BABY AND LIST AGENCIES THAT
4 OFFER ALTERNATIVES TO ABORTION; AND

5 4. INCLUDE A LIST OF AGENCIES THAT OFFER
6 SONOGRAM SERVICES AT NO COST TO THE PREGNANT WOMAN;

7 (4) BEFORE ANY SEDATIVE OR ANESTHESIA IS ADMINISTERED TO THE
8 PREGNANT WOMAN AND AT LEAST 24 HOURS BEFORE THE ABORTION OR AT LEAST 2
9 HOURS BEFORE THE ABORTION IF THE PREGNANT WOMAN WAIVES THIS
10 REQUIREMENT BY CERTIFYING THAT SHE CURRENTLY LIVES 100 MILES OR MORE
11 FROM THE NEAREST ABORTION PROVIDER THAT IS A FACILITY THAT PERFORMS
12 MORE THAN 50 ABORTIONS IN ANY 12-MONTH PERIOD:

13 (i) THE PHYSICIAN WHO IS TO PERFORM OR INDUCE THE
14 ABORTION OR AN AGENT OF THE PHYSICIAN WHO IS ALSO A SONOGRAPHER
15 CERTIFIED BY A NATIONAL REGISTRY OF MEDICAL SONOGRAPHERS PERFORMS A
16 SONOGRAM ON THE PREGNANT WOMAN ON WHOM THE ABORTION IS TO BE
17 PERFORMED OR INDUCED; AND

18 (ii) THE PHYSICIAN WHO IS TO PERFORM OR INDUCE THE
19 ABORTION DISPLAYS THE SONOGRAM IMAGES IN A QUALITY CONSISTENT WITH
20 CURRENT MEDICAL PRACTICE IN A MANNER THAT THE PREGNANT WOMAN MAY VIEW
21 THEM AND HEAR THE FETAL HEARTBEAT IN A MANNER CONSISTENT WITH THE
22 STANDARD OF CARE;

23 (5) THE PHYSICIAN WHO IS TO PERFORM OR INDUCE THE ABORTION
24 PROVIDES, IN A MANNER UNDERSTANDABLE TO A LAYPERSON, A VERBAL
25 EXPLANATION OF THE RESULTS OF THE SONOGRAM IMAGES, INCLUDING A MEDICAL
26 DESCRIPTION OF THE DIMENSIONS OF THE EMBRYO OR BABY, THE PRESENCE OF
27 CARDIAC ACTIVITY, AND THE PRESENCE OF EXTERNAL MEMBERS AND INTERNAL
28 ORGANS;

29 (6) THE PHYSICIAN WHO IS TO PERFORM OR INDUCE THE ABORTION
30 OR AN AGENT OF THE PHYSICIAN WHO IS ALSO A SONOGRAPHER CERTIFIED BY A
31 NATIONAL REGISTRY OF MEDICAL SONOGRAPHERS MAKES AUDIBLE THE HEART
32 AUSCULTATION FOR THE PREGNANT WOMAN TO HEAR, IF PRESENT, IN A QUALITY
33 CONSISTENT WITH CURRENT MEDICAL PRACTICE AND PROVIDES, IN A MANNER
34 UNDERSTANDABLE TO A LAYPERSON, A SIMULTANEOUS VERBAL EXPLANATION OF
35 THE HEART AUSCULTATION;

(7) BEFORE RECEIVING A SONOGRAM UNDER ITEM (6) OF THIS SUBSECTION AND BEFORE THE ABORTION IS PERFORMED OR INDUCED AND BEFORE ANY SEDATIVE OR ANESTHESIA IS ADMINISTERED, THE PREGNANT WOMAN COMPLETES AND CERTIFIES WITH HER SIGNATURE AN ELECTION FORM THAT STATES AS FOLLOWS:

“ABORTION AND SONOGRAM ELECTION

(1) THE INFORMATION AND PRINTED MATERIALS UNDER § 20-209(B)(3) OF THE HEALTH – GENERAL ARTICLE HAVE BEEN PROVIDED AND EXPLAINED TO ME.

(2) I UNDERSTAND THE NATURE AND CONSEQUENCES OF AN ABORTION.

(3) MARYLAND LAW REQUIRES THAT I RECEIVE A SONOGRAM PRIOR TO RECEIVING AN ABORTION.

(4) I UNDERSTAND THAT I HAVE THE OPTION TO VIEW THE SONOGRAM IMAGES.

(5) I UNDERSTAND THAT I HAVE THE OPTION TO HEAR THE HEARTBEAT.

(6) I UNDERSTAND THAT I AM REQUIRED BY LAW TO HEAR AN EXPLANATION OF THE SONOGRAM IMAGES UNLESS I CERTIFY IN WRITING ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

____ I AM PREGNANT AS A RESULT OF SEXUAL ASSAULT, INCEST, OR OTHER VIOLATIONS OF THE MARYLAND PENAL CODE THAT HAVE BEEN REPORTED TO LAW ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITIES OR THAT HAVE NOT BEEN REPORTED BECAUSE I REASONABLY BELIEVE THAT DOING SO WOULD PUT ME AT RISK OF RETALIATION RESULTING IN SERIOUS BODILY INJURY.

____ I AM A MINOR AND OBTAINING AN ABORTION IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 20-103 OF THE HEALTH – GENERAL ARTICLE.

____ MY BABY HAS AN IRREVERSIBLE MEDICAL CONDITION OR ABNORMALITY, AS IDENTIFIED BY RELIABLE DIAGNOSTIC PROCEDURES AND DOCUMENTED IN MY MEDICAL FILE.

(7) I AM MAKING THIS ELECTION OF MY OWN FREE WILL AND WITHOUT COERCION.

(8) FOR A WOMAN WHO LIVES 100 MILES OR MORE FROM THE NEAREST ABORTION PROVIDER THAT IS A FACILITY THAT PERFORMS MORE THAN 50

1 ABORTIONS IN ANY 12-MONTH PERIOD:

2 ___ I CERTIFY THAT, BECAUSE I CURRENTLY LIVE 100 MILES OR
3 MORE FROM THE NEAREST ABORTION PROVIDER THAT IS A FACILITY THAT
4 PERFORMS MORE THAN 50 ABORTIONS IN ANY 12-MONTH PERIOD, I WAIVE THE
5 REQUIREMENT TO WAIT 24 HOURS AFTER THE SONOGRAM IS PERFORMED BEFORE
6 RECEIVING THE ABORTION PROCEDURE. MY PLACE OF RESIDENCE IS _____.

7 _____
8 (SIGNATURE)

_____ (DATE)";

9 (8) BEFORE THE ABORTION IS PERFORMED OR INDUCED, THE
10 PHYSICIAN WHO IS TO PERFORM OR INDUCE THE ABORTION RECEIVES A COPY OF
11 THE SIGNED, WRITTEN CERTIFICATION REQUIRED UNDER ITEM (7) OF THIS
12 SUBSECTION; AND

13 (9) THE PREGNANT WOMAN IS PROVIDED THE NAME OF EACH
14 PERSON WHO PROVIDES OR EXPLAINS THE INFORMATION REQUIRED UNDER THIS
15 SECTION.

16 20-210.

17 (A) NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER PROVISION OF LAW, THE STATE HAS
18 SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY, A POLITICAL SUBDIVISION HAS GOVERNMENTAL IMMUNITY,
19 AND EACH OFFICER AND EMPLOYEE OF THE STATE OR A POLITICAL SUBDIVISION
20 HAS OFFICIAL IMMUNITY IN ANY ACTION, CLAIM, OR COUNTERCLAIM OR ANY TYPE
21 OF LEGAL OR EQUITABLE ACTION THAT CHALLENGES THE VALIDITY OF ANY
22 PROVISION OR APPLICATION OF THIS SUBTITLE, ON CONSTITUTIONAL GROUNDS OR
23 OTHERWISE.

24 (B) NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER PROVISION OF LAW, A PROVISION OF
25 STATE LAW MAY NOT BE CONSTRUED TO WAIVE OR ABROGATE AN IMMUNITY
26 DESCRIBED IN SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION UNLESS IT EXPRESSLY WAIVES
27 IMMUNITY UNDER THIS SECTION.

28 20-211.

29 (A) NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER PROVISION OF LAW, ANY PERSON WHO
30 SEEKS DECLARATORY OR INJUNCTIVE RELIEF TO PREVENT THE STATE, A POLITICAL
31 SUBDIVISION, ANY GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY OR PUBLIC OFFICIAL IN THE STATE, OR
32 ANY PERSON IN THE STATE FROM ENFORCING ANY STATUTE, ORDINANCE, RULE,
33 REGULATION, OR ANY OTHER TYPE OF LAW THAT REGULATES OR RESTRICTS
34 ABORTION OR THAT LIMITS TAXPAYER FUNDING FOR INDIVIDUALS OR ENTITIES

1 THAT PERFORM OR PROMOTE ABORTIONS, IN ANY STATE OR FEDERAL COURT, OR
2 THAT REPRESENTS ANY LITIGANT SEEKING SUCH RELIEF IN ANY STATE OR
3 FEDERAL COURT, IS JOINTLY AND SEVERALLY LIABLE TO PAY THE COSTS AND
4 ATTORNEY'S FEES OF THE PREVAILING PARTY.

5 (B) FOR PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION, A PARTY IS CONSIDERED A
6 PREVAILING PARTY IF A FEDERAL OR STATE COURT:

7 (1) DISMISSES ANY CLAIM OR CAUSE OF ACTION BROUGHT AGAINST
8 THE PARTY THAT SEEKS THE DECLARATORY OR INJUNCTIVE RELIEF UNDER
9 SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION, REGARDLESS OF THE REASON FOR THE
10 DISMISSAL; OR

11 (2) ENTERS JUDGMENT IN THE PARTY'S FAVOR ON ANY SUCH CLAIM
12 OR CAUSE OF ACTION.

13 (C) REGARDLESS OF WHETHER A PREVAILING PARTY SOUGHT TO RECOVER
14 COSTS OR ATTORNEY'S FEES IN THE UNDERLYING ACTION, A PREVAILING PARTY
15 UNDER THIS SECTION MAY BRING A CIVIL ACTION TO RECOVER COSTS AND
16 ATTORNEY'S FEES AGAINST A PERSON THAT SOUGHT DECLARATORY OR INJUNCTIVE
17 RELIEF UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS SECTION WITHIN 3 YEARS AFTER THE DATE
18 ON WHICH, AS APPLICABLE:

19 (1) THE DISMISSAL OR JUDGMENT UNDER SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS
20 SECTION BECOMES FINAL ON THE CONCLUSION OF APPELLATE REVIEW; OR

21 (2) THE TIME FOR SEEKING APPELLATE REVIEW EXPIRES.

22 (D) IT IS NOT A DEFENSE TO AN ACTION BROUGHT UNDER SUBSECTION (C)
23 OF THIS SECTION THAT:

24 (1) A PREVAILING PARTY UNDER THIS SECTION FAILED TO SEEK
25 RECOVERY OF COSTS OR ATTORNEY'S FEES IN THE UNDERLYING ACTION;

26 (2) THE COURT IN THE UNDERLYING ACTION DECLINED TO
27 RECOGNIZE OR ENFORCE THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS SECTION; OR

28 (3) THE COURT IN THE UNDERLYING ACTION HELD THAT ANY
29 PROVISION OF THIS SECTION IS INVALID, UNCONSTITUTIONAL, OR PREEMPTED BY
30 FEDERAL LAW, NOTWITHSTANDING THE DOCTRINES OF ISSUE OR CLAIM
31 PRECLUSION.

32 20-212.

(A) A STATUTE THAT REGULATES OR PROHIBITS ABORTION MAY NOT BE CONSTRUED TO REPEAL ANY OTHER STATUTE THAT REGULATES OR PROHIBITS ABORTION, EITHER WHOLLY OR PARTLY, UNLESS THE REPEALING STATUTE EXPLICITLY STATES THAT IT IS REPEALING THE OTHER STATUTE.

(B) A STATUTE MAY NOT BE CONSTRUED TO RESTRICT A POLITICAL SUBDIVISION FROM REGULATING OR PROHIBITING ABORTION IN A MANNER THAT IS AT LEAST AS STRINGENT AS THE LAWS OF THE STATE UNLESS THE STATUTE EXPLICITLY STATES THAT POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS ARE PROHIBITED FROM REGULATING OR PROHIBITING ABORTION IN THE MANNER DESCRIBED IN THE STATUTE.

(C) (1) EVERY STATUTE THAT REGULATES OR PROHIBITS ABORTION IS SEVERABLE IN EACH OF ITS APPLICATIONS TO EVERY PERSON AND CIRCUMSTANCE.

(2) IF ANY STATUTE THAT REGULATES OR PROHIBITS ABORTION IS FOUND BY ANY COURT TO BE UNCONSTITUTIONAL, EITHER ON ITS FACE OR AS APPLIED, THEN ALL APPLICATIONS OF THAT STATUTE THAT DO NOT VIOLATE THE U.S. CONSTITUTION AND THE MARYLAND CONSTITUTION SHALL:

(I) BE SEVERED FROM THE UNCONSTITUTIONAL APPLICATIONS;

(II) REMAIN ENFORCEABLE, NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER LAW; AND

(III) BE INTERPRETED AS IF CONTAINING LANGUAGE LIMITING THE STATUTE'S APPLICATION TO THE PERSONS, GROUP OF PERSONS, OR CIRCUMSTANCES FOR WHICH THE STATUTE'S APPLICATION WILL NOT VIOLATE THE U.S. CONSTITUTION AND THE MARYLAND CONSTITUTION.

[20–214.] 20–213.

(a) (1) A person may not be required to perform or participate in, or refer to any source for, any medical procedure that results in artificial insemination, sterilization, or termination of pregnancy.

(2) The refusal of a person to perform or participate in, or refer to a source for, these medical procedures may not be a basis for:

(i) Civil liability to another person; or

(ii) Disciplinary or other recriminatory action against the person.

(b) (1) A licensed hospital, hospital director, or hospital governing board may not be required:

(i) To permit, within the hospital, the performance of any medical procedure that results in artificial insemination, sterilization, or termination of pregnancy; or

(ii) To refer to any source for these medical procedures.

(2) The refusal to permit or to refer to a source for these procedures may not be grounds for:

(i) Civil liability to another person; or

(ii) Disciplinary or other recriminatory action against the person by this State or any person.

(c) (1) The refusal of an individual to submit to or give consent for an abortion or sterilization may not be grounds for loss of any privileges or immunities to which the individual otherwise would be entitled.

(2) Submitting to or granting consent for an abortion or sterilization may not be a condition precedent to the receipt of any public benefits.

(d) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, a health care provider, a licensed hospital, a hospital director, or a hospital governing board is not immune from civil damages, if available at law, or from disciplinary or other recriminatory action, if the failure to refer a patient to a source for any medical procedure that results in sterilization or termination of pregnancy would reasonably be determined as:

(1) The cause of death or serious physical injury or serious long-lasting injury to the patient; and

(2) Otherwise contrary to the standards of medical care.

SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, if any provision of this Act or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid for any reason in a court of competent jurisdiction, the invalidity does not affect other provisions or any other application of this Act that can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and for this purpose the provisions of this Act are declared severable.

SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect October 1, 2026.