



## **Opposition Statement HB299/SB34**

State Board of Physicians – Genetic Counselors-Licensing

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### **We Oppose HB299/SB34**

On behalf of our members in Baltimore and Howard Counties and across the state, we respectfully object to HB/SB as written. Without your amendment this bill could authorize public funds to promote abortion based on genetic testing for fetal abnormalities or disabilities. Selective abortion that discriminates against preborn children due to disability undermines the human value and dignity of all persons with disabilities. Genetic testing often produces false positives that lead genetic counselors to advise parents to abort healthy children.

### **Pregnancy is not a Disease**

Abortion is not healthcare. It is violence and brutality that ends the lives of unborn children through suction, dismemberment or chemical poisoning. The fact that 85% of OB-GYNs in a representative national survey do not perform abortions on their patients is glaring evidence that abortion is not an essential part of women's healthcare. Women have better options for comprehensive health care. There are 14 federally qualifying health care centers for every Planned Parenthood in Maryland. Abortion has a disproportionate impact on Black Americans who have long been targeted by the abortion industry for eugenics purposes. As a result abortion is the leading cause of death of Black Americans, more than gun violence and all other causes combined.

### **No public funding for abortions**

Taxpayers should not be forced to fund elective abortions, which make up the vast majority of abortions performed in Maryland. State funding for abortion on demand with taxpayer funds is in direct conflict with the will of the people. A 2019 Marist poll showed that 54% of Americans, both "pro-life" and "pro-choice" oppose the use of tax dollars to pay for a woman's abortion. Never has more than 40% of the American public supported taxpayer funding of abortion regardless of the context or way in which the question is asked.

### **Love them both**

This bill stands in conflict with the fact that 83% of Americans polled favor laws that protect both the lives of women and unborn children. Public funds instead should be prioritized to fund health and family planning services which have the objective of saving the lives of both mother and children, including programs for improving maternal health and birth and delivery outcomes, well baby care, parenting classes, foster care reform and affordable adoption programs.

### **Funding restrictions are constitutional**

The Supreme Court has held that the alleged constitutional "right" to an abortion "*implies no limitation on the authority of a State to make a value judgment favoring childbirth over abortion, and to implement that judgment by the allocation of public funds.*" When a challenge to the constitutionality of the Hyde Amendment reached the Supreme Court in 1980 in the case of *Harris v. McRae*, the Court ruled that the government may distinguish between abortion and other procedures in funding decisions -- noting that "*no other procedure involves the purposeful termination of a potential life*" -- and affirmed that *Roe v. Wade* had created a limitation on