



Secular Maryland

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March 10, 2021

The Honorable Delores G. Kelley
Finance Committee
Miller Senate Office Building, 3 East
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: OPPOSE SB0423 (HB0834) Public Health – Federal and State Funding for Abortions
– Prohibition and Exceptions

Chairwoman and Members of the Committee:

Secular Maryland agrees with the existing policy of legal abortions during the first and second trimesters of pregnancy. The end of the second trimester is approximately when the life of a baby usually becomes sustainable outside of the womb. In our view it takes some more time after conception before a new human life is realized. We disagree with those who claim that abortion is murder because human life begins at conception. Restrictions on government funding legal abortions imposes a particular disputable religious or moral viewpoint on those women who rely on government-funded health care. Government funding places the personal decision about how to treat a pregnancy in the hands of the women who live with the consequences of that decision. A July 2018 NBC/Wall Street Journal survey showed that 71 percent of Americans believed the high court's *Roe v. Wade* decision should not be overturned.

Under this bill, only if a woman would otherwise die, or if her pregnancy results from rape or incest, is an abortion covered. Sometimes a woman needs an abortion for her health. Some women will use money they need for food, rent, clothing, or other necessities to pay for an abortion. Women will delay their abortions, increasing their medical risks, while they scrape funds together. Therefore such a restriction on abortion funding would jeopardize women's health. Providing funding for abortion does not compel women to have abortions, but denying funding will compel impoverished women to carry their pregnancies to term. The costs associated with childbirth,



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neonatal and pediatric care exceed the costs of abortion. Public funding for abortion
neither costs the taxpayer money nor drains resources from other services