

HB 997

Support

Dr. Frank Arlinghaus

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Please issue a favorable report on House Bill 997. I fully support the concepts espoused in this bill, which represent a dramatic but proper change in Maryland abortion law by recognizing the personhood of unborn children.

For many of the bills I submit testimony on, the issues are small ones, looking not to transform abortion law, but merely to bring a standard of care of policy to abortion that we have on other medical procedures. Many of these are designed to protect women, parents, their children, and provide an appropriate standard of care. Sometimes they seek to limit a small number of abortions from occurring in narrowly defined circumstances.

However this bill is transformational, and espouses a fundamental idea that embodies in law what my family and I truly believe. Every human being is inherently of inestimable value, from conception to natural death, regardless of circumstances of conception, with no person of greater or lesser value due to any factors, including but not limited to race, creed, color, wealth, status, gender, or perceived societal value.

While I am motivated by my belief that each person is created in the image and likeness of God, and is therefore of infinite value, I can also approach this from a more secular American view. We believe that America's core values include life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Logically, the first among these is life, for without it, none of your rights are meaningful. We also see that throughout our history, failure to live up to these ideals, failure to extend these to all people, is a source of great pain and shame.

I ask that you return a favorable report on HB0997.