

**Senate Finance Committee****Senate Bill 891 - Public Health – Medical Procedures – Parent or Guardian Notice****March 16, 2022****Oppose**

Planned Parenthood of Maryland opposes *Senate Bill 891 – Public Health – Medical Procedures – Parents or Guardian Notice*. The bill would require the notice of a parent or guardian before a minor or a disabled adult with a guardian could receive abortion care. The only exceptions would be in medical emergencies or with a judicial waiver. Maryland law already provides for physicians to notify a parent. The law allows the physician to waive the notice in certain circumstances, including when the notice might cause harm to the minor.

Most minors involving a parent when making a decision about abortion care.<sup>i</sup> PPM supports parental involvement if it is the best interests of the minor. However, as stated by the American Academy of Pediatrics, “legislation mandating parental involvement does not achieve the intended benefit of promoting family communication, and in increases the risk of harm”.<sup>ii</sup>

This bill would endanger minors and disabled adults because:

- **Forced to Carry a Pregnancy to Term:** If a parent or guardian disagreed with a minor or disabled adult’s decision regarding abortion care, the minor or disabled adult could be pressured or even coerced to carry a pregnancy to term. Pregnancy is a major health condition with significant medical risks, and it completely changes the course of an individual’s life, whether they decide to raise a child or go through an adoption process.
- **Delays Care:** Concerns about confidentiality can delay minors in seeking pregnancy care, either prenatal or abortion care. The evidence shows that judicial bypass provisions are difficult for minors to navigate and delay care in many circumstances up to 6 weeks.<sup>iii</sup>

We ask for a unfavorable report on this legislation. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Robyn Elliott at (443) 926-3443 or [relliott@policypartners.net](mailto:relliott@policypartners.net).

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<sup>i</sup> Ralph L, Gould H, Baker A, Foster DG. The role of parents and partners in minors' decisions to have an abortion and anticipated coping after abortion. *J Adolesc Health*. 2014 Apr;54(4):428-34. doi: 10.1016/j.jadohealth.2013.09.021. Epub 2013 Dec 12. PMID: 24332398.

<sup>ii</sup> <https://publications.aap.org/pediatrics/article/139/2/e20163861/59961/The-Adolescent-s-Right-to-Confidential-Care-When>

<sup>iii</sup> Cartoof VG, Klerman LV. Parental consent for abortion: impact of the Massachusetts law. *Am J Public Health*. 1986; 76 (4): 397–400.