

To the Senate Finance Committee:

I am writing to urge you as strongly as possible to oppose HB 1171. It is scientifically undeniable that the life of a new human being begins at conception. The 2004 policy statement of the American College of Pediatricians states, "The body of scientific evidence that human life begins at conception - fertilization...scientific and medical discoveries over the past 3 decades (since Roe vs. Wade) have only verified and solidified this age-old truth." We are kidding ourselves when we try to use newspeak such as "reproductive liberty" to talk about abortion. We know what is happening. The life of a human being is being extinguished.

HB 1171 attempts to enshrine abortion as a fundamental right in the Maryland state constitution. I find it troubling that abortion is never mentioned by name in the bill, but instead deceptively referred to as "reproductive liberty" and the "right...to end their pregnancy" This is dehumanization of the act that is really occurring during an abortion. The bill fails to recognize that there are two individuals being affected in any abortion and one of them is a human being whose life is being terminated. This is not a political question. This is a moral question. If you fail to stand for the unborn, you are responsible for their deaths and you will be morally responsible for their destruction. "Rescue those being led away to death; hold back those staggering toward slaughter. If you say, 'But we knew nothing about this', does not he who weighs the heart perceive it? Does not he who guards your life know it? Will he not repay everyone according to what they have done?" (Proverbs 24:11-12). What kind of society are we if we are unwilling to protect the lives of the most vulnerable among us? As leaders with influence and authority, you will be held morally accountable if you fail to stand against this death, destruction, and moral degradation.

Furthermore, as a taxpayer, I am appalled that my tax dollars would go towards funding abortion. I am morally opposed to this and feel that this bill infringes on my own religious liberties and moral conscience by codifying the use of taxpayer dollars to fund all abortions.

Finally, though I would find this bill to be morally reprehensible even if it honestly defined terms, I am further concerned by some of the vague language contained in the bill. The bill says that "every person...has the fundamental right to reproductive liberty which includes the right to make and effectuate decisions regarding the individual's own reproduction." The bill does not limit this right to adults. Does a 13-year-old have the fundamental right to choose to reproduce with a 25-year-old? What if another 13-year-old girl wants to have a hysterectomy? Can she do so without parental consent? Would taxpayers be forced to pay for it? The bill also says that these "reproductive rights" can be denied by a "compelling state interest," but these interests are also left undefined. Would overpopulation or a climate crisis be a reason for the state to use its interest to force sterilization or abortion against a woman's will? All of these questions remain unanswered by the bill and I believe that the vague nature of the bill leaves open too many opportunities for harmful and destructive decisions and state actions..

I hope that you take these concerns to heart. You have the power to stand for the unborn and most vulnerable in our society. Please use it wisely and courageously.

Sincerely,

Justin Kuk

*Baltimore, Maryland*