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I represent the Dolores Turco Foundation, a charitable 501(C)3 organization whose mission for the past 25 years has been to protect children from abuse, neglect, and sexual exploitation. Our foundation adamantly opposes Maryland House Bill 1171, which would promote rather than prevent child abuse, rape, and molestation, while protecting the perpetrator. The multi-billion-dollar sex industry is the one of the largest enterprises in the nation. One out of four girls and one out of seven boys under the age of 18 is sexually assaulted every year. Sexual predators prey on children in schools, churches, extracurricular activities, and even in their homes. Children in foster homes are particularly vulnerable. Laws have always protected minors, who are considered victims of sexual offenses. Megan's Law requires convicted sex offenders to be registered in the communities for the protection of children. Over the past thirty or forty years, this nation has witnessed heinous sexual crimes and the rampant sexual exploitation of children that should foster even greater protections of these vulnerable citizens who have no legal rights until they are 18.

Bill 1171 would make it illegal to criminalize sex between an adult and a minor making Maryland a haven for sex traffickers and other predators to molest and rape their victims, then force an abortion with impunity. This legislation would also allow minors to seek sterilization and transgender without parental consent. This constitutes the mutilation of a child's body that cannot be reversed, which is the ultimate form of child abuse. Research demonstrates that minors are not sufficiently developed and mature to make these irreversible decisions regarding their sexuality until their early twenties. Predators and providers of services with financial motives could easily influence children, especially when parental consent is not required.

Laws are generally promulgated to protect innocent victims and punish crimes. It is obvious to the public, that any legislator who supports Bill 1171, prioritizes the greed of the multi-billion sex and abortion industries before the health, safety, and welfare of his or her constituents, especially the most vulnerable children.

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