



Testimony submitted on behalf of the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons by Dr. James Kelly for the State of Maryland Senate Finance Committee Hearing on March 30, 2022

House Bill 1171, is not about protecting fundamental rights-it is really about **abortion coercion and denying Marylanders of their fundamental constitutional rights, and increasing profits for abortionists**. I am a physician and psychiatrist. Over the last 35 years I treated many women who have abortions. The vast majority deeply regret their abortions, many report that they felt maneuvered towards and coerced into having abortions. Many suffer from post abortion stress syndrome. Many of these women go on to develop major depression, self-injurious behaviors such as cutting, scratching, banging, burning and damaging their bodies. Many bury their emotions under drugs and alcohol, go in and out of jails and prisons , drug rehab programs due to drug addictions. Many overdose on drugs and even commit crimes crimes to fund their drug habits in an effort to bury their remorse and regret about their abortions.

By changing induced abortion into a “fundamental right” Maryland taxpayers will also become victims of coercion also. Taxpayers will be forced, against their wills and consciences and beliefs -to be participants in abortions by being forced to pay for ALL ABORTIONS which violates their rights to a free conscience and free exercise of religion will be stopped violated. It would force physicians, nurses, hospitals and other healthcare providers to participate in abortions, in violation of their rights of conscience and free exercise of religion.

This bill also violates the Freedom of Speech guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States, and takes the power to regulate abortion away from our elected representatives by barring all future legislative protections and reforms.

Maryland law already is very extreme on abortion. The *Maryland Freedom of Choice Act* (1991) allows abortion-on-demand, for any reason and up until birth. Maryland is one of only four states that forces taxpayers to pay for other people's abortions.

Maryland is one of only three states that shield abortionists from liability by refusing to report abortion data to the CDC. This refusal to report data endangers the lives and health of women. Please vote NO. This amendment is unconscionable, coercive and divisive and should never be in our great Maryland Constitution.