



Favorable Testimony in support of the Abortion Care Access Act (SB 890)

***Senate Finance Committee
Hearing on February 23, 2022***

Launched in 2017, Our Maryland is a nonprofit, multi-issue hub for promoting a just and sustainable future for all Marylanders. Our Maryland currently has close to 55,000 Facebook followers and 14,000 email subscribers living across the state. Our Maryland testifies in strong support of SB 890, the Abortion Care Access Act.

With the current US Supreme Court majority preparing to gut the landmark *Roe v. Wade* decision this term, it is critical that Maryland acts quickly to protect fundamental reproductive freedoms and expands abortion access for Marylanders and those having to travel here from out of state to receive abortion care.

Two-thirds of Maryland counties currently lack an abortion provider and 26 states are poised to ban or severely limit access to abortion care. Current state law only allows licensed physicians to perform abortions, which is outdated and overly restrictive. SB 890 would enable nurse practitioners and other advanced practice clinicians, who provide much patient care today, to provide abortion care. This reflects the expert recommendation of the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecologists. The legislation also would provide training to new providers to ensure high quality and safe care. Indeed, fourteen other states already authorize clinical practitioners to provide abortion care,

SB 890 also recognizes that essential health care, including abortion care, should not depend on a person's income or insurance status. Maryland's Health Benefit Exchange and both private insurance and Medicaid should provide equal coverage for abortion care without imposing additional cost-sharing and deductible requirements. The Guttmacher Institute reports that 75% of people getting abortion care are low income. People of color are disproportionately harmed by barriers to abortion care as well. In addition, approximately 60 percent of people getting an abortion are already a parent and are religiously affiliated. We must reduce these barriers.

Marylanders strongly support reproductive freedoms and access to abortion care. In a 2021 poll, 72% of Marylanders oppose overturning *Roe v. Wade* and 79% support ensuring individuals have access to the full range of reproductive health care services. We urge you to provide a favorable report for SB 890 at the earliest opportunity. Thank you.

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