
BILL NO: Senate Bill 891
TITLE: Public Health – Medical Procedures – Parent or Guardian Notice
COMMITTEE: Finance
HEARING DATE: March 16, 2022
POSITION: **OPPOSE**

Senate Bill 891 repeal existing parental notification law for minors and disabled adult seeking abortion care and would require a litany of process that is unnecessary and invades a pregnant person's ability to make decisions in consultation of their medical care provider. The Women's Law Center of Maryland, Inc. opposes Senate Bill 891 because our current laws are adequate and because decisions about pregnancy are and should remain a matter between a pregnant person and their doctor.

Maryland law already has parental notification laws. In many situations, parents are involved in the decisions of the minor. But not in all families. For those pregnant minors, requiring a judicial waiver can be an unsurmountable obstacle to receiving the care they need. Sadly, if they are the minors who can't go to their parents for support, they will also have no assistance in accessing the judicial waiver system put in place by this bill. The process by which to receive a judicial waiver is complicated for anyone, much less a minor who is seeking relief. This process, in addition, will delay care. If SB 891 passed, individuals would be forced to carry pregnancies to term against their will.

Maryland has supported a woman's right to choose at least since Question Six in 1992, and there is no support that the citizens of this state want this type of change in our public policy.

For these reasons, the Women's Law Center urges an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 891.

The Women's Law Center of Maryland is a private, non-profit, membership organization that serves as a leading voice for justice and fairness for women. It advocates for the rights of women through legal assistance to individuals and strategic initiatives to achieve systemic change.