

**MARYLAND JUDICIAL CONFERENCE
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

Hon. Joseph M. Getty
Chief Judge

187 Harry S. Truman Parkway
Annapolis, MD 21401

MEMORANDUM

TO: House Health and Government Operations Committee
FROM: Legislative Committee
Suzanne D. Pelz, Esq.
410-260-1523
RE: House Bill 1167
Public Health – Abortions - Coercion
DATE: February 23, 2022
(3/11)
POSITION: Oppose

The Maryland Judiciary opposes House Bill 1167. This proposed legislation if enacted would prohibit an individual from committing or threatening certain actions intended to coerce a pregnant woman into having an abortion.

The Judiciary is concerned about Health General § 20-219(b)(2) of the bill which requires courts to provide counsel for pregnant women in certain cases, and to give certain cases “expedited consideration.” Courts should retain discretion to decide when it is appropriate to appoint counsel for a party and to manage their own dockets. This bill also does not provide any guidance as to who would fund this counsel.

cc. Hon. Susan McComas
Judicial Council
Legislative Committee
Kelley O’Connor