

Written Testimony of Aruna Miller
Former Maryland Delegate and Candidate for Lieutenant Governor
Before the House Health and Government Operations Committee
Declaration of Rights - Right to Reproductive Liberty FAVORABLE (HB
1171)
February 22, 2022

Chair Pendergrass, Vice Chair Pena Melnyk, and Members of the House Government and Operations Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of **House Bill 1171 Declaration of Rights - Right to Reproductive Liberty.**

First, allow me to thank and commend Speaker Jones for bringing forward this important measure, which takes directly to Marylanders the crucial question of reproductive rights. Speaker Jones has been an unwavering champion for reproductive rights and her long and impressive record on reproductive health care issues make her the perfect author of this historic measure.

As we have seen around the country, the fundamental right of people to make their own reproductive health care decisions is under assault. Despite overwhelming support for the right to choose, and nearly 50 years of Supreme Court precedent, states across the country have passed laws severely restricting access to abortion, ostensibly outlawing it.

In this moment, despite the incredible leadership and tireless advocacy to protect the right to an abortion in Maryland for decades, it is clear that we can never take the right to reproductive health care for granted.

My running mate, Wes Moore, and my record are very clear on this issue: reproductive health care is a fundamental right and must be protected. With that, we support House Bill 1171 so we may take this issue directly to the people and, through their approval, enshrine the right to choose in our Constitution. If given the opportunity, I am confident that Marylanders will choose to live in a state where people's reproductive rights are protected and all are empowered to make this often difficult, and always personal, decision with their doctors; as opposed to living in a state where that choice can be subject to political tides or the will of legislatures.

For these reasons, Wes Moore and I ask for the Committee's favorable report on House Bill 1171 to provide Marylanders with the opportunity to enshrine the right of every Marylander to access reproductive health care into our constitution.