



HB 1171 Declaration of Rights - Right To Reproductive Liberty

Position: Favorable

By: Nancy Soreng, President

Date: February 22, 2022

The League of Women Voters of Maryland is a nonpartisan organization that has over a century of political advocacy and education. The League supports House Bill 1171, Declaration of Rights - Right to Reproductive Liberty based on the position that it is paramount that all Maryland citizens have the right to equal protection to healthcare, reproductive justice, and equal status under the law.

The very basic issue of access to abortion is the option for equitable access to health care for all. All people deserve the right to assess any medical need with their chosen health professional and receive the desired treatment. It should not fall to any person's situation such as race, class, or zip code. These factors far too often can determine the quality of care one receives. HB 1171 would ensure that legislation would not become an added factor.

It is indisputable that legislation to limit or ban abortion access discriminates predominantly against women. Access to abortion services in Maryland is limited by health care provider shortages and lack of insurance coverage. Barriers to access abortion services are expected to increase as pregnant people travel to Maryland for health care they are not able to obtain in their own state. Access to abortion should not depend on where you live or the lack of health care providers in your community.

States have enacted over 100 abortion restrictions in 2021. This is the highest number of restrictions passed since *Roe v. Wade* was decided by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1973. With the passage of HB 1171 Maryland would be safeguarded from partisan politics coming out of Washington, DC. Maryland has always been forward thinking when it comes to protecting each and every individual. The League believes that this bill continues that trend.

The League of Women Voters of Maryland with 1500+ members urges a favorable report on HB 1171.