

March 9, 2022

I strongly oppose the Pregnant Persons Freedom Act (HB626/SB669) and urge your unfavorable report. This bill promotes infanticide, puts abortion profits before the health and safety of pregnant women, and could subject pregnant women to abortion coercion and sexual exploitation.

This bill promotes infanticide by prohibiting the state or law enforcement from investigating or prosecuting a woman for the death of a newborn infant due to her failure to act. A mother could not be held criminally responsible for denying her child care, nourishment or medical assistance resulting in her child's death. This is markedly distinct from miscarriage or stillbirth.

The bill is an unnecessary distraction as there is no provision in Maryland law to impose criminal penalties on a woman who obtains an abortion or a physician who "in good faith" performs and abortion.

Shielding Sexual Predators

Under current Maryland law, there is no explicit measure prohibiting any individual from coercing a woman into abortion. But the majority of women who have had abortions (64%) report afterward that they were pressured into the decision, either by an abusive partner, a parent or other authority figure or a clinic worker.

This bill shields individuals who may coerce women into abortion, including sexual abusers and sex traffickers. The bill binds the hands of the state and bars law enforcement officials from prosecuting an individual who may use coercion or threats to force a woman into obtaining an abortion and empowers sexual predators to continue to abuse their victims. Abortion providers have demonstrated an unwillingness to protect women and girls against sexual abuse and trafficking by refusing to report suspected abuse to law enforcement or other public authorities while agreeing to commit abortions on suspected victims.

The abortion industry self-identifies as pro-choice, but in reality, choice has little to do with the abortion transaction. Far from enshrining freedom for pregnant women against coercion, this bill denies pregnant women the protection of existing law and exposes them to further exploitation and abuse.

The Maryland General Assembly must not abandon pregnant women and girls by allowing the abortion industry to exploit them for profit. The State of Maryland must do better for women and families.

I urge you to vote "NO" on the Pregnant Persons Freedom Act (SB 669/HB626).

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