

TESTIMONY ON HB1171 - POSITION: FAVORABLE

Declaration of Rights - Right to Reproductive Liberty

TO: Chair Pendergrass, Vice Chair Pena-Melnyk, and members of the Health and Government Operations Committee

FROM: Lily Bolourian

My name is Lily Bolourian and I am a resident of District 14 and the Executive Director of Pro-Choice Maryland. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB1171, Declaration of Rights - Right to Reproductive Liberty. Pro-Choice Maryland is the political leader for abortion access and reproductive freedom in our state.

Access to safe, legal, and accessible abortion and reproductive health care is not only a moral imperative, but it also has enormous social, economic, and health benefits to individuals, families, and communities. The right to an abortion is incredibly popular but in peril nationally. This means that states such as ours must act to ensure that Marylanders' right to reproductive liberty is preserved in the strongest of ways. Bans on abortion harm pregnant people with particular impact on people of color, inappropriately interfere in the trusted doctor-patient relationship, are linked to negative maternal health outcomes, and serve an agenda that would have all pregnancy outcomes scrutinized, controlled, and criminalized. We must trust and empower pregnant people to make the best decisions about their lives and their pregnancies.

I strongly applaud this common-sense effort to further enshrine the right to reproductive freedom in Maryland. I urge the committee to lead the way, honor abortion access as essential, vital healthcare, and to return a favorable report on HB1171.