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HB 1171: Declaration of Rights- Right to Reproductive Liberty

UNFAVORABLE

Honorable Delegate Jones:

I am recommending that HB 1171 receive an unfavorable vote from the HGO Committee for the following reasons:

1. There is no fundamental right found in the US Constitution to terminate a pregnancy. In fact, the Constitution guarantees the fundamental right of Life through the 5th and 14th amendments.

2. Any proposed change to the Maryland Constitution deserves the highest scrutiny prior to submitting it by referendum; changes to any Constitution should be rare because of the broad nature of principles inherent in a constitution, as opposed to specific statutes.

3. The proposed amendment is in direct conflict with Article 24 in the Maryland Declaration of Rights which guarantees the most fundamental right to LIFE which must occur before any other right attaches and that Life cannot be terminated without due process of law. Article 24 states, "that no man ought to be.. deprived of his LIFE, Liberty or property. (emphasis added). My Liberty ends where your nose begins and your nose begins at conception. Mere size, development or location does not diminish human worth, even if it occurs in the human womb.

4. Although Roe v Wade wrongly set the humanity of the Preborn aside in it's decision, that humanity has been clearly established by both science and medicine as beginning at conception when a genetically complete human being is created. Humanity does not attach at any later stage of development from zygote to embryo to fetus to infant to child to adult. Humanity is scientifically established at human conception. Even Planned Parenthood admits that a living being is being terminated in the abortion, as clearly evidenced by a born alive baby that occurs if not intentionally terminated prior to birth.

5. Full term abortion rights for any reason, not just to save the life of the mother, were created by statute in Maryland in 1991. If the citizens of Maryland created a legal "right" to abortion by referendum, the citizens of Maryland should be able to rescind such a right by statute and should not have to go through undoing a constitutional amendment.

6. This legislation appears to be retaliatory and fear mongering because of the Texas heartbeat bill and the Dobbs case, neither of which will have any direct impact in the state of Maryland. Many heartbeat bills have been introduced over the years and an equal protection bill was introduced last year and none of these bills even received a vote from the HGO committee, so a constitutional amendment on this issue is absolute overkill and completely unnecessary.

7. Referendums are inherently biased because citizens tend to mindlessly select "for" which always appears first over "against" which will be exactly the presentation for this bill should it pass.

Additionally, words such as "Liberty" and "Equality" are inherently biased and used to elicit an automatic "yes" vote on a referendum question.

What if we tried to create "pay equity" for women by suspending the theft statute and allowing women to steal anything they wanted to without being criminally charged just because of gender discrimination and pay equity, which are real problems.

Similarly, deceiving women into believing that they are exercising some sort of freedom (liberty) and that they're now equal to men is good for men and bad for women. Equal means the same. Men and women are not the same, first and foremost because we create life and give birth. Women seek equity (fairness) not equality (sameness).

8. There is no doubt that enshrining abortion rights into our state constitution and creating a constitutionally protected "fundamental right" will include unlimited funding at taxpayer expense. It is unconscionable for you to force taxpayers who object to abortion for any reason to fund abortion more than we already do through Medicaid. We fund approximately 8,000 additional abortions through Medicaid. Now we would have to foot the bill for approximately 30,000 abortions that were privately paid for. And guess what happens when you make everything free? You encourage it and make it more likely to occur and in the case of taking human lives the tragedy of this is incalculable. Every abortion doesn't just end one child's life; it ends entire generations of human beings that might have been born from that one child.

9. This sort of legislation deregulates the entire abortion industry, so in effect you're creating legalized back alley abortions. Wasn't ending back alley abortion the reason for legalized abortion so it would be medically safe for women? The irony of this is incomprehensible. Passage of this legislation will guarantee that women will be butchered again and without any legal recourse by law enforcement. More women will be exploited than ever, not to mention the massive amount of loss of human life.

There is no social problem, including poverty, racism, sexism, rape, incest, pay equity that will be solved by the deliberate killing of a live human being inside the womb.

We are way past securing a woman's right to choose to murder her own child. This type of legislation is straight coercion.

As Feminists for Life say, "Women Deserve Better!"

I therefore urge the Committee to give an UNFAVORABLE report to HB 1171. Thank you.