



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE † ARCHDIOCESE OF WASHINGTON † DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

March 11, 2022

House Bill 626

Pregnant Person's Freedom Act of 2022

House Health & Government Operations Committee

Position: OPPOSE

The Maryland Catholic Conference represents the mutual public-policy interests of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, including the Archdiocese of Baltimore, the Archdiocese of Washington, and the Diocese of Wilmington. We offer this testimony in opposition of House Bill 626.

HB 626 alters certain provisions of law relating to the termination of a pregnancy and investigations of or criminal penalties or civil liabilities for pregnant person or a person assisting a pregnant person.

This legislation, if enacted would add language to statute stating that "A PERSON IS NOT SUBJECT TO CRIMINAL PENALTIES OR CIVIL DAMAGES FOR AIDING, INFORMING, OR IN ANY WAY ASSISTING A PREGNANT PERSON IN TERMINATING OR SEEKING TO TERMINATE THE PERSON'S PREGNANCY." . Under current law post viability abortions would only be protected if they are performed for the health of the mother or fetal abnormality. This new language would allow a doctor to perform a late term abortion for any reason at all and not be held responsible. According to May, 2020 Gallup polling 50% of Americans believe that abortion should only be legal under certain circumstances. While only 29% of Americans believe abortion should be legal in all circumstances.¹

This type of bill rejects the self-determination and bodily autonomy of women, especially low-income women, immigrants, and women of color. Maryland women want support to be able to achieve their dreams and raise their children. It is not more abortion that Maryland needs, but a clear understanding of the diverse demographic in our state and support and resources for growing families.

For these reasons, we urge an **UNFAVORABLE** report on House Bill 626.

¹ [Abortion | Gallup Historical Trends](#)