

Chair Shane E. Pendergrass
House Office Building
6 Bladen St.
Annapolis, MD 21401

SUPPORT – HB 952
Access to Abortion Care and Health Insurance Act

Dear Honorable Chair Pendergrass,

The Bronfein Family Law Clinic at The University of Baltimore School of Law **strongly supports** House Bill 952, the Access to Abortion Care and Health insurance Act.

The Bronfein Family Law Clinic (FLC) provides pro bono, client-centered representation to individuals in Baltimore and the surrounding counties who could not otherwise afford a lawyer. Student-attorneys in the FLC represent clients seeking assistance on family law matters who are low-income, Maryland residents. Many of our clients have experienced intimate partner abuse, and/or disproportionately face barriers in securing justice within the legal system due to economic discrimination, racial discrimination, and gender discrimination. As student attorneys we also work on issues of reproductive justice as it is also a family law matter.

In our efforts to mitigate the barriers to accessing legal representation, we must also address additional barriers our clients face in their everyday lives outside of our offices. The current threat to abortion access affects much of our client population.

According to data from the Guttmacher Institute on *Characteristics of U.S. Abortion Patients*, 75% of people who access abortion care are low-income and 59% of people who get abortions are already a parent. Additionally, research from the Turnaway Study found that 40% of people who access abortion care do so because they could not afford to have a child or to have an additional child. Our clients subsist on public benefits or are the working poor. Their finances are stretched to meet their daily needs and those of their children. They often are without cars, cannot afford taxis, and rely on public transportation. HB 952 ensures that Medicaid and private insurance comprehensively cover abortion care without cost-sharing. By guaranteeing that individuals who are insured get the care they need, resources in local abortion funds are freed up for individuals who are uninsured. Without free access to abortion care, individuals like our clients would not be able to afford an abortion. No one should be denied the health care they need because they are materially poor, and that includes abortion care.

Securing access to abortion care through the proposed bills means one less barrier to the justice our clients and other Maryland residents deserve.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony, and we urge a favorable vote. If we can provide any further information, please contact Chandler Jones (cjones@ubalt.edu), Neha Khan (neha.khan@ubalt.edu), and/or Katie Simon (katherine.simon@ubalt.edu).

Sincerely,

Bronfein Family Law Clinic
University of Baltimore School of Law