

February 18, 2022

I am writing to voice my strong opposition to the Abortion Amendment, House Bill 1171 - Declaration of Rights - Right to Reproductive Liberty.

My name is Colleen Morris; I am a registered voter, as well as a wife, an adoptive mother, and an educator for the Wicomico County Board of Education. I am very involved in serving people of all ages in my community, including volunteering at the local pregnancy care clinic, where women and men come, seeking facts about their options when facing a planned or crisis pregnancy.

I opposed House Bill 1171 strongly, as this amendment has extreme and permanent consequences for everyone in Maryland. Under Supreme Court precedent, Maryland lawmakers have the right to pass laws to protect women's health throughout pregnancy, to restrict abortion after viability, and to ban ALL public funding for abortion. But this Abortion Amendment would take the power to regulate abortion away from you- our elected representatives.

This legislation is dangerous for women and would remove all existing health and safety measures for pregnant women such as fetal homicide laws. This legislation grossly ignores the religious freedom and values of many Marylanders who are morally opposed to abortion by now forcing Maryland taxpayers to fully fund all abortions.

Passing this legislation would be detrimental to Maryland, causing division. Despite public opinion which favors abortion restrictions, Maryland already has some of the most permissive abortion laws in the nation. An amendment of this nature would now permanently lock in these extreme standards that already do not reflect public opinion. Are you aware that recent polls show that Americans heavily favor restrictions during the last two trimesters of pregnancy? In fact, 71% of people favor some restrictions on abortion after the first trimester. A majority (54%) oppose public funding for abortion. 81% prefer policies to protect the lives of both mothers and preborn children. (Marist Poll January 2022). This amendment is deceptive and would trap Marylanders into supporting abortion through all nine months at tax-payer expense.

We need you, as our elected leader, to please protect pregnant women and their children from predatory abortion practices and support a more reasonable, informed and humane position on abortion restrictions.

I urge you to oppose House Bill 1171 and this extreme amendment to our Constitution.

Respectfully,

Colleen Morris