



BILL NO: House Bill 952
TITLE: Access to Abortion Care and Health Insurance Act
COMMITTEE: Health and Government Operations
HEARING DATE: February 22, 2022
POSITION: **SUPPORT**

The Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV) is the state domestic violence coalition that brings together victim service providers, allied professionals, and concerned individuals for the common purpose of reducing intimate partner and family violence and its harmful effects on our citizens. **MNADV urges the House Health and Government Operations Committee to issue a favorable report on HB 952.**

Between 6-22% of women terminate their pregnancies because they're in an abusive relationship.¹ One of the most common reasons why survivors struggle to leave their abuser is because they have children in common. When a survivor is denied an abortion, they remain tethered to their abusive partner, whereas survivors who choose to terminate an unwanted pregnancy have a reduced risk of experiencing violence over time.² Additionally, survivors frequently experience forms of abuse that put them at an increased risk for unintended pregnancy, such as birth control sabotage, sexual assault, and reproductive coercion.³ 2.1 million women in the U.S. have become pregnant as a result of rape by an intimate partner,⁴ and, in one study, 16% of survivors with rape-related pregnancies chose to get an abortion.⁵ Access to abortions can be a matter of life or death for survivors of domestic violence because experiencing abuse while pregnant puts survivors at a much higher risk of being killed by their abuser.⁶

House Bill 952 will ensure both private insurance and Medicaid should provide equal abortion coverage without imposing obstacles like cost-sharing and deductible requirements. Abortion access shouldn't depend on someone's insurance status. For the above stated reasons, the **Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence urges a favorable report on HB 952.**

¹ <https://ncadv.org/blog/posts/ncadv-denounces-law-restricting-abortion-in-texas>

² <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4182793/>

³ <https://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/userfiles/file/HealthCare/Reproductive%20Health%20Guidelines.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.gutmacher.org/gpr/2016/07/understanding-intimate-partner-violence-sexual-and-reproductive-health-and-rights-issue>

⁵ <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/211678.pdf>

⁶ https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/70764/WHO_RHR_11.35_eng.pdf?sequence=1