

HB952 Access to Abortion Care and Health Insurance Act

- Closing MD Medicaid loopholes for abortion care
- Link: <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Legislation/Details/HB0952>

My name is Lynn McCann and I am testifying on behalf of the Baltimore Abortion Fund (BAF), a community-centered nonprofit that provides financial and logistical support to anyone living in or traveling to Maryland for abortion care. BAF operates a confidential helpline where our case managers provide information and make financial commitments to help clients pay for their procedures.

The Baltimore Abortion Fund is in strong support of the Access to Abortion Care and Health Insurance Act.

Many of the people calling our helpline actually have health insurance – often through Maryland Medicaid or private carriers – but still face difficulties accessing abortion care.

Maryland Medicaid is intended to provide support for abortion procedures, but gaps in coverage currently prevent many people from actually accessing this benefit. On average, 5-10% of the clients who call our helpline are Maryland Medicaid enrollees – to whom we've provided nearly \$36,000 in financial assistance over the last three years. Since we only speak to people who call our helpline, these figures represent only a small portion of Maryland Medicaid enrollees who are unable to use their insurance to pay for an abortion. It is unjust that people with private insurance can more easily afford an abortion, while this vital healthcare remains out of people for people on Medicaid.

Passing the Access to Abortion Care and Health Insurance Act would not only expand abortion access for Maryland Medicaid enrollees, but would also increase our organization's available funding and support for uninsured Marylanders, Marylanders with federal insurance – like military Tricare – that prohibits abortion coverage, and people forced to travel to Maryland for abortion care by anti-choice laws and restrictions.

Abortions are essential health care and should be fully covered by all health insurers, including Maryland Medicaid. The Access to Abortion Care and Health Insurance Act would expand abortion coverage through Maryland Medicaid and remove unjust and unnecessary barriers to care that currently harm people seeking abortions – especially people of color and those working to make ends meet.