



Ella Ennis, Legislative Chairman
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Delegate Shane Pendergrass, Chairman
and Members of the Health and
Government Operations Committee, Maryland House of Delegates

RE: **HB 1171** – Declaration of Rights – Right to Reproductive Liberty – **OPPOSED**

Dear Chairman Pendergrass and Committee Members,

The Maryland Federation of Republican Women strongly opposes HB 1171 for a number of reasons:

- The proposed constitutional amendment is written so broadly that it would allow abortion at any time. A Goucher poll of Marylanders' attitudes about abortion conducted in October 2021 found that more than half (54%) want some restrictions on abortion.
- The proposed Constitutional Amendment would take the power to regulate abortion away from our elected representatives, remove all existing health and safety measures for pregnant women, and force Maryland taxpayers to fully fund abortions even when in direct opposition to their personal beliefs and moral objections.
- No regard is given to the man, without whose contribution the pregnancy would be impossible. As a nation, we have always held that parental responsibility begins at conception. Parental rights (both the mother and father) begin at conception as well.
- No regard is given to the resulting child. U.S. Supreme Court precedents support what has been generally accepted in the medical community for decades -- in the United States, viability occurs at approximately 24 weeks of gestational age.¹

A woman's right to end her pregnancy as declared by the United States Supreme Court is not unlimited. Government and society should not abandon pre-born children, especially when they have reached viability. The decision of a woman to end her pregnancy should not unequivocally override the rights of a viable fetus.

Please give HB 1171 an **UNFAVORABLE** report.

Sincerely,
Ella Ennis
Legislative Chairman

¹ Chervenak, L.B. McCullough Textbook of Perinatal Medicine, 1998