



**Unfavorable
HB 626/SB 669
Pregnant Person's Freedom Act of 2022**

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On behalf of the Board of Directors of Maryland Right to Life, I strongly urge you to issue an unfavorable report on this reckless bill that would legalize infanticide and allow the abortion industry to aid and abet sexual abusers and sex traffickers in the victimization of women and girls in Maryland. This bill is the abortion industry's attempt to fearmonger and fundraise without addressing a real problem in Maryland.

But this bill is just political theater because the Maryland legislature enacted a Freedom of Choice Act in 1991 to codify Roe and Doe in state law. If Roe is weakened or overturned, abortion will remain legal in Maryland through all 9 months of pregnancy for any reason. This bill is one of several radical abortion measures introduced this year to enrich the multi-billion dollar abortion industry at taxpayer expense. It is a knee jerk reaction to the successful Texas Heartbeat Act which is saving lives every day by allowing civil lawsuits against anyone who aids a woman in obtaining an abortion of a child whose heartbeat is detectable.

Maryland has **no criminal penalties** for women seeking abortions or their doctors. In fact, the state of Maryland refuses to inspect clinics, investigate or prosecute abortionists even in the case of death or serious bodily injury. In 2013 a late term abortionists practicing in Maryland killed a woman (Jennifer Morbelli) who was transported across state lines to receive a late term abortion prohibited by her state. The state allowed that abortionist to continue practicing and he is now being sued for the brutal botched abortions of two women in May of 2020, who both experienced perforated uteri and remnants of their babies limbs and head forced into their abdominal cavities. The state refused to investigate until prompted by Operation Rescue but any reports will not be made public.

There are two operative provisions of the bill:

SHIELDING PREDATORS

First the bill shields sexual predators and abusive partners. Sexual predators including sex abusers and even sex traffickers use abortion as a tool that enables them to continue to victimize women and girls without consequences. Abortion providers are mandatory reporters of sex abuse under Maryland law but are unwilling. This bill leaves victims defenseless by binding the hands of law enforcement from investigating and prosecuting suspected sex crimes and abuse. With the proliferation of chemical abortion pills and liberal abortion policies that deny pregnant women care through a licensed physician, we will witness a dramatic increase in abortion coercion and sex crimes.

INFANTICIDE

Secondly, the bill prohibits law enforcement from investigating suspected infanticide – or the death of a baby within the first month after birth. A woman or an abusive partner would be shielded from

prosecution for the death of a child before or AFTER birth for any reason, including by inaction, which could include neglect, starvation or abandonment of the child. This is completely unnecessary because Maryland has a Safe Haven law that allows women to safely abandon their newborns without fear of criminal prosecution. MDRTL is working with the National Safe Haven Alliance to support policy efforts to expand the time period under that program, from 10 days until 30 days after birth.

It seems the intention of this bill is to shield from prosecution anyone who promotes or assists in chemical abortions – including abortion doulas, midwives, physician assistants or nurses. Chemical abortion pills are 4 times more dangerous for women than surgical abortion. Through the deregulation and mass distribution of abortion pills, the abortion industry itself is subjecting women to back alley style abortions – leaving women alone to hemorrhage without physician supervision. There is a strong likelihood that the pills will fail and babies will be born alive only to be flushed down toilets or disposed of like trash in waste baskets. This will have profound psychological repercussions for women's health. This bill will further enable the abortion industry to undermine the physician only requirement in the law for performing abortions.

ERASING "WOMEN"

Finally the title of the bill and the replacement of the word pregnant "woman" with pregnant "person", is disrespectful to women and is a shameless publicity stunt. For the last 50 years, militant feminists have been telling men they have no right to an opinion on abortion. However as more women become ambivalent about abortion, the abortion industry is attempting to expand their base of support by pandering to the LGBTQ community. However, the LGBTQ community should be among the loudest voices to fight for the rights of marginalized human beings like the preborn.

ABORTION IS NOT HEALTH CARE

Pregnancy is not a disease and abortion kills, not cures. The fact that 85% of OB-GYNs in a representative national survey will not participate in abortions is glaring evidence that abortion is not an essential part of women's healthcare. Abortion is never medically necessary and poses risks to women's physical and emotional health as well as to the health of future pregnancies. Women have better options for family planning and well woman care. For each Planned Parenthood in Maryland, there are 14 federally qualifying health centers and 4 pro-life pregnancy centers providing FREE services for women. The Maryland Department of Health must give women real CHOICE and protect women from abortion coercion, by providing information about and referrals to lifesaving alternatives to abortion.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge you to vote against this bill and any other measures to allow the abortion industry to put profits above the health and safety of Maryland women and girls. We appeal to you to prioritize the state's interest in human life and restore to all people, born and preborn, our natural and Constitutional rights to life, liberty, freedom of speech and religion.