

HB1167
FAVORABLE
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Dear Delegates,

I am a mother of 4 daughters, a nurse, a volunteer who has worked with many women facing a crisis pregnancy and a member of Harford County Respect Life Coordinators.

Working at a crisis pregnancy center in Baltimore County, a majority of our clients came from Baltimore City. Some of those young women came looking for support for a current pregnancy after experiencing an abortion for a prior pregnancy. These women would say, "I can't kill another baby" and would share how they were "pressured" into the abortion by the fathers or, in some cases, family members. There was no one offering support for anything other than an abortion. At the time, they were unaware of the services of crisis pregnancy centers.

In another case, I was praying across the street from the Howard Street Planned Parenthood in Baltimore City. I spoke with a group that was headed to the abortion center. They were a 15 year old girl, with tears streaming down her face, her aunt, her grandmother, and her uncle. The women stated that the girl "must" get the abortion, that the father was not going to help and that she was too young to take care of a baby. I provided information about crisis pregnancy centers. The women stood just in front of the crying girl and said they had made their decision. The uncle said nothing and the girl continued to cry. They all went in, and, an hour later, I left without seeing them exit.

In these cases, it is clear the young women are not given a choice. They are prevented from seeking alternate solutions. They are coerced into taking a permanent action for a temporary condition which can cause physical, emotional and psychological damage. In each of these cases, the young women go into the abortion center and receive the abortion during that visit. If there is a consultation, there is not adequate time to think about a decision that cannot be reversed. When making material purchases, returns are possible within a certain time frame. This is not a purchase that can be returned.

Please think about the young women in your lives and what you would want for them. I urge you to respect and protect a woman's right to informed consent and sufficient time to consider her options and vote in favor of House Bill 1167.

Thank you.