



Support Statement
House Bill 735– Public Health - Abortions
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Maryland Right to Life Mission Maryland Right to Life, Inc. (MDRTL) supports public policy that recognizes the fundamental value of every human life. MDRTL seeks to protect all human life by working to make abortion, infanticide, euthanasia, cloning and the destruction of human embryos socially, legally, and morally unacceptable and by promoting positive alternatives to these acts.

HUMANITY OF THE PREBORN - This bill speaks to the humanity of each human being. Some similar state laws have been contested in courts, deferring to a forty-six year old federal precedent based in an incomplete or factually erroneous understanding of human biology. Fetal heartbeat legislation should not be held against this antiquated standard but instead should be reviewed with the same purposeful deliberation as “personhood” legislation. The two having the same public policy purpose – to make state law consistent with modern scientific knowledge about human fetal development.

Each new human life comes into existence at the union of an egg cell and a sperm cell, the moment of fertilization. This is not a matter of opinion or religious dogma. It is a simple scientific fact. Life ends when a person's heartbeat stops permanently and irreversibly. Life does not end when a disability is diagnosed or when a person begins to require special care. Every human being — regardless of age, size, level of development, or condition of dependency — has an unalienable right to life. Detection of a fetal heartbeat is a sound medical measurement for verifying that a new and *separate* human life has begun.

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.

INVEST IN LIFE - 81% of Americans polled favor laws that protect both the lives of women and unborn children. Public funds should not be *diverted from* but *prioritized for* health and family planning services which have the objective of saving the lives of both mothers and children, including programs for improving maternal health and birth and delivery outcomes, well baby care, parenting classes, foster care reform and affordable adoption programs.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge you to issue a favorable report on this bill. We appeal to you to prioritize the state's interest in human life beginning at conception, and restore to all people, born and preborn, our natural and Constitutional rights to life, liberty, freedom of speech and religion.

Thank you for your consideration of this bill.