



COMMISSION FOR WOMEN

February 11, 2022

Chair Shane E. Pendergrass
Health & Government Operations Committee
House Office Building
6 Bladen St.
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Letter in Support of HB 952

As a Commissioner of the Montgomery County Commission for Women, I write to express our strong support of HB 952, the Access to Abortion Care and Health Insurance Act, and urge the Committee to issue a favorable report on this bill. The Commission is a 15-member advisory board appointed by the County Executive to advise it, the County Council, and county, state and federal government on matters affecting women and girls. We represent the interests of all the women in our County who constitute more than half of the residents of Montgomery County. Support for this legislation falls squarely within the Montgomery County Commission for Women's strategic priority of supporting and increasing financial security for women.

Several years ago, I helped a lifelong friend through a very traumatic event in her life which resulted in an abortion. We had to drive many miles to find a physician who would actually perform the abortion without fear of reprisal. Access of safe, legal abortion care is also impacted by poor insurance coverage that makes abortions just plain unaffordable with very high deductibles and skyrocketing out-of-pocket costs to the women. Maryland is one of the few states that covers abortion through state Medicaid but it is not guaranteed and only for certain women receiving Medicaid. Medicaid and private insurance should offer equal coverage of abortion so that all people—including those who are low-income—can access comprehensive and compassionate care.

As the nation awaits a U.S. Supreme Court ruling that could significantly erode abortion rights, state laws on the issue have taken on a whole new meaning. And in Maryland, it is even more critical that HB 952 is passed this year.

Sincerely,



Jan Molino
Montgomery County Commission for Women

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