

I am writing to my representatives to voice my opposition to the **Abortion Amendment, House Bill 1171 - Declaration of Rights - Right to Reproductive Liberty**.

I do not support this extreme amendment to enshrine abortion violence in our state Constitution.

I support the right to life for *all* human beings, born and unborn. Neither our state nor federal Constitutions declare a right to kill any life. To simply declare that life inside the womb is not life and thus not subject to protection is to be no different than those who once said that black slaves were not human or were only 3/5 human. We know that they were on the wrong side of history, just as it is wrong now to say that an unborn child is not human. To say otherwise is to deny the science that life starts at conception. We don't start as trees or as inanimate objects, but rather as a living, growing, reproducing cells, complete with all of the DNA to make hearts and lungs and cute little toes and a brain, in short to make a unique individual, capable of one day changing the world.

I look at my 3 beautiful children who have amazing potential in this ever-changing world. What they will do is yet to be seen. Perhaps one of them will finally find the cure to cancer or another will find a way to save our seas from the effects of pollution and plastic. Whatever it may be, the point is that they are alive and have the opportunity to do something great—all because my mother, for whatever reason, gave me up for adoption so that I would have a chance at life. She didn't choose a death sentence for me because of circumstances that may have only been temporary. Every child deserves the opportunity to make a difference in this world. Think of some of the great leaders of this age, or even previous ages, and then think "what would the world be like if that person never existed?"

When I see that the majority of abortion centers, particularly Planned Parenthood, are located in black, urban locations and see that more African-American children are killed by abortion than are born, it breaks my heart. A study published in 2020 in the *Journal of Health Services Research and Managerial Epidemiology* found that "black women have been experiencing abortions at a rate nearly four times that of white women for more than 30 years". There is no more racist policy than the genocide being committed in the name of choice every day in cities across the nation. Black children deserve an opportunity to survive until birth, just as much as white children do.

Does Maryland want to be known as a place that values life, or casually casts it aside in the name of convenience and choice? If a mother is having financial problems and unable to care for her 2 year old child, she doesn't have the choice to kill it. Why should the line be simply in the womb or outside of the womb? Instead of enshrining the ability to kill in our state Constitution, we should be putting our efforts into supporting life, into supporting the needs of pregnant women, into greater access to prenatal care, and into affordable adoption problems.

From the depths of my heart, I plead with you to not enshrine the death of unborn children as a Constitutional right in Maryland. Please vote against House Bill 1171 and this extremely racist amendment to our Constitution.

Sincerely,

James M. Golden