

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

SUPPORT – HB 952
Access to Abortion Care and Health Insurance Act

Dear Honorable Chair Pendergrass,

The Center on Applied Feminism at University of Baltimore School of Law **strongly supports** House Bill 952 –Access to Abortion Care and Health Insurance Act. This bill will ensure abortion care coverage under private insurances and Medicaid.

The Center on Applied Feminism seeks to apply feminist insights to legal practice and the policy arena. In particular, the center examines how feminist theory can benefit legal practitioners in representing clients, shape legal doctrine and play a role in policy debates and implementation. The center holds conferences and regular colloquia on emerging legal areas that intersect with feminism, and helps students plan for careers in feminist advocacy.

As a Center focused on intersectional gender justice, the Center supports this bill because abortion access is not only a gender justice issue, but also intersects with economic and racial justice. Limited access to abortion care disproportionately affects low-income and minority Maryland residents. Currently, Maryland Medicaid’s coverage of abortion is subject to debate each year and only allows for care to be covered in certain circumstances. This bill would help ensure that abortion care is comprehensively covered by Maryland’s public and private insurance providers. Low-income Marylanders – those who are least likely to afford abortion care on their own – should be able to rely on permanent coverage. Research from the Turnaway Study showed that 40% of people cited getting an abortion because they could not afford to have a child or another child (Biggs et al., “Understanding why women seek abortions in the U.S.,” 2013).

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony, and we urge a favorable vote. If we can provide any further information, please contact Neha Khan (neha.khan@ubalt.edu), Katherine Simon (katherine.simon@ubalt.edu), and Chandre Jones (chandre.jones@ubalt.edu).

Sincerely

University of Baltimore School of Law Center on Applied Feminism