



Favorable Testimony - Access to Abortion Care and Health Insurance Act (HB 952)

*House Health and Government Operations Committee
Hearing on February 22, 2022*

Launched in 2017, Our Maryland is a nonprofit, multi-issue hub for promoting a just and sustainable future for all Marylanders. Our Maryland currently has close to 55,000 Facebook followers and 14,000 email subscribers from across the state. Our Maryland testifies in strong support of HB 952, the Access to Abortion Care and Health Insurance Act.

With the current US Supreme Court majority preparing to gut the landmark *Roe v. Wade* decision this term, it is critical that Maryland acts quickly to protect fundamental reproductive freedoms and expands abortion access for Marylanders and those having to travel here from out of state to receive abortion care.

Abortion is essential to personal and economic freedoms. Yet, two-thirds of Maryland counties currently lack an abortion provider and 26 states are poised to ban or severely restrict abortions after the Supreme Court's ruling in the Mississippi abortion case. This imposes costs in time, travel and often overnight stays, serious barriers particularly on low-income and working families.

Abortion access and health care should not depend on a person's income or insurance status. HB 952 would ensure that both private insurance and Medicaid provide equal coverage for abortion care without imposing real economic obstacles like cost-sharing and deductible requirements. The Guttmacher Institute reports that 75% of people getting abortion care are low income and cost barriers disproportionately harm people of color. We must reduce these barriers.

Marylanders strongly support access to abortion care. In a 2021 poll, 72% of Marylanders oppose overturning *Roe v. Wade* and 79% support ensuring individuals have access to the full range of reproductive health care services. We urge you to provide a favorable report for HB 952 at the earliest opportunity.

Thank you.

*Larry Ottinger, President
Our Maryland
7004 W. Greenvale Pkwy
Chevy Chase, MD 20815
lsottinger@gmail.com*