

**HEALTH CARE FOR THE HOMELESS TESTIMONY  
IN SUPPORT OF  
HB 952 – Access to Abortion Care and Health Insurance Act**

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



Health Care for the Homeless strongly supports HB 952, which would ensure that abortion care is comprehensively covered by Maryland’s public and private insurance providers. The clients we serve who have insurance are largely covered by Medicaid, so expanding Medicaid coverage for abortion services will be hugely beneficial for the clients we serve.

Low-income Marylanders – those who are least likely to afford abortion care on their own – should be able to rely on a permanent coverage.<sup>1</sup> Individuals experiencing homelessness face particular barriers to receiving abortion care and reproductive health care generally. A lack of access to contraceptive protection and underlying mental and behavioral health problems are specific challenges for people experiencing homelessness.<sup>2</sup> We know that access to abortion care increases health outcomes of the clients we serve. Therefore, it is critical that Medicaid comprehensively covers abortion care.

Abortion care should be treated like any other health care service. Health Care for the Homeless has long supported efforts to expand Medicaid coverage for a number of different services. As such, we just as vehemently support Medicaid coverage of abortion care just like any other full benefit they offer.

Abortion care is basic and essential health care. It should be comprehensively covered by insurance in both the public and private market. We stand in strong support of HB 952 and we urge a favorable report on the bill.

*Health Care for the Homeless is Maryland’s leading provider of integrated health services and supportive housing for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. We work to prevent and end homelessness for vulnerable individuals and families by providing quality, integrated health care and promoting access to affordable housing and sustainable incomes through direct service, advocacy, and community engagement. We deliver integrated medical care, mental health services, state-certified addiction treatment, dental care, social services, and housing support services for over 10,000 Marylanders annually at sites in Baltimore City and Baltimore County. For more information, visit [www.hchmd.org](http://www.hchmd.org).*

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<sup>1</sup> According to data from the [Guttmacher Institute](https://www.guttmacher.org), 75% of people who access abortion care are low-income.

<sup>2</sup> One study found that individuals experiencing homelessness in the United States become pregnant at twice the national rate of all people of reproductive age who can become pregnant. <https://nhchc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Fall2012HealingHands.pdf>; see also <https://nhchc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/ReproductiveHealth.pdf>.