



Opposition Statement SB678

Health Insurance - Reimbursement for Services Rendered by a Pharmacist
Deborah Brocato, Legislative Consultant
Maryland Right to Life

We Oppose SB678

On behalf of our 200,000 followers across the state, we respectfully object to SB678. We oppose the use of this bill for funding abortions by reimbursing pharmacists for prescribing chemical abortion drugs. We reject the premise that requires “the Maryland Medical Assistance Program, the Maryland 4 Children’s Health Program, and certain insurers, nonprofit health service plans, and 5 health maintenance organizations to provide coverage for all services rendered by a 6 licensed pharmacist within the pharmacist’s lawful scope of practice” when those services would include reimbursement for chemical abortion drugs. Taxpayers should not be forced to fund the use of the dangerous chemical abortion drugs. We ask that a Hyde-like amendment be added to exclude use of this bill for any abortion purposes.

The Maryland Medical Assistance Program and the Maryland Children’s Health Program (MHCP) are the two primary programs used for publicly funded reimbursements to abortion providers in Maryland. The Maryland Department of Legislative Services, in their *Analysis of the FY 2022 Maryland Executive Budget*, shows that Maryland taxpayers are forced to fund elective abortions. For the years 2018, 2019 and 2020, over \$6 million was spent each year for almost 10,000 abortions each year. In that same report, we see that for Fiscal 2020, less than 10 of the almost 10,000 abortions were due to rape, incest or to save the life of the mother. With the advent of chemical abortion, those prescriptions are easily obtained via the internet.

Abortion is about revenue. The state of Maryland forces taxpayers to subsidize the abortion industry through direct Maryland Medicaid reimbursements to abortion providers, through various state grants and contracts, and through pass-through funding in various state programs. Health insurance carriers are required to provide reproductive health coverage to participate with the Maryland Health Choice program.

D-I-Y Abortions endanger women. Public policy has failed to keep pace with the abortion industry’s rapid deployment of chemical abortion pills. The Assembly removed the final safeguard in law for women seeking abortion when they enacted the Abortion Care Access Act of 2022 and removed the physician only requirement. Chemical abortion is 4 times more likely to result in complications than surgical abortion. The abortion industry itself calls these pills “Do-It-Yourself” abortions. Telehealth has made these pills easily accessible making women and girls victims of the predatory abortion industry. A telehealth prescription removes any serious assessment of the woman or girl’s physical condition and whether or not she is getting this prescription voluntarily or by coercion. Do not assist sex traffickers and other abusers to continue their criminal behavior.



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Funding for Wage Increases for Medical Provider Workers

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Maryland is one of only 4 states that forces taxpayer funding of abortion. Maryland taxpayers are forced to subsidize the abortion industry through direct Maryland Medicaid reimbursements to abortion providers, through various state grants and contracts, and through pass-through funding in various state programs. Health insurance carriers are required to provide reproductive health coverage to participate with the Maryland Health Choice program. Programs involved in reproductive health policy include the Maryland State Department of Education, Maryland Department of Health, Maryland Family Planning Program, maternal and Child Health Bureau, the Children's Cabinet, Maryland Council on School Based Health Centers, Maryland for the Advancement of School Based Health, Community Health Resource Commission, Maryland Children's Health Program (MCHP) and Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund.

Abortion is not healthcare and abortion is never medically necessary. A miscarriage is the ending of a pregnancy *after* the baby has died; an ectopic pregnancy is not a viable pregnancy and the baby cannot continue to develop. Abortion is the destruction of a developing human being and often causes physical and psychological injury to the mother. In the black community, abortion has reached epidemic proportions with half of pregnancies of Black women ending in abortion. The abortion industry has long targeted the Black community with 78% of abortion clinics located in minority communities. **Abortion is the leading killer of black lives.** See www.BlackGenocide.org.

Americans oppose taxpayer funding of abortion. Taxpayers should not be forced to fund elective abortions, which make up the vast majority of abortions committed in Maryland. The 2023 Marist poll shows that 60% of Americans, pro-life and pro-choice, oppose taxpayer funding of abortion. 81% of Americans favor public funds being prioritized for health and family planning services that save the lives of mothers and their children including programs for improving maternal health and birth and delivery outcomes, well baby care and parenting classes.

Funding restrictions are constitutional. The Supreme Court of the United States, in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health* (2022), overturned *Roe v. Wade* (1973) and held that there is no right to abortion found in the Constitution of the United States. As early as 1980 the Supreme Court affirmed in *Harris v. McRae*, that *Roe* had created a limitation on government, not a government funding entitlement. The Court ruled that the government may distinguish between abortion and other procedures in funding decisions -- noting that "*no other procedure involves the purposeful termination of a potential life*", and held that there is "*no limitation on the authority of a State to make a value judgment favoring childbirth over abortion, and to implement that judgment by the allocation of public funds.*"

Maryland urges the addition of an amendment to exclude any funding for this bill to be used for abortion purposes. Without this amendment, we ask that you oppose this **SB678** in its entirety.