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Support
SB 786 - Health - Reproductive Health Services - Protected Information
and Insurance Requirements
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
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My name is Mady Anderson, I'm 21 years old, and a senior at the University of Houston studying Human Resources Development with a minor in English.

I am juggling multiple things in my life, working my job selling bridal dresses, completing my mandatory 20 hours a week internship, being active and helping run my sorority, all while attending college full time.

I had just come out of a two-year relationship. So, I decided on September 15th, 2021, to take a pregnancy test. I remember taking the first one, and a line had developed immediately even before the control line. I called my friends to bring me more because I was in disbelief. At one point I had five positive tests in front of me.

After seeing multiple positive tests, I talked to my sorority sister about my options before me, and I knew that abortion was more than likely the choice I was going to make. I called Planned Parenthood the next day to schedule my first appointment. The nearest clinic was only five mins away from where I lived. While on the phone, the representative explained and informed me about SB8, which banned abortion after six weeks. The earliest they could bring me in was about a week later. At that moment, I was okay with it because I believed I was only about twelve days along.

My appointment was scheduled for September 23rd. During my appointment, I paid \$150, and after talking to my clinician, I estimated myself to be around four and a half weeks along. To my surprise, I measured in at 10.5/ 11 Weeks. That meant that I couldn't get my abortion in Texas.

I called 20 different clinics after my visit. Yes, 20. I called surrounding states and even as far as the Dakotas; no one could see me right away. The earliest I could be seen was two weeks after. I scheduled my appointment with Jackson Women's Health Organization in Mississippi.

I wasn't ready to tell my parents about my decision, but I had no choice; I needed help. I'm a college student, who took out student loans just to pay for my housing. I was saving for a new car, because any day now my car can break down. I'm fortunate that I worked hard and got a 2k paycheck that would cover the cost, but so much for saving money.

I also knew that because of the “bounty” portion of SB8, anyone I asked would be putting themselves at risk. My regular inner circle wasn’t available. I took a risk talking to my sorority sister because I wasn’t 100% sure about her feelings on abortion.

My dad immediately took off from work. He told his job that he had a family emergency. We drove a total of 720 miles roundtrip and spent 13 hours on the road. The total amount of gas was about \$350, and spent \$200 for one night at a hotel. We only *slept in the room for about 5 hours* before going to my appointment and turning around to drive back home that evening. I had to pay another \$150 for a sonogram during my appointment. I was informed at the MS clinic that they couldn't do my abortion that same day because it wasn't a procedure day. I was frustrated, sleep-deprived, angry to get the news that I had to return to Mississippi on another day to get my abortion.

My mom was able to find great deals for flight tickets. For the cost of both of us, it was \$450. We flew in at 7 am for my 10 am appointment. I had another sonogram and it measured me at 13 weeks and 5 days. The cost for that visit was \$750. Because I was farther along my pregnancy I had to do a D& E procedure. After my procedure, I waited in the recovery room for about 20 mins, and flew back to Houston that same evening.

I just told you about three different doctor’s appointments to get one procedure. I don’t know how they keep their records, but more and more providers are using electronic health records. If any one of those appointments kept an electronic health record, then there is a record that I was pregnant, and it’s apparent that I did not carry that pregnancy to term.

Texas has already put my support network at risk with SB 8. My sorority sister, my mother, my father, and the providers at Jackson Women’s Health Organization were all at risk of being sued for helping me. The same people who put those restrictions on my access to health care are back in session right now. I don’t know what they have planned for the future. I want to make sure as many places as possible are safe for people like me to seek health care.

Electronic health records are supposed to make health care easier to access. But knowing how my state feels about abortion care, electronic health records could put me at risk. The more control I have over my privacy, the safer it is for me, my family, and my providers. I urge a favorable report on SB 786. Thank you for your time.