

Testimony from Brigitta Mullican Rockville, MD 20851 (LD-17)
February 27, 2023

Oppose SB 798, " Declaration of Rights - Right to Reproductive Freedom"

I urge you to not vote **NO** on HB705/SB798 to enshrine abortion through birth in our state constitution.

Maryland law already is extreme on abortion. The Maryland Freedom of Choice Act (1991) allows abortion on demand, for any reason, up until birth. Maryland is one of only four states that forces taxpayers to pay for other people's abortions. Maryland is one of only three states that shield abortionists from liability by refusing to report abortion data to the CDC. As a result, Maryland is failing to address women's reproductive health and the incidents of abortion-related maternal injury and death or risks of future miscarriage, pre-term birth or loss of fertility.

By making abortion a "fundamental right" Maryland taxpayers will be forced to pay for ALL ABORTIONS, when in fact many Marylanders believe there should be at least some reasonable restrictions on abortion. This amendment also would compel physicians, hospitals, and other healthcare providers to participate in abortion, in violation of their rights of conscience and free exercise of religion. Finally, by passing this bill, the Maryland legislature will be infringing on the Freedom of Speech guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States, by barring all future attempts to pass lifesaving legislation such as partial-birth abortion or dismemberment bans.

HB705/SB798, if enacted by ballot, would threaten to close pro-life pregnancy centers, and deny medical providers their rights of conscience.

Under Supreme Court precedent, Maryland lawmakers still have the right to pass laws to protect women's health throughout pregnancy, to restrict abortion after viability, and to ban ALL public funding for abortion. But this proposed Abortion Amendment would take the power to regulate abortion away from our elected representatives and force Maryland taxpayers to fully fund ALL ABORTIONS.

Maryland has become a destination for abortion (even late-term abortion), as more and more women are coming here from other states for abortion access. I do not want Maryland to become the abortion capital of the U.S. Such extreme legislation has no place in our State Constitution. I urge you to please issue an unfavorable report on HB705/SB798.

Brigitta Mullican, coburgbrigitta@gmail.com