

## SB798

### Declaration of Rights – Right to Reproductive Freedom

#### Oppose

I am writing to firmly urge you to oppose SB798. It is dangerous for the health of women in Maryland.

The title of the bill is an oxymoron since women are and always will be (I hope) free to reproduce. This bill wants to make women free to NOT reproduce, indeed, free to be harmed and barren. It will not protect their health physically or emotionally.

The fact that the bill says “every person”, not every woman has this right, leaves the door open to coercion by men to force women to either bear children or to not bear them. By not saying that *women* have this right, what’s to stop a man from forcing a woman to abort his baby and state that it is his right under this law to have compete “reproductive freedom?”

The sponsors of this bill know that it will allow abortion through all nine months, and force taxpayer funding for them. That is not liberty and equality for the unborn certainly, and it tramples the rights of citizens who abhor the thought of paying for countless gruesome deaths.

If this amendment comes to referendum the public certainly will not be made aware of its extreme nature - that the General Assembly will no longer have the ability to pass laws that would “deny, burden or abridge.” But those are the laws that could protect women from incompetent practitioners, from unsafe

facilities, from the abuse of minors, coercion of sex trafficking, or from any new dangerous method of abortion. Without the ability to enact protections, Maryland will be the hub of these criminal activities and women in Maryland will be immeasurably harmed.

Abortion law in Maryland is already as liberal as it gets, for practitioners have been performing risky late-term abortions for many years with impunity. The complications have become so numerous and serious (women showing-up in emergency rooms with hemorrhaging and infections) that it is too difficult now for those doctors to get malpractice insurance. Maryland needs to be able to regulate and curtail abortions like it does any other procedure or surgery. This amendment would expand beyond anything you could describe as women's rights. It will deform Maryland into an alarmingly dark place.

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