

MARYLAND JUDICIAL CONFERENCE
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Hon. Matthew J. Fader
Chief Justice

187 Harry S. Truman Parkway
Annapolis, MD 21401

MEMORANDUM

TO: House Health and Government Operations Committee
FROM: Legislative Committee
Suzanne D. Pelz, Esq.
410-260-1523
RE: House Bill 1043
Public Health – Abortions - Coercion
DATE: March 1, 2023
(3/16)
POSITION: Oppose

The Maryland Judiciary opposes House Bill 1043. This proposed legislation if enacted would prohibit an individual from committing or threatening certain actions intended to coerce a pregnant woman into having an abortion.

The Judiciary is concerned about Health General § 20-219(b)(2) of the bill which requires courts to provide counsel for pregnant women in certain cases. Courts should retain discretion to decide when it is appropriate to appoint counsel for a party. This bill also does not provide any guidance as to who would fund this counsel.

cc. Hon. Susan McComas
Judicial Council
Legislative Committee
Kelley O'Connor