

As a tax-paying citizen in Montgomery County, I am profoundly opposed to Maryland's already extreme abortion laws, that allow abortion-on-demand, for any reason and up until birth. (I opposed the additional one million dollars imposed by the Montgomery County Council last year, submitting testimony asking that at least some of the funds be used to fund pregnancy resource centers so women would have other options than abortion. The Council unanimously rejected any other use of the funds except for abortion.) With the current proposed legislation, Maryland taxpayers will be forced to pay for ALL ABORTIONS when a majority of Marylanders believe there should be at least some reasonable restrictions on abortion. I decry having to pay state taxes to fund ALL abortions including being forced as a taxpayer to pay for other people's abortions.

The proposed legislation proposes to make abortion a "fundamental right" because women have the right to liberty and "reproductive freedom" a euphemistic phrase for abortion throughout all stages of pregnancy. The law neglects to mention the right to life that the innocent unborn child has.

As an advanced practice nurse, I commend to you the settled science that life begins at conception as the renowned scientist and physician Dr. Jerome Lejeune, widely regarded as "the father of modern genetics" wrote: "[T]he fact that after fertilization has taken place a new human being has come into being is no longer a matter of taste or opinion ...it is plain experimental evidence." Because science affirms that life begins at conception, my faith compels me to defend unborn children. The 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. 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. This extreme legislation has no place in Maryland and I ask you to OPPOSE HB705/SB798.

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