

HB 973

Favorable

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Please issue a favorable opinion on House Bill 973

This bill is concerned with how the state of Maryland regulates abortion. Abortion is legal and the bill makes no attempt to restrict that. The state has a compelling interest to regulate legal medical procedures to establish reasonable regulations and restrictions to help ensure the health and well-being of the patient. This is consistent with the limitations and restrictions of the Abortion Amendment potentially coming to referendum in 2024.

Patients need to be fully informed of their options. One means of doing this is by providing the patient with an ultrasound. Ultrasounds serve an essential medical purpose in confirming the presence, location, and gestational age of a pregnancy, as well as helping detect potential medical problems. This process injects additional science and safety into the process, helping to provide the patient additional information for making medical decisions. A short waiting period gives an opportunity for reflection on the information presented.

At least twenty eight states have adopted some form of ultrasound requirement for abortion, including Virginia and West Virginia. Abortion providers have no compelling reason to voluntarily share the ultrasound view with the patient. They have no inherent interest and no common law duty to provide sufficient information for the patient to make an autonomous, educated decision.

HB973 ensures that patients have more information made available to them as well as time to consider that information. Return a favorable report for House Bill 973.