

POSITION: Favorable HB 812, “Reproductive Health Services - Protected Information and Insurance Requirements”
TO: Health and Government Operations Committee
DATE: Hearing 3/2, 1pm
FROM: Kim Alexander, the Mountain Maryland Alliance for Reproductive Freedom

My name is Kim Alexander. I am from Garrett County, and I am here to testify on behalf of the Mountain Maryland Alliance for Reproductive Freedom, a non-partisan, grassroots organization of people in Allegany and Garrett Counties, committed to assuring and expanding reproductive healthcare in rural Mountain Maryland.

Our organization supports the entire package of Reproductive Healthcare provisions under consideration in this Session. We believe that each bill complements the others, and that each and all support the protection of reproductive health care in Maryland in a post-Dobbs environment.

This bill would provide privacy protections for electronic medical records that are shared between healthcare providers across the Country, as part of the coordination of patient care among a patient’s medical providers. In a pre-Dobbs world, this sharing of medical information about a patient receiving care in Maryland was unquestionably helpful to the patient and her doctors and other healthcare providers, in whatever state those healthcare providers were located.

Now, however, this sharing of reproductive healthcare information across state lines has the potential to put our healthcare providers and patients at risk for litigation, prosecution, and intimidation by those who oppose reproductive rights outside of Maryland.

The Mountain Maryland Alliance for Reproductive Freedom has a particular interest in this Bill. Because our neighboring state of West Virginia has banned abortion in almost all cases, we know that many people from West Virginia (and other states with post-Dobbs bans) will likely seek reproductive health care and abortion in Maryland.

Moreover, in Garrett County, our hospital is part of the West Virginia University healthcare system. A woman receiving reproductive healthcare in our local hospital should not have to worry about whether her medical records will be available for possible legal action in West Virginia, or in any other state that makes abortion illegal. We believe that patients need and deserve the greatest confidence that, if they seek reproductive healthcare in Maryland, information about their care will be private and protected.

We urge this Committee to support HB 812. Thank you.

