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BILL NO: House Bill 641  
TITLE: Income Tax - Pregnancy Options Tax Credit  
COMMITTEE: Ways & Means  
HEARING DATE: February 23, 2023  
POSITION: **OPPOSE**

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The Women's Law Center of Maryland is a statewide, non-profit legal service organization that provides direct legal representation to survivors of domestic violence and advocates legislatively on issues related to the physical safety, economic security, and bodily autonomy of women in Maryland. Part of that advocacy includes supporting women in their reproductive choices so that they are able to build their families how and when they want and ensuring that women's reproductive health care is treated equitably and fairly as a medical issue and not a political one. We oppose House Bill 641 as it sits squarely in the realm of the politicization of health care and promoting anti-abortion facilities, under the guise supporting women's health.

Specifically, HB641 provides for a significant income tax credit, as well as a federal tax deduction, for donations made specifically to what the bill refers to as "pregnancy resource centers" but are more commonly known as Crisis Pregnancy Centers (CPCs). CPCs are organizations that seek to intercept women with unintended pregnancies who might be considering abortion and convince them otherwise using fear-mongering and dubious medical research. Known for their misleading and coercive tactics, particularly against vulnerable and low-income women, numerous studies have been conducted into their predatory and deceptive practices<sup>1</sup>. As CPCs seek to blur the lines between anti-abortion advocacy and health care, organizations such as the American Medical Association<sup>2</sup> and the National Institute for Health<sup>3</sup> have published articles raising concerns about the ethics and risks associated with CPCs, while the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists actively warns people seeking reproductive health care to avoid them<sup>4</sup>.

For these reasons, the Women's Law Center of Maryland strongly urges an unfavorable report on House Bill 641.

*The Women's Law Center of Maryland is a private, non-profit, legal services organization that serves as a leading voice for justice and fairness for women. It advocates for the rights of women through legal assistance to individuals and strategic initiatives to achieve systemic change, working to ensure physical safety, economic security, and bodily autonomy for women in Maryland.*

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<sup>1</sup> United States House of Representatives Committee on Government Reform—Minority Staff Special Investigations Division, [False and Misleading Health Information Provided by Federally Funded Pregnancy Resource Centers](#), 2006; [Designed to Deceive. A Study of the Crisis Pregnancy Center in Nine States](#), The Alliance: State Advocates for Women's Rights and Gender Equality, 2021,

<sup>2</sup> Bryant, Amy, [Why Crisis Pregnancy Centers Are Legal But Unethical](#), American Medical Association Journal of Ethics, 2018; 20(3):269-277.

<sup>3</sup> Montoya, Melissa; Judge-Golden, Colleen; and Swartz, Jonas, [The Problems with Crisis Pregnancy Centers: Reviewing the Literature and Identifying New Directions for Future Research](#), International Journal for Women's Health, 2022; 14: 757-763.

<sup>4</sup> American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, [Issue Brief: Crisis Pregnancy Centers](#), October 2022.