

Cresta M. Kowalski

Bill: HB 705

Position: Favorable

My name is Cresta Kowalski, a citizen of Allegany County and a mother of two grown daughters. I have first-hand experience with the detrimental results when a woman's right to safe reproductive healthcare is unavailable. When I was a freshman in college in 1995, my roommate became pregnant and sought an abortion. Yet, she could not find safe reproductive healthcare from a trained provider. Instead, she went to a back-alley abortion provider outside of Washington, DC, where she had an abortion from an untrained provider. Her non-regulated abortion resulted in a perforated uterus and a horrible infection. No nineteen-year-old should have to endure the pain and an emergency hysterectomy for the damage done when she only wanted to exercise her right to an abortion. The trauma she experienced from the entire experience resulted in her leaving college and a massive change in her personality.

Maryland is poised to be a leader and haven for those needing safe, medically trained, and socially conscious reproductive health care. The addition of a constitutional amendment for reproductive liberty for all people is a positive step in ensuring no person has to seek subpar care or flee to another state searching for healthcare. A constitutional amendment will protect all pregnant people and set Maryland apart as a

In Allegany County, we are represented by a conservative, male-dominated block in the Maryland General Assembly. Yet, these men do not speak for all women or the majority of people in the United States who want to protect a person's right to choose. They are spewing misinformation about abortions and reproductive health care, creating an environment of fear in Western Maryland. We need the addition of a Constitutional Amendment to ensure that these talking heads do not get the right to say what a woman or pregnant person can do with their body. The right to bodily autonomy should not be denied to any pregnant person, and this Constitutional amendment will ensure Maryland protects that right across our state.