

TO: The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr., Chair
Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Jeanette Ortiz, Esq.
Associate Director, State Affairs

DATE: March 1, 2023

RE: SB859 Reproductive Health Protection Act

Johns Hopkins supports **SB859 Reproductive Health Protection Act**. This bill protects patients, providers, and individuals supporting out-of-state patients seeking reproductive health care in Maryland from criminal, civil, and administrative actions from restrictive states. Specifically, the legislation 1) establishes additional protections for information related to “legally protected health care” when that information is sought by another state; 2) prohibits a health occupations board from taking specified disciplinary actions related to the provision of legally protected health care; 3) prohibits a medical professional liability insurer from taking “adverse actions” against a practitioner related to the practice of legally protected health care; and 4) prohibits specified State entities, agents, and employees from participating in any interstate investigation seeking to impose specified liabilities or sanctions against a person for activity related to legally protected health care – with limited exception.

As a major employer in the State of Maryland with a presence in the National Capital Region and in Florida, and as a leading provider of clinical care, including health and well-being services to our students, Johns Hopkins University & Medicine take seriously our obligation to the many populations we serve. We remain firmly committed to providing the safest and best possible care to our patients, and to supporting all aspects of women's health and reproductive rights.

To the fullest extent allowed under the law, our institutions have continued to be guided by the evidence-based best practices established by medical and public health faculty experts and practitioners, which make clear that access to safe, legal abortion is critical for the health of individuals, families, and communities. Accordingly, we greatly appreciate this legislation which provides necessary legal protections to our health care providers and patients and helps to ensure that access to reproductive healthcare is not criminalized.

Accordingly, Johns Hopkins respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE** committee report on **SB859**.