

Senate Bill 975 - Favorable
Finance Committee

Honorable Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Finance Committee;

Please give Senate Bill 975, the Supporting Reproductive Health Care Clinics Act, a Favorable report.

I volunteer as a clinic escort at a city reproductive healthcare clinic that is situated on a public sidewalk and has no private parking lot. This means that patients have to park on the street and walk across at least one public road and on a public sidewalk in order to get into the clinic. Anti-choice protesters accost and try to block patients on their way from their cars to the building, even putting their hands on them. They name-call, accuse, guilt, and harass the patients and anyone who accompanies them, even when the patients tell them that they're just there for birth control, being seen about a wanted pregnancy, or are in tears because they miscarried. There are anti-choicers who write down license plate numbers, and record and take photos of employees, patients, and volunteers.

Anti-choicers push, jab, and ram into clinic escorts as we try to safely escort patients past the them and into the building. The anti-choice protesters regularly, often constantly, harass clinic escorts, even when no patients are around. We have been threatened and heard threats towards the clinic, witnessed fights, had anti-choicers yell in our faces, and been outright assaulted by them. Despite what they often claim, these are not peaceful protesters.

Clinic employees, patients, and volunteers are all at risk, all the time. We're usually met with apathy when we report things to the police, though some show up just to tell the anti-choicers that they agree with them. Clinics need to be able to increase security measures in order to keep people safe. I urge you to give Senate Bill 975 a favorable report. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Debi Jasen
Pasadena, MD