



Partners in Abortion Care

Senate Bill 119
Legally Protected Health Care - Gender-Affirming Treatment
March 20, 2024
Support

Dear Chair Peña-Melnyk, Vice Chair Cullison, and members of the Health and Government Operations Committee,

Partners in Abortion Care is an all-trimester abortion clinic located in College Park, MD. We are the only abortion clinic co-owned by a midwife/physician partnership, and currently the only all-trimester clinic owned and operated by women. Several of our clinicians also provide gender-affirming care in addition to abortion care.

- **ORGANIZATION:** Partners in Abortion Care is submitting this testimony in support of SB119, Legally Protected Healthcare - Gender-Affirming Treatment, which would add gender-affirming care to the definition of legally protected healthcare in Maryland.

At Partners in Abortion Care, we see patients from across the country and around the world, and we greatly appreciate Maryland's legal protections for the care provided by our team of expert clinicians. There are many parallels between abortion care and gender-affirming care, including the harmful and violent rhetoric being used to demonize patients and providers, as well as numerous laws restricting abortion and gender-affirming care beyond what is standard and necessary for other types of healthcare.

These laws and rhetoric have a chilling effect on providers, who fear loss of license as well as civil and criminal penalties for giving patients the evidence-based healthcare they need. Just as with abortion, Maryland is a receiving state for people seeking gender-affirming care that has been restricted or banned in other states. Maryland healthcare providers need to know that

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they will be protected from out-of-state attacks on their ability to practice legal, safe, evidence-based medicine. SB119 extends legal protections to include gender-affirming care, a step which is sadly necessary in our current climate.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB119.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Diane Horvath".

Diane Horvath, MD, MPH, FACOG
Co-founder and Chief Medical Officer
Partners in Abortion Care

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