



## **OPPOSITION STATEMENT**

SB705 Access to Care Act

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Maryland Right to Life

On behalf of our Board of Directors and members across the state, we oppose SB705 as written. Without amendment, the bill will force state taxpayers and ratepayers to bear the burden of paying for abortions for residents who are citizens of other states or nations. We strongly object to the appropriation and use of any public funds for the purposes of abortion. Maryland Right to Life supports policy that recognizes the equal value of each human being regardless of the circumstances of their conception and reminds policymakers that abortion is not a medical treatment and is never medically necessary.

**No Public Funding** - Maryland is one of only 4 states that forces taxpayers to fund abortions. There is bi-partisan unity on prohibiting the use of taxpayer funding for abortion. 60% percent of those surveyed in a January 2023 Marist poll say they oppose taxpayer funding of abortion.

**Invest in Life** - 81% of Americans polled favor laws that protect both the lives of women and unborn children. Public funds should not be diverted from but prioritized for health and family planning services which have the objective of saving the lives of both mothers and children, including programs for improving maternal health and birth and delivery outcomes, well baby care, parenting classes, foster care reform and affordable adoption programs.

**Funding Restrictions are Constitutional** - The Supreme Court of the United States, in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health* (2022), overturned *Roe v. Wade* (1973) and held that there is no right to abortion found in the Constitution of the United States. As early as 1980 the Supreme Court affirmed in *Harris v. McRae*, that *Roe* had created a limitation on government, not a government funding entitlement. The Court ruled that the government may distinguish between abortion and other procedures in funding decisions -- noting that "*no other procedure involves the purposeful termination of a potential life*", and held that there is "*no limitation on the authority of a State to make a value judgment favoring childbirth over abortion, and to implement that judgment by the allocation of public funds.*"

**Abortion is not Health Care** - Abortion is NOT health care and is never medically necessary. Abortion is the violent destruction of a developing human being. Abortion always kills a human child and often causes physical and psychological injury to women. Abortion is the exploitation of women and girls and enables sexual abusers and sex traffickers to continue in the course of their crimes and victimization. Abortion is the leading cause of death among Black Americans and has become American genocide. Abortion is the greatest human and civil rights abuse of all time.

The fact that 85% of OB-GYNs in a representative national survey will not participate in abortions is glaring evidence that abortion is not an essential part of women's healthcare. Women have better options for family planning and well woman care, in fact there are 14 federally qualifying health centers for each Planned Parenthood in Maryland.

Abortion is never medically necessary to save the life of a woman - In the rare case of severe pregnancy complications, hospitals, not abortion clinics, may decide to separate the mother and child and make best efforts to sustain the lives of both. This is different from an abortion, which involves the purposeful termination of fetal human life.

Prior to the Supreme Court's imposition of their decision in *Roe v. Wade* in 1973, the Maryland legislature had enacted a ban on abortion and only would allow exception for the physical life of the mother, if two physicians agreed that termination of the pregnancy was necessary to avoid the imminent death of the mother. Science has advanced beyond this point to support that both lives may be saved through emergency medical intervention.

Recent radical enactments of the Maryland General Assembly have completely removed abortion from the spectrum of "healthcare". Because of the *Abortion Care Access Act of 2022*, the state is denying poor women access to care by licensed physicians making abortion unsafe in Maryland. With the unregulated proliferation of chemical "Do-It-Yourself" abortion pills, women are self-administering back-alley style abortions, where they suffer and bleed alone, without examination or care by a doctor.

**For these reasons, we respectfully urge you to amend this bill to exclude abortion funding or vote against this bill and any and all measures to allocate public funds to abortion providers, services, education, training or promotion or to pass along the cost of abortions to insurance ratepayers.**

**We appeal to you to prioritize the state's interest in human life and restore to all people, our natural and Constitutional rights to life, liberty, freedom of speech and religion.**