

Greetings,

My name is Olivia Shryock, a 29-year-old Western Maryland native residing in Cumberland where I am a wife, mother of two, and FF/Medic for the last decade. As a volunteer and paid public servant of our state, I see firsthand the struggles and obstacles families face. My heart goes out to anyone who may feel abandoning their newborn is their only option.

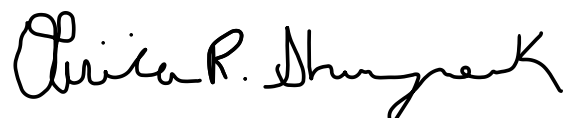
While Safe Haven laws are present in all fifty states, District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, Maryland requires a "Face to Face" surrender to take place. Several states, 20 in fact, have already adjusted their safe haven law to include "anonymous" box surrenders (Oklahoma, Maine, Arizona, Kentucky, Arkansas, Virginia, Indiana, Ohio, Louisiana, Missouri, Tennessee, Texas, Pennsylvania, Iowa, Alabama, Mississippi, Kansas, West Virginia, Montana, and Wisconsin).

The NSHA has unofficially recorded that 1,610 babies have been illegally abandoned since 1999, 608 having been found alive, and 915 found deceased. In 2022 alone, 31 babies were placed in dumpsters, found in backpacks, or discarded in other dangerous locations. 22 of those infants were found deceased. These statistics underscore the need for a safe and anonymous option for desperate mothers. - www.hrsa.gov

Anonymous surrenders are not a new concept having been around for centuries in other countries and are quickly spreading across the United States to give women in crisis a safe and legal option. Once the safe haven law is adjusted to include box placement, there are non-profit organization's present ready to assist our cities with implementing these boxes, providing 24 hour crisis hotlines, a complete breakdown of costs, annual fees, education for our schools, and training for first responders. It's been alarming communicating with these organizations and researching how often these resources are being used but aren't available in every state.

I urged you to favor this positive change for our state! To give our women and infants another option. At no cost to the state or need for funding, this seems like a golden opportunity to provide this resource for our people.

Thank you for your time! Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Olivia R. Shryock". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.