



REQUEST FOR AMENDMENT STATEMENT

SB97- Education - Youth Enhancement Program - Establishment
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On behalf of our Board of Directors and members across the state, we respectfully seek amendment of SB97 – Education – Youth Enhancement Program – Establishment. While youth mentoring is a valuable program and worthwhile investment by the state, we object to any public funding for abortion, abortion providers or nonprofit organizations that promote abortion or the abortion industry – particularly among our schoolchildren in or coordinated by Maryland public schools.

Without an amendment to specifically exclude the program’s award of grants or Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) between the Maryland State Department of Education and nonprofit abortion organizations such as Planned Parenthood and Advocates for Youth, the bill will likely be used to increase the amount of taxpayer dollars used for abortion purposes. This bill in particular, due to the training and mentoring aspect of the program, could be used to further grow and develop the state’s abortion workforce at taxpayer expense.

No Public Funding for Abortion – Maryland is one of only 4 states that forces taxpayers to fund abortions. However, taxpayers generally disapprove of the use of taxpayer funding for abortion purposes. 53% percent of those surveyed in a January 2024 Marist poll say they oppose taxpayer funding of abortion.

Vast Majority Support Investment in Life - 86% of people 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.*”

Maryland Subsidies to Corporate Abortion - Abortion is big business in Maryland. Maryland taxpayers subsidize the abortion industry in Maryland through direct Maryland Medicaid reimbursements to abortion providers, through various state grants and contracts, and through pass-through funding in various state programs. Health insurance carriers are required to provide reproductive health coverage to participate with the Maryland Health Choice program. Programs that utilize public funding for abortion, abortion providers or promotion and other abortion-related activities include the Maryland State Department of Education, Maryland Department of Health, Maryland Family Planning Program, Maternal and Child Health Bureau, the Children's Cabinet, Maryland Council on School Based Health Centers, Maryland Assembly for the Advancement of School Based Health, Community Health Resource Commission, Maryland Children's Health Program (MCHP), Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund and even the Maryland Department of Public Works.

MDH is Failing Pregnant Women - The Maryland Department of Health has consistently failed to meet the needs of pregnant women and families in Maryland and appropriations should be withheld until the Department provides an annual report to the Centers for Disease Control to measure the number of abortions committed each year in Maryland, abortion reasons, funding sources and related health complications or injuries.

- The Department has routinely failed to enforce existing state health and safety regulations of abortion clinics enacted in 2012, even after multiple women have been fatally or near fatally injured in botched abortions in Maryland.
- The Department has routinely failed to provide women with information and access to abortion alternatives, including the Maryland Safe Haven Program (see Department of Human Services), affordable adoption programs or referral to quality prenatal care and family planning services that do not promote abortion.
- The Department has demonstrated systemic bias in favor of abortion providers, engaging in active partnerships with Planned Parenthood and other abortion organizations to develop and implement public programs, curriculum and training. In doing so the Department is failing to provide medically accurate information on pregnancy and abortion.
- The Department systemically discriminates against any reproductive health and educational providers who are unwilling to promote abortion and in doing so, suppresses pro-life speech and action in community-based programs and public education.
- The Department fails to collect, aggregate and report data about abortion and the correlation between abortion and maternal mortality, maternal injury, subsequent pre-term birth, miscarriage and infertility.
- The Department is failing to protect the Constitutionally-guaranteed rights of freedom of conscience and religion for health care workers, contributing to the scarcity of medical professions and personnel in Maryland.

- The Department is failing to protect women and girls from sexual abuse and sex trafficking by waiving reporting requirements for abortionists, waiving mandatory reporter requirements for abortionists, and failing to regulate abortion practices.

Pregnancy is not a Disease - 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 can be saved.

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. No state has enacted a law to prohibit the use of medical intervention in the case of medical emergency including miscarriage or ectopic pregnancy.

Abortion is Black Genocide - Abortion has reached epidemic proportions among people of color with half of all pregnancies of Black women ending in abortion. It is believed that nearly half of all pregnancies of Black women end in abortion. As a result, Black Americans are no longer the leading minority population, dropping second to the Hispanic population. People of color have long been targeted for elimination through sterilization and abortion by eugenicists like Planned Parenthood founder Margaret Sanger. Even today, 78% of abortion clinics are located in Minority communities. As a result abortion has become the leading killer of Black lives. Abortion is the greatest human and civil rights abuse of our time and as a civilized people we cannot continue to justify or subsidize this genocide. For more information please see www.BlackGenocide.org.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge you to amend this bill to prohibit the awarding of public grant monies to the abortion industry including to nonprofits involved in abortion provision, coordination, education, training or promotion.

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.