



Senate Finance Committee
March 6, 2025
Senate Bill 848 – *Public Health Abortion Grant Program - Establishment*
POSITION: SUPPORT

On behalf of MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, the Maryland Section of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, and the Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, we submit this letter of support for Senate Bill 848.

Maryland has led the way in securing reproductive rights by enshrining them in our state constitution. However, Senate Bill 848 is a crucial next step in ensuring that Maryland not only protects the fundamental right to reproductive freedom but also guarantees access to care for all who need it. This bill is in response to the growing demand for reproductive healthcare, particularly as small providers struggle with the influx of out-of-state patients and as many areas of our State remain underserved. By supporting existing providers and encouraging new ones in areas without accessible care options, this bill will help Maryland continue to serve as a beacon for reproductive healthcare.

Senate Bill 848 ensures that access to abortion care is not limited by state residency, insurance coverage, immigration status, or other factors. Abortion care is healthcare, and this bill affirms that fundamental truth.

The bill is funded by a surplus of insurance premiums earmarked for abortion services under the federal Affordable Care Act. With \$25 million available immediately and an ongoing revenue stream of approximately \$3 million annually, the program is designed for financial sustainability. Managed by the Department of Health, it ensures the same level of oversight and efficiency as other public health initiatives, with 90% of funds directly benefiting grantees and providers. Maryland can lead the nation with this first-of-its-kind approach, serving as a model for other reproductive sanctuary states striving to secure and expand access to care.

The overwhelming support for this bill reflects Maryland's long-standing commitment to reproductive freedom. Over 76% of voters supported Question 1, and this legislation is a direct continuation of that effort. It is backed by over 80 members of the House of Delegates and sponsored in the Senate by the Chair of the Budget and Taxation Committee. Additionally, the bill has garnered support from local, state, and national organizations, including healthcare providers, professional associations, advocacy groups, and influential elected officials. Importantly, there is no opposition from insurance companies, as the surplus funds used in this program are already earmarked solely for abortion services.

At a time of national uncertainty regarding reproductive rights, Maryland has the chance to offer something positive and hopeful for its residents.

We urge you to support Senate Bill 848 and ensure that Maryland remains a leader in reproductive healthcare.

For more information call:

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