

SB0848\_RichardKaplowitz\_FAV  
03/06/25  
Richard Keith Kaplowitz  
Frederick, MD 21703-7134

**TESTIMONY ON SB0848 - POSITION: FAVORABLE  
Public Health Abortion Grant Program – Establishment**

**TO:** Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, and members of the Finance Committee  
**FROM:** Richard Keith Kaplowitz

**My name is Richard Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of/ SB0848, Public Health Abortion Grant Program – Establishment**

This bill recognizes a significant problem exists in providing reproductive healthcare and identifies a non-state source and allocation of funding to resolve the problem.

For decades, anti-abortion policies have tried to limit access to care, with federal restrictions like the Hyde Amendment preventing public funding for abortion services. Abortion funds and providers are facing a funding crisis, struggling to keep up with demand, especially since the Dobbs decision overturned Roe v. Wade. Local providers like Partners in Care in College Park, the Baltimore Abortion Fund, and the Women's Health Center near Cumberland are already feeling financial strain, with some facing the real possibility of closing their doors.

The bill makes the following happen to address the identified problems:

- Establishes a public grant program that will distribute funds **from an existing surplus** in segregated insurance accounts (set aside by the Affordable Care Act) to reimburse abortion providers and nonprofit funds. **No taxpayer funds are involved.** In Maryland, our estimated fund is \$25 million, with \$3 million expected annually.
- Supports uninsured and underinsured individuals, those facing confidentiality concerns, and people who must travel for care due to restrictive laws in neighboring states.
- Allocates 90% of available funds directly to abortion care providers and nonprofit funds, with a special focus on equity and access.
- Protects privacy and confidentiality for individuals seeking care.
- Keeps our abortion providers in business.
- Provides a model for other reproductive rights sanctuary states.

This bill establishes the Public Health Abortion Grant Program to provide grants to improve access to abortion care clinical services for individuals in the State. It will establish the Public Health Abortion Grant Program Fund as a special, non lapsing fund to provide grants under the Program. It further requires that certain premium funds collected by health insurance carriers be used to provide certain coverage and to support improving access to abortion care clinical services under certain circumstances.

**I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB0848.**