



SCHOOL OF  
**PUBLIC HEALTH**

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**FAVORABLE  
Senate Bill 674**

Maryland Commission for Women – Maryland Collaborative to Advance  
Implementation of Coverage of Over-the-Counter Birth Control  
Senate Finance Committee  
Hearing February 18, 2025

I encourage a **Favorable** report on SB674 for the following reasons.

This bill provides for a strategic, coordinated, and inclusive approach to identify how to expand women’s awareness of and access to over the counter birth control options. The intent of over the counter birth control is to make it easier for women to access birth control. However, there is a difference between availability and accessibility. Without a consumer-focused education initiative to make women aware of over the counter birth control options, they may not find out on their own or hear about this option from healthcare providers. If women don’t know over the control birth control is an option, then they may not experience the benefits of this expanded availability. People must know about a benefit or service and how to access it for the benefit or service to make a meaningful difference in their lives.

The proposed Collaborative includes a wide range of interests that can consider and recommend how to inform and educate women about over the counter birth control options. As a Collaborative member, the Maryland Consumer Health Information Hub, which is managed by the UMD Horowitz Center for Health Literacy, can contribute health literacy, plain language and language access expertise to the discussions and recommendations. The Collaborative’s recommendations should consider the types of messages and informational materials and the variety of languages needed to reach all Maryland women so that the consumer effort is appropriately supported.