Maryland Family Institute
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Testimony of Jeffrey S. Trimbath, President
in Support of
SB 965
March 6, 2024

Good afternoon, Chair Beidle and members of the Committee. My name is Jeff Trimbath and I am the President of the Maryland Family Institute. I write in support of this bill which will improve data collection for the costs associated with delivery, postpartum care, pregnancy care, and abortion.

All of these are important. Maryland, like the rest of the country, has a birth rate well below what we need to sustain the population. We just released our Family Structure Index last week showing a fertility rate of 1.69 for Maryland (well-below mere replacement rate of 2.1 children per women). Undoubtedly this contributes to Maryland's declining population, which Comptroller Lierman has highlighted as a significant factor in Maryland's stagnant economy.

There are many reasons for our sagging birth rate, but cost is certainly a factor. I remember well the journey home from Anne Arundel Medical Center with our first, then second, then third child. It was a journey with a bundle of joy, but also a bundle of stress due to the financial burden of having a child.

This bill, which will collect data on birth, pregnancy care and postpartum care, will give us greater insight into these expenses, and new ways to support new parents and strengthen families in Maryland. Better data will drive better outcomes for parents.

Collecting data on abortion costs is also important. Importantly, this bill is neither pro-abortion nor anti-abortion. It merely attempts to gather information to make better decisions.

Unfortunately too much of this argument goes on in the dark because abortionists and abortion businesses in the state are resistant to releasing broader data on their policies, methods and costs.

This bill promises a big improvement allowing for greater transparency and upholding the state's values of protecting new families. And that's why we recommend your favorable report.