

Rachel Santos
Regarding SB 0477
February 5, 2025

My name is Rachel Santos, and I am a concerned Maryland resident, Obstetric Nurse, and pregnant person. I am testifying in order to voice my vehement support for ensuring access to prompt emergency abortion care for all people in Maryland. Regardless of action taken on the federal level, it is critical to ensure access to emergency medical care in Maryland. Legislation such as SB 0477 promotes the ability of healthcare providers to provide evidence-based care.

Through my work in the inpatient setting, I see firsthand the importance of access to this care. Working on a labor & delivery unit in East Baltimore, I've had the opportunity to care for very sick patients needing prompt care. As both a nurse and pregnant person, I am proud and relieved to be in a state in which I can help provide this necessary care, and also receive it if necessary. Legislation such as the Maryland Constitutional Amendment-Right to Reproductive Freedom is not just a clear representation of Marylander's support for this access to care, but a critical part of healthcare providers' ability to provide necessary care without retribution.

I feel compelled to testify on behalf of all of my patients, and on behalf of anybody who could find themselves needing this life-saving care. I will never forget the day I cared for a patient who happened to be in another state on a business trip when her water broke. The patient was well into her second trimester, but several weeks before the gestational age of fetal viability. She quickly became very ill and went to an emergency room where she was denied necessary abortion care because her fetus still had a heartbeat. By the time she left the emergency room in a southern state, caught a red-eye flight back to Maryland and arrived at the hospital where I work, she had developed life threatening sepsis.

Fortunately, we were able to promptly provide necessary life-saving care. Following her procedure, the patient and her husband tearfully detailed their harrowing account of attempting to seek this necessary care in another state, being forced to make the decision to *leave a hospital* to try to *save her life* and uterus, and enduring their long flight home to Maryland while vigilantly watching the flight map in case they needed an emergency landing should her condition quickly worsen. Absolutely nobody should have to be in that position, ever. I will never forget their heartbreak, disgust and rage. This vignette is but one of countless stories that those of us working on obstetric services could share, further illustrating the crucial need for emergency abortion care.

By supporting SB0477, you are protecting not just anonymous Marylanders, but also those you love who could find themselves needing this care. Can you imagine the patient I described being your daughter, sister, aunt, friend, neighbor or spouse being denied life-saving care? Nobody is immune to emergencies, and nobody should be allowed to die due to the lack of enforcement of necessary, evidence-based medical

care. Healthcare providers want to be able to provide the best possible care for their patients, and by supporting this legislation you are supporting the health and future of medicine in Maryland.

Thank you Chairwoman Beidle, Vice Chairman Hayes, other Council members, and Senator Lam for your efforts to protect access to emergency abortion care in Maryland. I hope this testimony further supports your valuable work to ensure access to necessary medical care in Maryland.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read "Rachel Santos". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "S".

Rachel Santos