



### **Opposition Statement SB83**

Public Health – Overdose and Infectious Disease Prevention Services Program  
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Maryland Right to Life

**On behalf of our Board of Directors and members across the state, we respectfully yet strongly oppose to SB83** without an amendment that excludes this bill being used for abortion purposes. Maryland Right to Life strongly objects to the appropriation and use of any public funds for the purposes of abortion violence .

The bill is to be applied to “community-based organization(s)” which include organizations that provide health or social services and lists hospitals and clinics. In order to prevent this program, meant for people at risk or with actual addictions and/or infectious diseases, from being exploited by the abortion industry, Maryland Right to Life requests an amendment to exclude from this bill any organization that promotes and provides abortions.

The bill states “a program shall provide access or referrals to services, including reproductive health and education services. . . . train staff members to deliver services offered by the program. . .” This opens the door for these programs to provide a pipeline of clients for the abortion industry and also use grants to train workers for the abortion workforce . In addition, conscience protections may be threatened for staff members in the program or in the referral organizations who refuse to promote or provide abortions.

**Maryland is subsidizing corporate abortion.** Abortion is big business in Maryland. Maryland taxpayers subsidize the abortion industry in Maryland through direct Maryland Medicaid reimbursements to abortion providers, through various state grants and contracts, and through pass-through funding in various state programs. Health insurance carriers are required to provide reproductive health coverage to participate with the Maryland Health Choice program.

Programs that utilize public funding for abortion violence, abortion providers or promotion and other abortion -related activities include the Maryland State Department of Education, Maryland Department of Health, Maryland Family Planning Program, Maternal and Child Health Bureau, the Children’s Cabinet, Maryland Council on School Based Health Centers, Maryland Assembly for the Advancement of School Based Health, Community Health Resource Commission, Maryland Children’s Health Program (MCHP), Maryland Stem Cell Research Fund and even the Maryland Department of Public Works.

**MDH is Failing Pregnant Women:** The Maryland Department of Health has consistently failed to meet the needs of pregnant women and families in Maryland and appropriations should be withheld until the Department provides the annual report to the Centers for Disease Control to measure the number of abortions committed each year in Maryland, abortion reasons, funding sources and related health complications or injuries.

- The Department has routinely failed to enforce existing state health and safety regulations of abortion clinics, even after two women were near fatally injured in botched abortions.

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- The Department has routinely failed to provide women with information and access to abortion alternatives, including the Maryland Safe Haven Program (see Department of Human Services), affordable adoption programs or referral to quality prenatal care and family planning services that do not promote abortion.
- The Department has demonstrated systemic bias in favor of abortion providers, engaging in active partnerships with Planned Parenthood and other abortion organizations to develop and implement public programs, curriculum and training. In doing so the department is failing to provide medically accurate information on pregnancy and abortion.
- The Department systemically discriminates against any reproductive health and education providers who are unwilling to promote abortion and in doing so, suppresses pro-life speech and action in community-based programs and public education.
- The Department fails to collect, aggregate and report data about abortion and the correlation between abortion and maternal mortality, maternal injury, subsequent preterm birth, miscarriage and infertility.
- The Department is failing to protect the Constitutionally-guaranteed rights of freedom of conscience and religion for health care workers, contributing to the scarcity of medical professions and personnel in Maryland.
- The Department is failing to protect women and girls from sexual abuse and sex trafficking by waiving reporting requirements for abortions, waiving mandatory reporter requirements for abortionists, and failing to regulate abortion practices.

Pregnant women and girls seeking to use this proposed program should not be coerced into abortion over receiving proper maternity care. A pregnant woman or girl suffering addiction and/or infectious disease can be treated for those conditions and continue her pregnancy with proper care. As a state sponsor of abortion, Maryland does not promote motherhood or give equal funding to organizations that provide care and support for poor women and girls choosing motherhood.

**For these reasons, Maryland Right to Life asks for an amendment to exclude abortion purposes from this bill. Without an amendment, we ask for an unfavorable report on SB83.**