

To: Senate Finance Committee

Re: SB 447

February 2025

Dear Chairman and Distinguished Members,

I ask you to oppose SB 447.

SB 447 is unnecessary to ensure access to abortion, but does endanger physicians' conscience rights. There is no law in Maryland that prevents care for women experiencing a miscarriage, ectopic pregnancy or any pregnancy emergency. Emergency room physicians can, and do, treat life-threatening conditions such as ectopic pregnancies.

Maryland law allows doctors to do whatever is necessary to preserve the life of a mother. But elective abortion is not life-saving care as it ends the life of the unborn child. The government has no authority to force doctors to perform these procedures. No physician has been prosecuted or disciplined for an abortion that fell within the scope of the "life-of-the-mother" exception.¹

As an ethical Maryland physician who is called to save lives and heal the sick, abortion is not and never will be healthcare. During a woman's pregnancy we are caring for at least two patients and abortion seeks to end the life of one of them. This law will be used to pressure or even force physicians to participate in elective, non-emergent abortions. The majority of obstetricians do not perform elective abortions.^{2,3}

Please respect their no.

I urge you to vote "NO" on SB 447. Doctors will provide life-saving care and this bill is unnecessary. I encourage you instead to ensure that the conscience freedoms of Maryland healthcare professionals are protected.

Thank you for considering this testimony.

Sandra Christiansen, MD, FACOG

scmdforlife@gmail.com

¹ "Medical emergency exceptions in state abortion statutes: The statistical record." *Issues in Law & Medicine* 31, no. 1 (2016): 29-47.

² Sheila Desai, Rachel Jones, and Kate Castle, "Estimating abortion provision and abortion referrals among United States obstetrician-gynecologists in private practice." *Contraception* 97, no. 4 (Apr 2018): 297-302, doi: [10.1016/j.contraception.2017.11.004](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.contraception.2017.11.004)

³ Debra Stulberg, Annie Dude, Irma Dahlquist, et al., "Abortion provision among practicing obstetrician-gynecologists." *Obstetrics and Gynecology* 118, no. 3 (Sep 2011): 609-614, doi: [10.1097/AOG.0b013e31822ad973](https://doi.org/10.1097/AOG.0b013e31822ad973)