
BILL NO:	House Bill 0373
TITLE:	Health - Abortion Data - Submission to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
COMMITTEE:	Health and Government Operations
HEARING DATE:	February 27, 2025
POSITION:	OPPOSE

The Women's Law Center of Maryland is dedicated to ensuring the physical safety, economic security, and bodily autonomy of women throughout the state. We oppose House Bill 0373 and its requirement that the Maryland Department of Health submit abortion data to the Center for Disease Control (CDC).

To obtain such data, the Department of Health would have to establish a data collection system for providers to report abortion related information to the Department. The Women's Law Center of Maryland is opposed to this legislation for the following reasons:

- **Public Health Data is Already Available:** The bill presumes that there is no information available about pregnancy and abortion rates in Maryland. However, the Guttmacher Institute routinely collects this information and calculates pregnancy-related rates in every state. In addition, the Society for Family Planning also collects this data in partnership with providers and its "We Count" reports track the impact of the Dobbs decision on the provision of abortion care within each state.
- **Public Health Survey Data is More Accurate:** When analyzing pregnancy-related data, the Guttmacher Institute does not use data from mandated state abortion reporting systems. According to Guttmacher, "abortions are almost always underreported to the state surveillance systems." Because of this discrepancy, Guttmacher uses its own survey data.
- **Intimidating to Patients:** Patient's fears about the confidentiality of abortion services are very real and merited as abortion opponents have publicized confidential and highly personal information about recipients of reproductive health care on websites and to the press. Unfortunately, this creates a uniquely hostile environment for patients unlike any other environment in which individuals seek healthcare services. Mandated reporting for abortion services, especially since there are no such mandates for any other type of health care service, would only validate their fears.

The Women's Law Center strongly urges an unfavorable report for HB 0373, and all legislation designed to inculcate an environment of fear around Marylander's medical decisions and assertion of bodily autonomy.

The Women's Law Center of Maryland is a non-profit legal services organization whose mission is to ensure the physical safety, economic security, and bodily autonomy of women in Maryland. Our mission is advanced through direct legal services, information and referral hotlines, and statewide advocacy.