



**February 27, 2025**

**House Bill 1271**  
**Health - Abortion - Ultrasound and Wait Time**  
**House Health and Government Operations Committee**

**Position: Favorable**

The Maryland Catholic Conference (MCC) is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals, and numerous charities combine to form our state's second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government.

**House Bill 1271** prohibits a qualified provider from performing or inducing an abortion on a pregnant woman within 24 hours after the woman receives certain ultrasound imaging; establishing certain requirements related to the performance of a certain transabdominal ultrasound; and providing that a woman is not required to accept anything offered during certain transabdominal ultrasound imaging.

Ultrasounds play a crucial role in providing women with essential medical information during pregnancy, empowering them to make fully informed decisions. Viewing an ultrasound image, hearing the fetal heartbeat, and having time to reflect on this information are critical steps in understanding the reality of pregnancy and the life developing within. Ultrasounds confirm pregnancy, determine the baby's gestational age, and identify potential complications such as ectopic pregnancies. They also reveal if a woman is carrying multiple babies and provide critical insights into the baby's development by examining organs, muscles, and bones.<sup>1</sup> These medical assessments are standard prenatal care, offering mothers vital information about their own health and that of their child.

Denying women access to ultrasound images or preventing them from hearing the fetal heartbeat withholds fundamental medical information that could impact their decision-making process. When faced with a life-and-death decision involving a vulnerable and developing baby, every woman deserves the right to receive accurate, medically appropriate information. Ensuring a 24-hour wait time from viewing an ultrasound to inducing an abortion affirms a woman's right to knowledge and provides her with the clarity needed to choose life.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diagnostics/9704-ultrasound-in-pregnancy>

For these reasons, the Maryland Catholic Conference asks for a favorable report on **HB 1271**.

Thank you for your consideration.