



Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

February 27, 2025

The Honorable Joseline A. Peña-Melnyk
Chair, House Health and Government Operations Committee
Room 241, House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: House Bill 373 – Health – Abortion Data – Submission to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – Letter of Opposition

Dear Chair Peña-Melnyk and Committee members:

The Maryland Department of Health (the Department) respectfully submits this letter of opposition for House Bill (HB) 373 – Health – Abortion Data – Submission to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. HB 373 requires the Department to submit to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) any data regarding abortion requested by the CDC unless submitting the data would violate federal or State law.

The Department does not currently collect abortion data. Therefore, the Department does not have abortion data to submit to the CDC upon their request. Furthermore, the CDC itself describes its abortion data surveillance system as a voluntary reporting data collection effort.¹ While some states may choose to report this data to the CDC, they are not mandated by law to do so.²

Additionally, abortion providers in Maryland and nationally have expressed concerns about mandatory reporting laws due to concerns around data use and patient and provider privacy rights. Anti-abortion advocates and lawmakers have continued to attempt to criminalize abortion, and routinely use abortion data collected in other states to inform their efforts, including seeking to use state abortion reports to re-identify patients³. This poses additional risks for patients traveling to Maryland from states that ban, criminalize, or are hostile to abortion.⁴ For these reasons, the Department aligns with abortion providers and other stakeholders who oppose mandatory abortion data collecting/reporting legislation.

¹ Abortion Surveillance — United States, 2022. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Nov 2024. <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/73/ss/ss7307a1.htm>

² Abortion Reporting Requirements. The Policy Surveillance Program. Temple University Beasley School of Law. Nov 2022. <https://lawatlas.org/datasets/abortion-reporting-requirements>

³ Abortion Reporting. Electronic Frontier Foundation. <https://www.eff.org/issues/abortion-reporting>

⁴ Abortion Data Wars: States and Cities Debate How Much Information to Collect. The New York Times. April 2024. <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/04/23/health/abortion-patient-data-privacy.html>

If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact Sarah Case-Herron, Director of Governmental Affairs at sarah.case-herron@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Laura Scott", written in a cursive style.

Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H.
Secretary