

Committee:	House Judiciary Committee
Bill:	House Bill 1186 – Criminal Law - Causing Ingestion of an Abortion-Inducing Drug - Prohibition (Women's Freedom From Coercion Act)
Hearing:	March 6, 2025
Position:	Oppose

Planned Parenthood of Maryland (PPM) opposes *House Bill 1186 - Criminal Law - Causing Ingestion of an Abortion-Inducing Drug - Prohibition (Women's Freedom From Coercion Act)*. The bill would make criminal the act of forcing someone to ingest an “abortion inducing drug” without consent or knowledge or through coercion, force, or threat of force.

There is nothing more important than an individual’s right to control their future through making decisions relating to their health with full consent and information. That is why, in PPM’s daily operational practice, providers are certain to inform patients about all of their options, and make sure that they visit us on their own, and only their own, accord and without coercion or force. Patient safety is our number one priority.

While we obviously support medical consent and an individual’s right to advocate for the care they need, we have concerns about the possible interpretation of this law, which is written in an ambiguous manner and could possibly lead to inconsistent and unjust interpretation. This could lead to providers facing criminal ramifications for simply providing consensual, informed care.

We suggest the inclusion of language that clarifies the intent of this bill is to prevent individuals from forcing abortions rather than an effort to create a legal scare tactic that aligns abortion with danger, which perpetuates an antiquated stigma about this type of health care. It is of equal importance to include language that protects health care providers, who already follow best practices to make sure that their patients are of sound mind to make decisions, are protected under any proposed law like this.

We ask for an unfavorable report. Of course, Marylanders should be able to make medical decisions about abortion without fear and intimidation – but this law is too broad. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Erin Bradley at erin.bradley@ppm.care.