



UNFAVORABLE

HB 1076/SB532 Higher Education Institutions – Over-the-Counter Contraception- Access and Reporting

Laura Bogley, JD
Executive Director
Maryland Right to Life, Inc.

On behalf of our Board of Directors and chapters across the state, we object to this bill, which expands upon the 2023 abortion mandates imposed on colleges and universities. This bill would require institutions of higher education to provide students access to abortion-inducing drugs mislabeled as “emergency contraception”, which may even be distributed through vending machines. By enacting this bill into law, the Assembly would expose Maryland college students to substandard reproductive health practices that could lead to both physical and mental impairment. The bill also fails to provide conscience rights protections for college employees who do not wish to participate in abortions.

KNOWN HEALTH RISKS OF CONTRACEPTIVE DRUGS

This bill would require colleges to stockpile and distribute contraceptive and abortifacient drugs to college students causing great risk to student health. So-called contraceptive drugs approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), include the minipill or “Opill” and emergency contraception pills also known as “morning after” pills which have known harmful side effects including death. The FDA requires drug manufacturers to disclose these side effects to users. However, college students may not fully appreciate the health risks and therefore are incapable of giving informed consent.

The Opill is newly approved by the FDA for over the counter (OTC) use. It contains norgestrel which is the synthetic form of progestin. The Opill is a 0.075mg pill taken once per day every day. The pill advertises that it can prevent ovulation, or thicken cervical mucus to prevent sperm from reaching the egg. The pill also is intended to thin the uterine lining to prevent implantation within the uterus of a newly created human being in his or her zygote stage of life, which results in an early termination of pregnancy otherwise known as an ABORTION.

Emergency contraception pills are taken as a one-dose pill after sex. The emergency contraception pill contains 1.5 mg norgestrel, which is 20 times the dose of the daily Opill taken all in one dose. It is important to note that if students have access to these drugs through vending machines without medical guidance, they could potentially overdose and experience serious health problems.

According to the Mayo Clinic, the health risks of contraceptive drugs include liver problems, ectopic pregnancy and severe allergic reaction. Ectopic pregnancy is a medical emergency that often requires surgery. Ectopic pregnancies can cause serious internal bleeding, infertility, and even death. The likelihood of those risks increases through frequent use, such as use after every sexual encounter or



when combined use with high-doses of hormone as contained in emergency contraceptive drugs. There also are known contraindications with other drugs that can render contraceptives ineffective.

ABORTIFACIENTS MISLABELED AS “CONTRACEPTION”

While Maryland Right to Life takes no position on family planning methods and devices that truly prevent conception of a new human life, we strongly oppose misinformation and taxpayer funding for abortifacients mislabeled as contraceptives. Abortifacients drugs and devices, do not prevent conception or fertilization that results in the creation of a unique human life. Instead, abortifacients disrupt the continuation of human gestation, resulting in the death of the new human life.

Since 1827, we’ve had reasonable knowledge that human life begins when sperm and egg unite, creating a distinct, living individual. That was confirmed beyond reasonable doubt in 1876, when Oscar Hertwig observed the first union of sperm and egg in animals. Then in 1965, to influence people to accept “the pill,” the American College of Gynecologists (ACOG) made a political decision—not a scientific one—to redefine conception. ([Exposing ACOG: How abortion and population control enthusiasts redefined the beginning of life](#)) ACOG’s definition of when conception begins was not when the child’s life actually begins, but when the already alive and growing child implants in the uterus. ACOG’s opinion is scientifically incorrect, pretending nothing happens between fertilization and implantation. This twisting of scientific fact to fit political agendas has led to mass confusion on the topic and the shameless manipulation of women for profit.

WOMEN DESERVE THE RIGHT TO INFORMED CONSENT

Maryland Right to Life defends the right to know of every woman, to be provided the scientific facts that many contraceptive methods endanger a woman’s health and induce an early abortion, rather than prevent conception in order to give truly informed consent before utilizing these abortifacients. But Maryland law does not require sex education to be medically accurate nor age appropriate and it is neither. This is a result of intense lobbying by abortion-invested special interests like Planned Parenthood, which is one of the leading providers of sexuality education curriculum.

Due to this intentional miseducation of our youth, many young women are made dependent on hormonal birth control without understanding the long term effects on their health. Contraceptive drugs are reported to cause various side effects, including increased risk of infertility, miscarriage and cancer. Women also experience psychological and emotional trauma when they learn that they were unknowingly using abortifacients, resulting in the premature deaths of multiple children throughout their childbearing years.



BILL VIOLATES CONSCIENCE RIGHTS OF EMPLOYEES

Maryland Right to Life will advocate for the right of conscience of any individual, organization or institution to refuse to use, pay for or administer any contraceptive methods that may have an abortifacient effect. This bill contains no conscience clause protections for college employees and health center providers.

Abortion Is Not Healthcare

Induced abortion is not healthcare but an act of violence that intentionally ends the life of a living human being. Abortion always kills a human child and often causes physical and psychological injury to women. Abortion enables the exploitation of women and girls by sexual abusers and sex traffickers to continue in the course of their crimes and victimization. Abortion is causing a genocidal effect on Black Americans.

Pregnancy is not a disease and induced abortion cures no illness or disease and therefore is not healthcare. 85% of obstetricians and gynecologists refuse to commit abortions as their medical oath requires them to first do no harm to their patients – either mother or baby. In the rare cases when continuation of pregnancy threatens the physical life of the mother, medical providers may induce birth, but have a duty to treat both the mother and the baby. There is no law in any state that prohibits medical intervention to save the physical life of the mother in the case of medical emergency, such as ectopic pregnancy or abortion. These medical interventions do not constitute induced abortion and are performed in hospitals, not in abortion clinics.

Recent radical enactments of the Maryland General Assembly have completely removed abortion from the spectrum of “healthcare”. Because of the *Abortion Care Access Act of 2022*, the state is denying poor women access to care by licensed physicians making abortion unsafe in Maryland. With the unregulated proliferation of chemical “Do-It-Yourself” abortion pills, women are self-administering back-alley style abortions, where they suffer and bleed alone, without examination or care by a doctor. When women experience complications from abortion, they are typically refused care by the abortionist and referred to hospital emergency rooms where medical providers are often coerced into completing abortions against their rights of conscience. Since the FDA’s approval of chemical abortion drugs, related hospital emergency room admissions have increased by 500%.

For these reasons, we urge you to protect Maryland college students from known health risks by issuing an unfavorable report on this bill and the mandatory distribution of abortifacient drugs on college campuses.