

SB 532 Higher Education Institutions - Over-the-Co

Uploaded by: Ariana Kelly

Position: FAV

Maryland Commission for Women

51 Monroe Street, Suite. 1034 Rockville, Maryland 20850



www.marylandwomen.org

SB 532 Higher Education Institutions - Over-the-Counter Contraception - Access and Reporting

SPONSOR: Senator Cheryl Kagan

HEARING: March 11, 2026

POSITION: FAVORABLE

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Ariana Kelly
Executive Director

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,

The Maryland Commission for Women urges a **FAVORABLE** report on **SB 532 Higher Education Institutions - Over-the-Counter Contraception - Access and Reporting**. We thank sponsor Vice Chair Cheryl Kagan for her leadership in introducing this legislation.

The Maryland Commission for Women has been working in partnership with the Maryland Higher Education Commission, the American Society for Emergency Contraception and the Straus Foundation to support implementation of HB 477/SB 341 from 2023 and HB 367/SB 527 from 2024.

These laws recognize that access to contraception enables students to achieve their academic and workforce goals, leading to greater financial security and improved health outcomes throughout their lives.¹ The Maryland Commission for Women is also staffing the Maryland Over-the-Counter Contraception Collaborative, working to ensure contraception access to the larger population.

It is through our work in this space that the need for SB 532 became evident to the Commission. SB 532 is a straightforward bill that aligns the contraceptive access requirements for public two-year and four-year institutions of higher education in the state. It amends the 2023 and 2024 legislation that created first-in-the-nation on-campus access to over-the-counter (OTC) contraception.

While the original legislation created strong programs reflecting the similar but different needs of two- and four-year schools, there were two technical differences between the statutes whose alignment will

¹ Brittany Lee. *Opportunities and Barriers to Contraception Access on College Campuses*. American Society of State and Territorial Health Officials. <https://www.astho.org/communications/blog/opportunities-barriers-to-contraception-access-on-college-campuses/>

strengthen the programs themselves, as well as the state's ability to be responsive to the needs of students and colleges.

First, SB 532 establishes the requirement that four-year universities submit their reproductive health plans to MHEC on an annual basis. Community colleges already submit these reports, and as a result, MHEC is able to assist them with implementation challenges and assess program needs. Four-year universities are already required to create these plans; sending them to MHEC is a small additional step that will offer huge benefits to colleges, students, and other stakeholders.

Second, the legislation clarifies what products community colleges must make available on campus. The legislation governing four-year universities explicitly states that these institutions must provide all FDA-approved forms of OTC contraception (which currently include condoms, Plan B/generic levonorgestrel emergency contraception, and the O Pill daily contraceptive pill); while the legislative intent was the same for the statute governing community colleges, the language is more general. As a result, some colleges have interpreted the statute as less comprehensive than the sponsors intended. This bill aligns the language in the two statutes to make clear that all public institutions of higher education in the state must provide all forms of FDA-approved OTC contraception.

With these two technical changes, the General Assembly can further strengthen campus access to OTC contraceptive products and help students achieve their academic goals. For these reasons, the Maryland Commission for Women urges a **FAVORABLE** report. For specific questions, please contact our Executive Director, Ariana Kelly, at Ariana.Kelly@Maryland.Gov or via telephone at 240-338-0591.

SB0532_FAV_MDACOG_Higher Ed. Institutions - Over-t

Uploaded by: Christine Krone

Position: FAV



Maryland Section

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
March 11, 2026

Senate Bill 532 – *Higher Education Institutions – Over-the-Counter Contraception – Access and Reporting*

POSITION: SUPPORT

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, Maryland Section (MD ACOG), which represents the Maryland physicians who serve the obstetrical and gynecological needs of Maryland women and their families, **supports** Senate Bill 532.

This bill advances reproductive health equity by increasing transparency and access to over-the-counter contraception at Maryland’s public higher education institutions and community colleges. By requiring each institution to report annually to the Maryland Higher Education Commission on how students are provided access to over-the-counter contraception, whether all FDA-approved non-prescription methods are accessible, the amount of contraception made available, and how students were consulted in this process, Senate Bill 532 helps ensure that colleges are actively addressing student reproductive health needs.

College-aged individuals face unique barriers to reproductive health care, including cost, transportation, scheduling limitations, and gaps in insurance coverage. Ready access to over-the-counter contraception is a safe strategy to reduce unintended pregnancy and support educational attainment and long-term health outcomes. Ensuring that community colleges provide access to all available nonprescription contraceptive methods reflects best clinical practice and promotes reproductive autonomy.

For these reasons, MD ACOG requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 532.

For more information call:

Christine K. Krone
J. Steven Wise
Danna L. Kauffman
Andrew G. Vetter
410-244-7000

EzraTowne_SB0532_FAV_2026_0309 (EEE).pdf

Uploaded by: Ezra Towne

Position: FAV

EZRA MACLEOD TOWNE

Testimony Favorable to SB0532: Higher Education Institutions – Over-the-Counter Contraception – Access and Reporting

March 9, 2026

Senator Brian J. Feldman, Chair, Senator Cheryl C. Kagan, Vice-Chair, and esteemed members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

My name is Ezra Towne, and my pronouns are they/them. I am the parent of two children, one of whom is starting college this fall. **I am writing to you today to ask you to vote favorably on SB0532: Higher Education Institutions – Over-the-Counter Contraception – Access and Reporting.**

Much of SB0532 is already established Maryland state law - but this bill serves as a needed update to that legislation.

1. The bill broadens the definition of over-the-counter contraception to include both contraceptive devices AND medication approved by the FDA and available without a prescription.
2. It more concretely defines what counts as a “public senior higher education institution.”
3. Further defines the type of annual reporting required by institutions by September 1 of each calendar year. Reports must now include how students are provided access, and the contraceptive types and amounts provided In addition, reports must also include evidence that it has consulted with students and student organizations about providing contraception to students.
4. Requires that a report be given to the General Assembly by October 1 of each calendar year from the Maryland Higher Education Commission.

The barriers to contraception access for students include lack of access to on-campus health services, limited clinic hours and lengthy wait times, and lack of transportation to obtain contraception off of campus.¹

I do not want my daughter to experience any of these barriers while in college caused by lack of access to ALL forms of over-the-counter contraception. **For these reasons, I fully support the expansions detailed in SB0532 and urge a favorable report.**

Sincerely,
Ezra MacLeod Towne
Wheaton, Maryland, D18

¹ National Council of State Legislatures, “Contraceptive Options for Women on College Campuses,” October 15, 2025

<https://www.ncsl.org/state-legislatures-news/details/contraceptive-options-for-women-on-college-campuses>

CHPA Supports MD SB 532.pdf

Uploaded by: John McLuckie

Position: FAV



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March 9, 2026

The Honorable Senator Brian Feldman
Chairman, Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Support for SB 532 - Higher Education Institutions - Over-the-Counter Contraception - Access and Reporting

Dear Chairman Feldman,

On behalf of the Consumer Healthcare Products Association (CHPA)¹, I am writing to express strong support for SB 532. The legislation broadens Maryland's access to contraception by mandating community colleges in the state provide students with access to all forms of over-the-counter (OTC) contraception.

Access to contraceptives has significant health, social, and economic benefits, including reducing unintended pregnancies, abortions, and improving outcomes for planned pregnancies. Women ages 18-25 have the highest rates of unintended pregnancies², yet many college students have trouble accessing methods of contraception due to cost barriers, privacy concerns, and logistical challenges such as transportation to off-campus pharmacies.

SB 532 mandates contraceptive availability in student health centers, retail establishments on campus, and vending machines, among other methods. By requiring availability in these spaces, the bill meets students where they are and removes much of the friction that prevents consistent contraceptive use.

SB 532 represents a meaningful step toward expanding contraceptive access for students throughout Maryland. We are grateful to you and Senator Kagan for introducing this legislation and strongly encourage its passage. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly with any questions regarding our position.

Respectfully submitted,

Carlos I. Gutiérrez
Vice President, State & Local Government Affairs
Consumer Healthcare Products Association
Washington, D.C. | 202.429.3521 | cgutierrez@chpa.org

¹ Consumer Healthcare Products Association is the national trade association representing the manufacturers of nonprescription drugs, dietary supplements and over-the-counter medical devices

² <https://www.ncsl.org/state-legislatures-news/details/contraceptive-options-for-women-on-college-campuses>

HB 1075_ SB532 FAV (1).pdf

Uploaded by: Meghan Music

Position: FAV



March 11, 2026

The Honorable Brian Feldman, Chair,
Education, Energy, and Environment Committee
2 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy, and Environment Committee,

The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) respectfully requests a favorable report on SB 532 – Higher Education Institutions – Over-the-Counter Contraception – Access and Reporting, sponsored by Senator Kagan. This legislation represents a critical step in refining Maryland’s landmark efforts to ensure that every student at a public higher education institution has reliable, equitable, and transparent access to reproductive health services.

Since January 2025, MHEC has worked diligently to implement the mandates established by SB 341/HB 477 (2023) and SB 527/HB 367 (2024). Our efforts have been characterized by robust statewide collaboration. In June 2025, MHEC hosted a full-day convening at UMBC in partnership with the Maryland Department of Health (MDH), the American Society for Emergency Contraception (ASEC), and Upstream USA. We engaged 42 institutions and nearly 60 clinical and administrative leaders to develop implementation blueprints. This could not have happened without a vital partnership with the Commission on Women, who currently has been able to facilitate a grant in which \$10,000 awards are currently helping community colleges install wellness vending machines.

MHEC strongly supports the reporting alignment proposed in SB 532. By establishing a synchronized annual deadline of September 1 for both public senior higher education institutions and community colleges to report to MHEC (followed by our consolidated report to the General Assembly by October 1), this bill creates a streamlined, efficient data collection process. This alignment ensures that the state receives a comprehensive, unified picture of reproductive health access across the entire public higher education landscape simultaneously.

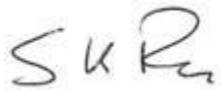
Furthermore, we appreciate the clarity SB 532 provides regarding the scope of over-the-counter (OTC) access. By explicitly requiring access to "all methods" of FDA-approved OTC contraception for all public institutions, the bill eliminates ambiguity and ensures that a student’s

resources are not limited by the specific type of institution they attend. This "all methods" approach is essential for true equity of access.

Maryland has already made significant strides in removing health-related barriers to student success. SB 532 codifies the best practices we have identified during our initial implementation phase and provides the structural consistency needed for long-term sustainability.

For these reasons, the Maryland Higher Education Commission requests a favorable report on SB 532.

Yours in Service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S K Rai". The letters are cursive and somewhat stylized.

Secretary Rai

2025 WLC SB 532 Senate Side.pdf

Uploaded by: Public Policy Partners

Position: FAV

Committee: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Bill: Senate Bill 532 – Higher Education Institutions – Over-the-Counter Contraception – Access and Reporting

Hearing Date: March 12, 2026

Position: Support

The Women's Law Center of Maryland supports *Senate Bill 532 – Higher Education Institutions – Over-the-Counter Contraception – Access and Reporting*. Maryland law already requires public 4-year colleges and community colleges to provide access to over-the-counter contraception on campus. The bill provides for two clarifications to Maryland law: 1) 4-year schools will be required to report annually on the program to the Maryland Higher Education Commission, just as community colleges are required to report; and 2) the requirement for access to over-the-counter contraception on community colleges is for all methods, just as is required for 4-year schools.

We ask for a favorable report. The clarifications proposed by Senate Bill 532 will help the Maryland Higher Education Commission in implementing Maryland's law. If we can provide any further information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net or (443) 926-3443.

The Women's Law Center of Maryland is a private, non-profit, legal services organization that serves as a leading voice for justice and fairness for women. It advocates for the rights of women through legal assistance to individuals and strategic initiatives to achieve systemic change, working to ensure physical safety, economic security, and bodily autonomy for women in Maryland.

2026 ACNM SB 532 Senate Side.pdf

Uploaded by: Public Policy Partners

Position: FAV



Committee: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Bill: Senate Bill 532 – Higher Education Institutions – Over-the-Counter Contraception – Access and Reporting

Hearing Date: March 11, 2026

Position: Support

The Maryland Affiliate of the American College of Nurse Midwives (ACNM) supports *Senate Bill 532 – Over-the-Counter Contraception – Access and Reporting*. Maryland law already requires public higher education institutions and community colleges to provide access to over-the-counter contraception on campus. The bill clarifies several program requirements, including ensuring all campuses submit data to the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) on an annual basis. ACNM supports the legislation because access to over-the-counter contraception can be transformative for students, as they are more likely to face challenges in obtaining transportation or seeing a regular clinical provider.ⁱ

We ask for a favorable report on this legislation. If we can provide any further information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net or (443) 926-3443.

ⁱ <https://www.naspa.org/expand-access-to-ec>

Testimony in support of SB0532 - Higher Education

Uploaded by: Richard KAP Kaplowitz

Position: FAV

SB0532_RichardKaplowitz_FAV

03/11/2026

Richard Keith Kaplowitz

Frederick, MD 21703

TESTIMONY ON SB#/0532 – FAVORABLE

Higher Education Institutions - Over-the-Counter Contraception - Access and Reporting

TO: Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard K. Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB#0532 Higher Education Institutions - Over-the-Counter Contraception - Access and Reporting

Providing contraception access in higher education settings offers significant benefits, primarily by enabling women to **delay childbirth, pursue their academic goals, and achieve greater economic security.**¹ Key benefits include:

Enhanced Educational Attainment

Increased Enrollment and Graduation, On-Time Completion, Pursuit of Advanced Degrees

Improved Economic Prospects

Higher Lifetime Earnings, Reduced Poverty, Narrowed Gender Pay Gap

Better Health Outcomes

Prevention of Unintended Pregnancies, Improved Maternal and Infant Health, Non-Contraceptive Health Benefits

Enhanced Well-being and Autonomy

Empowerment, Improved Mental Health

By addressing barriers like cost, lack of awareness, and limited provider availability, higher education institutions can significantly support students' academic success and long-term well-being. Multiple academic studies support these conclusions.

This bill will require each public senior higher education institution and community college to submit a report on contraception access to the Maryland Higher Education Commission each year; requiring the Commission to submit a report on contraception access to the General Assembly each year beginning October 1, 2026; and requiring each community college to provide students with access to all methods of over-the-counter contraception.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report and pass SB0532.

¹ Google AI Search "benefits of higher education providing contraception access"

2026 RJM SB 532 Senate Side.pdf

Uploaded by: Robyn Elliott

Position: FAV



Reproductive Justice Maryland

BILL NUMBER:	Senate Bill 532
TITLE:	Higher Education Institutions – Over-the-Counter Contraception – Access and Reporting
COMMITTEE:	Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
HEARING DATE:	March 11, 2026
POSITION:	Favorable

Reproductive Justice Maryland strongly supports *Senate Bill 532 – Higher Education Institutions – Over-the-Counter Contraception – Access and Reporting*. The bill clarifies existing law that already requires public 4-year higher education institutions and community colleges to provide access to over-the-counter contraception on campus.

Reproductive Justice Maryland has long-supported increasing access to contraception on campuses, including over-the-counter contraception. The Food and Drug Administration has approved three main types of over-the-counter contraception: condoms, emergency contraception, and Opill.ⁱ Maryland has been a leader in access to over-the-counter contraception, beginning by becoming the first state to require coverage of over-the-counter contraception.ⁱⁱ The Maryland General Assembly has already taken two major steps to increase access to over-the-counter contraception on college campuses:

- **Public Four-Year Higher Education Institutions:** In 2023, the Maryland General Assembly enacted House Bill 477/Senate Bill 341 to require public four-year higher education institutions to provide 24/7 access to over-the-counter contraception;
- **Community Colleges:** In 2024, the Maryland General Assembly extended requirements for access to over-the-contraception during class hours to community colleges through House Bill 367/Senate Bill 527.

Maryland has made significant progress in implementing its campus access program. In its January 2026 annual report on implementation, the Maryland Higher Education Commission highlighted innovative programs including over-the-counter contraception in wellness vending machines on multiple campuses. We would like to note Maryland's progress has been the result of robust student engagement and a public-private partnership between the Maryland Higher Education Commission, American Society for Emergency Contraception, and the Maryland Commission for Women.

Senate Bill 532 will support Maryland's ongoing implementation work by: 1) extending an annual reporting requirement to public 4-year institutions. The reporting requirement already applies to community colleges; and 2) clarifying that community colleges are required to provide access to *all* forms of over-the-counter contraception. It is already implied, but it is clearer in the law for 4-year higher education institutions.

We ask for a favorable report. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Robyn Elliott at relliott@policypartners.net or (443) 926-3443.

ⁱ <https://www.ccjm.org/content/92/9/572>

ⁱⁱ <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/624f47211382a25c48aca17d/t/689cb5cbca5a475cf759c1d3/1755100619053/Free+the+Pill+State+OTC+Fact+Sheet+ 8.13.25.pdf>

Maryland SB0532 Testimony - Higher Education OTC A

Uploaded by: Sarah Legried

Position: FAV

March 9, 2026

Written Testimony from Upstream USA

Senate Bill 0532

Higher Education Institutions - Over-the-Counter Contraception - Access and Reporting

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,

Upstream USA welcomes the opportunity to submit comments regarding Senate Bill 0532, which would bolster existing contraceptive access laws by requiring regular reporting and a consistent supply of over-the-counter (OTC) contraception on community college and university campuses in Maryland.

Upstream is a national nonprofit whose mission is to ensure that patient-centered contraceptive care is basic, primary healthcare. We provide free training and technical assistance to healthcare organizations across the country, supporting their ability to provide high-quality, accessible birth control counseling and care. In 2022, Upstream launched a multi-year partnership with the Maryland Department of Health and have since partnered with 11 healthcare organizations across 61 sites.

In the last few years, Maryland has passed legislation ensuring access to OTC contraception at universities and colleges, but a few implementation gaps remain. Currently, community colleges are required to ensure access to some but not all three types of FDA-approved OTC contraception - condoms, emergency contraception, and the OTC pill - and they must report on their efforts to achieve this goal to the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC). Conversely, universities are required to ensure access to all types of OTC contraception, but are not required to report on their activities to MHEC. Senate Bill 0532 would address these inconsistencies in the current law, introducing consistent reporting and supplying requirements for all higher education entities.

Research has shown that women's ability to decide if and when to have children is strongly linked to their academic performance and ability to complete college.¹ According to a 2024 Survey conducted by the National College Health Association, 52% of students reported having vaginal sex in the past year, and 1 in 5 of those students report not using any form of contraception.² Providing students with a range of accessible birth control options offers them the opportunity to plan their reproductive and academic lives.

¹ Sonfield, A., Hasstedt, K., Kavanaugh, M., & Anderson, R. (2013, March). The Social and Economic Benefits of Women's Ability To Determine Whether and When to Have Children. Guttmacher.

²American College Health Association. (2024). UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT Reference Group .



In passing this bill, Maryland would build on existing policy supports to ensure timely and affordable access to contraception for students across the state.

Thank you,

Sarah Legried
Senior Manager of Policy & Government Affairs
Upstream USA

Sen. Kagan Testimony SB532_ OTC Contraception.pdf

Uploaded by: Sen. Cheryl Kagan

Position: FAV

CHERYL C. KAGAN
Legislative District 17
Montgomery County

Vice Chair
Education, Energy, and
the Environment Committee

Joint Audit and Evaluation Committee

Joint Committee on Federal Relations



Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Suite 2 West
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3134
800-492-7122 Ext. 3134
Cheryl.Kagan@senate.maryland.gov

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony SB532: Over-The-Counter (OTC) Contraception

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Wednesday, March 11, 2026 1 PM

History of the Issue

The General Assembly has taken important steps to expand community colleges to over-the-counter (OTC) contraception for college students. Many undergraduates have busy schedules and limited community colleges to transportation, making on-campus health resources essential.

In 2023, [SB341](#) required public higher education institutions, including schools in the University System of Maryland, Morgan State University, and St. Mary's College, to develop plans to provide reproductive health care on campus.

The following year, I co-sponsored [SB527](#) with then-Senator Ariana Kelly to expand these requirements to community colleges, requiring them to develop implementation plans and submit annual reports to the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC).

Maryland is the first state to require over-the-counter contraception at both community colleges and four year colleges. Our campuses have made meaningful progress towards universal community colleges. In February 2026, The Maryland Commission for Women reported that the community colleges in Montgomery, Anne Arundel, and Howard counties, had all fully implemented contraception vending machines.¹

The Problem

Despite this progress, there are differences between community colleges and four-year institutions. Community colleges provide every type of FDA-approved contraceptives, while four-year institutions may not. In addition, reporting requirements are detailed in different sections of the code, which makes oversight more complicated.

Students need reliable access to all FDA-approved OTC methods, including condoms, emergency contraception, and birth control-- regardless of which campus they attend.

The Solution

[SB532](#) includes three changes that:

¹ [Over the Counter Birth Control: Campus Programs \(February 18, 2026\)](#)

² [SB-320 - College Student Health Center Sexual and Reproductive Health Preparation Fund.\(2017-2018\)](#)

³ [HB3709 - 104th Illinois General Assembly](#)

1. Clarify that both community colleges and four-year institutions must provide all available types of OTC contraception;
2. Require four-year institutions to follow the same reporting guidelines as community colleges; and
3. Establish an annual MHEC report about OTC contraception options on college campuses, to be delivered to the MGA each October 1st.

This bill ensures that all Maryland students benefit from consistent, reliable access while simplifying oversight of current law.

I urge a favorable report on SB532.

SB0532_MACC_FWA.pdf

Uploaded by: Drew Jabin

Position: FWA

Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
March 11, 2026

SB 532 – Higher Education Institutions - Over-the-Counter Contraception - Access and Reporting

Position: Favorable with Amendments

The Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC), representing Maryland’s 16 community colleges, supports the goal of ensuring that students have access to over-the-counter contraception and appreciates the sponsor’s continued focus on student health and well-being. Maryland’s community colleges are committed to supporting students’ basic needs and recognize that access to health resources is an important component of student success.

Legislation enacted last year already requires each community college to develop and implement a plan, in consultation with students, to provide access to over-the-counter contraception and to report on implementation to the Maryland Higher Education Commission. Community colleges across the State are currently working to implement these requirements and establish sustainable access models that reflect campus structures, student needs, and available resources. MACC understands that this legislation is intended to clarify the existing framework and appreciates the sponsor’s efforts to support implementation.

As this work continues, MACC believes it will be important to ensure that community colleges are able to implement these requirements in a manner that is both effective and cost-efficient for campuses. Continued collaboration with community colleges will help ensure that access models are sustainable and responsive to the diverse needs of students across Maryland’s campuses. MACC looks forward to continuing to work collaboratively with the sponsor and the General Assembly to ensure that students have appropriate access to over-the-counter contraception and that implementation is successful across all campuses.

For these reasons, MACC respectfully requests a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report on **SB 532** and stands ready to continue working with all partners to support student health and access across Maryland’s community colleges.

Please contact Brad Phillips (bphillips@mdacc.org) or Drew Jabin (djabin@mdacc.org) with questions.

Maryland Catholic Conference_UNF_SB532.pdf

Uploaded by: Diane Arias

Position: UNF



MARYLAND
CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE

March 11, 2026

Senate Bill 532

Nursing Facilities - Medicaid Quality Assessment - Funding of Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Position: Unfavorable

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.

Senate Bill 532 requires each public senior higher education institution and community college to submit a report on contraception access to the Maryland Higher Education Commission each year; requiring the Commission to submit a report on contraception access to the General Assembly each year; and requiring each community college to provide students with access to all methods of over-the-counter contraception.

Hormone-based contraception works by altering a woman's natural hormonal cycle, often suppressing ovulation and creating an artificial hormonal state. Studies and clinical literature have identified potential adverse effects associated with certain hormonal contraceptives, including impacts on mood and mental health, changes in libido, increased risk of blood clots, stroke, and hypertension in some populations, and complex associations with certain cancers.¹ While some contraceptives may reduce the risk of specific cancers, they may increase the risk of others, and long-term effects on fertility and ovarian health continue to be debated in medical literature. These risks underscore the importance of comprehensive counseling and informed consent.

Institutions of higher education should not be reduced to distribution sites that are evaluated primarily on how much contraception they provide. If the General Assembly is focused on student health, equal attention should be given to ensuring that students receive full and

¹<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10347535/#:~:text=Hormone%2Dbased%20contraception%20disrupts%20hormonal,and%20their%20right%20to%20autonomy.>

balanced information about potential risks, side effects, and long-term considerations. Access alone should not be the sole policy objective; informed decision-making must accompany it.

Human dignity must remain paramount in public policy, including respect for the procreative dimension of human sexuality. A respect-for-life framework affirms that human life possesses inherent worth from its earliest beginnings and that procreation is not merely a biological function, but a meaningful and integral aspect of human relationships. Expanding institutional mandates related to contraception, particularly without clear protection for conscience and religious conviction—raises serious ethical considerations. Any policy in this area should prioritize human dignity, safeguard respect for procreation, ensure transparency in medical information, and honor the diverse moral and religious beliefs of students and institutions.

For these reasons, the Maryland Catholic Conference asks for an unfavorable report on **SB 532**.

Thank you for your consideration.

UNFAVORABLE.SB532.HB1076.LauraBogley.MDRTL.pdf

Uploaded by: Laura Bogley

Position: UNF



UNFAVORABLE

SB532/HB1076 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 psychological harm. 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.