

HB1468_RichardKaplowitz_FAV

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TESTIMONY ON HB#1468- POSITION: FAVORABLE

Hospitals - Patients in Active Labor - Safe Discharge Labor Plans

TO: Chair Bagnall, Vice Chair Cullison, and members of the Health Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#1468, **Hospitals - Patients in Active Labor - Safe Discharge Labor Plans**

The Populations Reference Bureau has found *Abortion Bans Linked to Sharp Rise in Sepsis, Infant Death, and Pregnancy-Associated Death, New Research Shows - In the wake of Roe's overturn, states with abortion bans have seen 478 excess infant deaths and 59 excess deaths during or after pregnancy.*¹

Hospital systems in states with strict abortion bans have faced significant challenges in providing safe, standard-of-care, and, in some cases, legally compliant discharge plans for patients experiencing pregnancy emergencies. Investigations by federal officials have revealed instances where patients with severe complications were sent home, sometimes with instructions to return only when their condition worsened, resulting in cases of sepsis, hemorrhaging, and the need for emergency, high-risk, and, in some cases, fatal care.²

Maryland believes that abortion IS health care and the care of anyone in labor must always meet all guidelines for proper care. This bill will ensure that Maryland states its policies will not permit the disregard of a woman's healthcare needs while in labor.

Maternal mortality in Maryland shows a rate of 21.3 deaths per 100,000 live births (2018–2022), with significant disparities, as Black women are over 3 times more likely to die from pregnancy-related causes than White women. The state's rate is higher than the Healthy People 2030 target of 15.7, with behavioral health conditions/substance use being a leading cause of pregnancy-associated deaths. Every step Maryland can take to reduce this rate must occur.³

This bill will require a hospital to prepare a safe discharge labor plan before discharging or transferring a patient in active labor, subject to a certain exception; require a hospital to maintain records of safe discharge labor plans for at least 21 years; require a hospital to conspicuously post copies of the rights of a patient in active labor; and require a hospital to provide certain annual training to certain staff members.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB#1468.

¹ <https://www.prb.org/news/abortion-bans-linked-to-sharp-rise-in-sepsis-infant-death-and-maternal-mortality-new-research-shows/>

² Google AI Search "Failure of hospitals in anti abortion states to have a safe discharge labor plan"

³ Google AI Search "maternal death rates in maryland"