

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND
WOMEN'S DEMOCRATIC CLUB

P.O. Box 34047, Bethesda, MD 20827

www.womensdemocraticclub.org

House Bill 1159 Public Health and Health Insurance - Access to Abortion Care - Reporting Requirements

**Health Committee – March 12, 2026
SUPPORT**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the **Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club (WDC)** in support of **HB 1159 – Public Health and Health Insurance – Access to Abortion Care – Reporting Requirements**. We are one of Maryland's most active Democratic clubs, representing hundreds of engaged members, including elected officials and community leaders. Expanding equitable access to reproductive health care is a core priority of our organization.

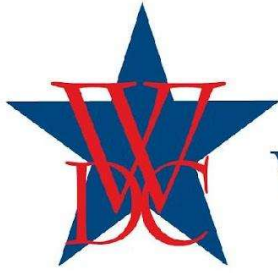
Maryland has become a critical access point for abortion care in the post-Dobbs landscape. In 2024, more than 40,000 abortions were provided in Marylandⁱ, a significant increase from prior years as patients from both within and outside the state sought care. Yet access remains uneven. According to the Maryland Department of Health 2024 Abortion Care Clinical Training Program report, nearly all responding clinical sites were concentrated in Central and Capital regions, with very limited presence in Western and Eastern Maryland. The report further found that Maryland “lacks diversity in profession type and geographic location of abortion providers compared to the general population of Marylandⁱⁱ.”

The state created the Abortion Care Clinical Training Program through the Abortion Care Access Act specifically “to protect access to abortion care by ensuring that there are a sufficient number of health professionals to provide abortion care.” That goal is sound. **But good policy requires good data.**

HB1159's expanded reporting requirements will help illuminate how and where abortion care is accessed across Maryland, including identifying disparities in geographic access, insurance coverage, and care utilization. Without this transparency, lawmakers and public health officials are navigating blindly. Enhanced reporting will yield data that legislators, health care providers, and advocates can use to identify gaps in service delivery and develop targeted solutions.

By requiring the Maryland Insurance Commissioner to report on health plan practices and segregated accounts related to reproductive care coverage, HB1159 will help ensure that insurance practices align with state policy goals to expand access to essential health services. This reporting requirement will shed light on how private insurance practices affect access to critical reproductive health services and ensure greater accountability.

HB 1159 equips lawmakers with the evidence needed to craft policies that protect equitable access to reproductive health care and remove systemic obstacles to care for all Marylanders. It also provides a structured path for evidence-based policy refinement year after year.



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WDC believes that access to safe, legal, and affordable abortion care, delivered by trained professionals, is fundamental to gender equity, economic security, and public health. HB 1159 strengthens Maryland's ability to measure, evaluate, and improve access for all communities.

We ask for your support for HB 1159 and strongly urge a favorable Committee report.

Cynthia Rubenstein
WDC President

Minal Amin
WDC The Basics Subcommittee

Kate Stein
WDC Advocacy Chair

ⁱ Guttmacher Institute (<https://www.guttmacher.org/monthly-abortion-provision-study#the-estimates>)

ⁱⁱ https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/mch/Documents/Abortion%20care%20Access/HG%2013-4707_MDH_Abortion%20Care%20Clinical%20Training%20Program%202024%20Report.pdf