
Planned Parenthood of Maryland

Committee: Health Committee

Bill: House Bill 49 - Public Health - Abortion

Hearing: March 19, 2026

Position: Unfavorable

Planned Parenthood of Maryland opposes *House Bill 49 - Public Health - Abortion*. The bill is a reintroduction of last year's HB 108 with no substantive changes. The bill prohibits abortion after a "fetal heartbeat" is detected, and it is enforced through a private right of action.

This legislation is dangerous and extreme. The bill is modeled after SB 8 from Texas; the legislation would essentially ban abortion after 6 weeks of pregnancy. The law would be enforced through intimidation by allowing any individual to file civil action against anyone who "knowingly engages in conduct that aids or abets the performance or inducement of an abortion." This provision puts health care providers, friends and family of the patient, and any person, including a ride sharing driver, at risk for supporting an individual seeking abortion care. In 2023, the Maryland General Assembly took action to protect against this very sort of intimidation from out-of-state actors with the passage of shielding legislation. Additionally, in 2024, more than 75% of Maryland voters affirmed their belief that abortion should be protected in the state constitution. This act would flagrantly violate the will of the overwhelming majority of Marylanders.

We've seen what happens to pregnant people when this type of legislation becomes law. In Texas, the impact has been severe. People who are unable to travel to other states are forced to carry unwanted or dangerous pregnancies to term – or have sought care outside of the legal health system – while their support networks are fearful of serious reprisals for helping their loved ones. According to research from The University of Texas, "Among those most affected will be minors who cannot involve a parent in their care, immigrant families who fear encounters with police and border enforcement, parents who have limited childcare options, and people living in poverty. In Texas, those with lower incomes are disproportionately Black, Latinx, and other people of color."¹

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

¹ <https://liberalarts.utexas.edu/txpep/news/initial-impacts-of-texas-senate-bill-8-on-abortions-in-texas-and-at-out-of-state-facilities-research-brief>