

Committee: House Judiciary and Health Committees

Bill number: House Bill 885 - Criminal Law - Causing Ingestion of an Abortion-Inducing Drug - Prohibition (Women's Freedom From Coercion Act)

Hearing Date: February 17, 2026

Position: Oppose

Planned Parenthood of Maryland (PPM) opposes *Criminal Law - Causing Ingestion of an Abortion-Inducing Drug - Prohibition (Women's Freedom From Coercion Act)*. The bill would make criminal the act of forcing someone to ingest an “abortion-inducing drug” without consent or knowledge or through coercion, fraud, force, or threat of force.

Make no mistake - there is nothing more important than an individual’s right to control their body and future through making decisions relating to their health with full consent and information. That is why, in PPM’s daily operational practice, providers are certain to inform patients about all of their options, and make sure that they visit us on their own, **and only their own**, accord and without coercion or force. Patient safety has always been, and continues to be, our number one priority.

While PPM obviously supports consent in every area of one’s life, especially the right to advocate for the care they need, we have concerns about the possible interpretation of this law. Because this bill specifically calls out abortion medication, PPM is concerned that this legislation serves as an attempt to limit access to legally protected health care. Furthermore, given that drugging an individual without consent is already punishable under Maryland law, we fear this distinction unnecessarily targets reproductive health care providers who could face criminal ramifications for simply providing **legal, consensual, and informed care**.

In today’s political climate, abortion is misrepresented by politicians and media alike, which is inherently harmful for those seeking and providing this crucial health care service. The notion that the majority of people are ‘forced’ into an abortion, pushed by anti-abortion organizations like Heartbeat International, is an outdated scare tactic that aligns abortion with danger and violence and perpetuates an antiquated stigma about this type of health care.

We ask for an unfavorable report. Of course, Marylanders should be able to make medical decisions about abortion without fear and intimidation – but this bill is focused on abortion stigma and fear rather than protecting vulnerable Marylanders. If we can provide any additional information, please contact Vice President of Public Affairs, Erin Bradley, at erin.bradley@ppm.care.