



**Testimony for the House Health and Government Operations
Committee**

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HB 1227 – Abortion – Ultrasound Requirement

JOSEPH SPIELBERGER
PUBLIC POLICY COUNSEL

The ACLU of Maryland opposes HB 1227, which would require a woman to receive an ultrasound before providing informed consent to have an abortion.

AMERICAN CIVIL
LIBERTIES UNION
FOUNDATION OF
MARYLAND

Medical procedures already require informed consent.

A woman must give her informed consent before undergoing any surgical procedure, including abortion. The standards of the medical profession ensure that health care practitioners provide women with accurate and unbiased information regarding the risks and benefits of various treatment options, and obtain their informed consent. HB 1227 improperly singles out abortion from every other medical procedure. Implicit in the requirement of this consent procedure is the assumption that women do not adequately think through their abortion decision, and a lack of respect for women's decision-making. In fact, virtually all women have carefully considered their decision to have an abortion by the time they arrive at the clinic. Clinics routinely refer for additional counseling the small number of women who are undecided.

MAIN OFFICE
& MAILING ADDRESS
3600 CLIPPER MILL ROAD
SUITE 350
BALTIMORE, MD 21211
T/410-889-8555
or 240-274-5295
F/410-366-7838

FIELD OFFICE
6930 CARROLL AVENUE
SUITE 610
TAKOMA PARK, MD 20912
T/240-274-5295

WWW.ACLU-MD.ORG

**Requiring an ultrasound undermines a physician's professional
discretion to determine the patient's best interests.**

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HB 1227 intrudes into the practice of medicine and the patient-doctor relationship to politicize that relationship with respect to a single aspect of medical care. We support principles that maintain good health practices, women's autonomy, and strong, healthy families. Every woman must have the best, medically accurate information so that she can make the right decision for her and her circumstances, without undue pressure.

For the foregoing reasons, the ACLU of Maryland urges an unfavorable report on HB 1227.