

Informational Statement – SB882/HB1053

Operating Budget for Education

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On behalf of our members across the state, we urge the members of the Maryland General Assembly to protect Maryland school children from being preyed upon by the abortion industry. We will make every effort to prevent Planned Parenthood and other abortion businesses from setting up shop in our children's schools.

While the Supreme Court through an extreme act of judicial activism overturned Maryland's criminal ban on abortion and created a federal right to abortion, there is no legal right for abortion organizations to operate on public property or to be compensated through public funding.

The Maryland State Department of Education is entrusted by parents and the state with the education of Maryland children. The state has taken it upon themselves to provide Reproductive Health curriculum and services. The state has contracted those responsibilities out to third parties, including to Planned Parenthood and other organizations and health providers that advocate for abortion and provide abortion counseling and referral. These services are being offered without parental knowledge or consent. Each year the Maryland Department of Health and the Maryland State Department of Education force taxpayers to subsidize the abortion industry not only through Medicaid reimbursements and Family Planning Program fungibility, but also through grants and contracts awards. In 2020 MDH gave Planned Parenthood nearly \$80,000.00 in Covid relief grant monies. The Maryland State Department of Education has failed in their duty to parents and students to ensure that contractors are providing medically accurate and age appropriate health education and services.

There is bi-partisan unity on prohibiting the use of taxpayer funding for abortion. State funding for abortion on demand is in direct conflict with the will of the people. In fact, 58% percent of those surveyed say they oppose taxpayer funding of abortion, including 31% of Democrats, 83% of Republicans, and 65% of independents. 80% of Americans polled favor laws that protect both the lives of women and unborn children.

Funding restrictions are constitutional - The Supreme Court has held that the alleged constitutional "right" to an abortion "*implies no limitation on the authority of a State to make a value judgment favoring childbirth over abortion, and to implement that judgment by the allocation of public funds.*" When a challenge to the constitutionality of the Hyde Amendment reached the Supreme Court in 1980 in the case of *Harris v. McRae*, the Court ruled that the government may distinguish between abortion and other procedures in funding decisions -- noting that "*no other procedure involves the purposeful termination of a potential life*" -- and affirmed that *Roe v. Wade* had created a limitation on government, not a government funding entitlement.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge you to vote against the expansion and funding of any NARAL or Planned Parenthood or affiliated organization endorsed programs or policies in Maryland schools. Thank you.