



HB0549 - Maryland Department of Health – Birth Registration – Gestational Carriers
Presented to the Hon. Shane Pendergrass and
Members of the House Health & Government Operations Committee
February 9, 2021 1:30 p.m.

POSITION: SUPPORT

NARAL Pro-Choice Maryland urges the House Health and Government Operations Committee to issue a **favorable report on HB0549 -Maryland Department of Health – Birth Registration – Gestational Carriers**, sponsored by Delegate Joseline Pena-Melnyk.

Our organization is an advocate for reproductive health, rights, and justice. We honor pregnancy in all its complexity. We support the use of reproductive technology in all its forms, and we have deep respect for the individuals who help others achieve their desired family. Just as we fully expect and support surrogates to be financially compensated for carrying a pregnancy, our organization wants to make sure that those looking to add to their families are protected in their right to parentage.

HB0549 aims to create more uniformity, documentation, and security for those who are starting or adding to their families with the help of a gestational surrogate. Individuals who enter into an agreement with a gestational carrier fully expect to become parents, but many carry concerns that their legal right to parenthood may be challenged or questioned in the case that the gestational carrier changes her mind once the baby is born. HB0549 puts more protections in place for those individuals by ensuring that, immediately upon the birth, the Vital Records department has documentation from a court of the gestational carrier as well as the intended parents. Such documentation limits the possibility for confusion and controversy surrounding parentage.

All people are deserving of the right to determine if, when, and how they form their families, and this includes those who have experienced issues with infertility. For these reasons, NARAL Pro-Choice Maryland **urges a favorable committee report on HB0549**. Thank you for your time and consideration.