

Dear Members of the Senate Finance Committee,

Please SUPPORT SB 0862, Protecting Pregnant Women Against Coercive Abuse and Human Trafficking, in your hearing on Wednesday, March 13, 2024.

The bill will give many protections to pregnant women who choose to carry a child to term. It will prohibit coercion to not only have an abortion against their will, but will prohibit persuasions from other people or groups to have an abortion, such as withholding academic scholarships which have already been awarded to them, changing wages or terms of their current employment, etc.

Other important issues relate to sex trafficking, such as forcing a pregnant woman into sex trafficking, or selling a woman to another individual who intends to traffic her, etc. if she declines to have an abortion.

Any laws that we can pass to protect women who DO NOT want an abortion, but find themselves coerced in some way, should be seriously considered. If the referendum on the ballot this fall does pass and enshrines more lenient abortion laws into a constitutional amendment, laws protecting pregnant women who want to carry their child full term are crucial. There will be much more pressure on women to have abortions if all restrictions are removed in the amendment.

Even if the consensus among your committee members is not to support this bill for the average pregnant women, please consider sex trafficking, which proliferates in Maryland, as in all other states. Any support we can give to trafficking victims is common sense and morally right.

Please carefully read and consider all the protections in SB 0862, and give it a **FAVORABLE** report.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Very truly yours,

Linda R. Bradley
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