



HB0364 - Health Care Practitioners - Medical Examinations on Anesthetized or Unconscious Patients

Presented to the Hon. Shane E. Pendergrass and members of the House Health and Government
Operations Committee.

February 12, 2019 1:00 p.m.

POSITION: SUPPORT

NARAL Pro-Choice Maryland **urges the House Health and Government Operations Committee a favorable report on HB0364** - Health Care Practitioners - Medical Examinations on Anesthetized or Unconscious Patients, sponsored by Delegate Heather Bagnall. A patient's bodily autonomy is essential to their reproductive freedom.

Our organization is an advocate for reproductive health, rights, and justice. As part of our efforts to protect and expand reproductive freedoms to all Marylanders, we support individuals being able to make their own choices when it comes to how they receive healthcare. A patient under anaesthesia is unaware of what is going on around them and cannot actively consent to in-the-moment examinations for training purposes. HB0364 prohibits healthcare practitioners, as well as students in the healthcare and medical fields, from practicing more intrusive bodily examinations, such as pelvic, prostrate, or rectal, without prior written consent. By requiring informed consent to be obtained, the patient is given full autonomy to make the healthcare decision with which they feel most comfortable. It is essential that practitioners uphold the rights of their patients and ensure the best, most effective care strategies are being utilized. Practices which promote a patient's sense of safety are vital in encouraging more individuals to seek healthcare. In our communications with Maryland's two university medical schools, we feel confident that consent protocols will be in compliance with this legislation

HB0364 will help promote patient-centered care for all Marylanders. Given the sensitive nature of sexual and reproductive healthcare, personal boundaries and consent are essential when patients seek such care. For these reasons, **NARAL Pro-Choice Maryland urges a favorable report on HB0364**. Thank you for your time and consideration.