



**HB1193 Health – Abortion – Facility Requirements**  
Presented to the Hon. Shane E. Pendergrass and  
Members of the House Health & Government Operations Committee  
March 8, 2019, 1:00 p.m.

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POSITION: OPPOSE

NARAL Pro-Choice Maryland **urges the House Health & Government Operations Committee an unfavorable report on HB1193**, Health – Abortion – Facility Requirements, sponsored by Delegate Daniel Cox.

Our organization is an advocate for reproductive health, rights, and justice. We strive to ensure every individual has the freedom to decide if, when, and how to form one's family, and when parenting, to do so in safety, in good health, and in dignity. We recognize that each pregnancy is unique and honor pregnancy in all its complexity. Abortion access is an essential part of the ability to make reproductive healthcare decisions and a basic human right affirmed by the *Roe v. Wade* ruling in 1973 which was also codified in our state by a 1992 ballot referendum. In the years following the *Roe* decision, many states passed legislation imposing regulations on abortion clinics past what is necessary for patient safety. As lower courts began to strike some of these policies down in the 1980s, politicians moved away from this tactic. However, in the last several years, state governments have reignited this effort to regulate clinics.<sup>1</sup>

The purpose of this bill is to restrict abortion access, and it does so under the guise of protecting women's health. Anti-choice politicians claim pseudo-scientific reasons for the necessity of certain regulations, like ensuring that all facilities in which abortions are performed meet the standards for an ambulatory surgical center. In reality, these surgical centers usually provide more invasive procedures with higher levels of sedation than what is used for surgical abortion. These standards extend beyond what is necessary for the safety of abortion patients, even in the event of an emergency.

If clinics and medical practices are unable to comply with these new, stricter standards, they will be forced to close. HB1193 places an unnecessary burden on abortion providers, and, in doing so, on patients. When clinics close, the most vulnerable individuals in our communities are affected. Fewer clinics means lower access. Wealthy women will always be able to afford abortion care, but if clinics close, low-income women may not be able to travel to the next-closest clinic. The cost of travel can include transportation, childcare, and missing work. As it is now, there are not enough clinics in Maryland to serve the number of patients who would benefit from accessing care in their local communities.

We believe that mandating facilities where abortions are performed to meet ambulatory surgical standards is an attack on abortion access under the guise of protecting women's health. For these reasons, **NARAL Pro-Choice Maryland urges an unfavorable report on HB1193**. Thank you for your time and consideration.

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<sup>1</sup> Targeted Regulation of Abortion Providers. (2019, March 04). Retrieved from <https://www.guttmacher.org/state-policy/explore/targeted-regulation-abortion-providers>