



SB0918 Human Services- Trauma- Informed Care- Commission and Training
Presented to the Honorable Delores Kelley and Members of the Senate Finance Committee
March 6, 2020 12:00 p.m.

POSITION: SUPPORT

NARAL Pro-Choice Maryland urges Finance Committee to issue **a favorable report on SB0918 Human Services-Trauma-Informed Care- Commission and Training**, sponsored by Senator Jill Carter.

Our organization is an advocate for reproductive health, rights, and justice, which includes the health and safety of children, youth, and families by protecting their bodily integrity. In doing so, we support establishing the Commission on Trauma-Informed Care in order for staff members in state agencies to identify best practices and policies to better address physical, emotional, and sexual violence experienced by all Marylanders.

According to the Rape Abuse Incest National Network (RAINN), 1 in 9 girls and 1 in 53 boys experience sexual abuse and/or sexual assault under the age of 18 at the hands of an adult. Approximately 93% of children who are survivors of sexual abuse know their perpetrator. ¹ The Children's Mental Health Matters: A Maryland Public Awareness Campaign states 1 in 5 children and adolescents may suffer with a mental illness, in which experiencing abuse may contribute to their mental health issue. ² Maryland does not require mandatory reporting laws for domestic violence or sexual assault, unless there is a case of child abuse, vulnerable adult abuse, or a healthcare provider treated injury.³

SB0918 requires the creation of the Trauma-Informed Care Commission so that actors among our various state agencies will have opportunities to increase their knowledge about issues that violate the reproductive freedom of children and youth. We believe that mandating a trauma-informed care training for those in the department will protect more Marylanders from experiencing physical, emotional, and sexual violence, and assist more survivors with establishing and maintaining safety while in the healing process.

In addition to supporting the creation of this body, we also strongly recommend that the commission include required training modules that are centered in the spirit of reproductive justice, so that all survivors of trauma have access to timely and appropriate sexual and reproductive healthcare and services, and that each child-bearing individual has the right to choose if, when, and how to form their families, and when choosing to parent – no matter the age of the survivor – to do in good health, in safety and with dignity. For these reasons, NARAL Pro-Choice Maryland **urges a favorable committee report on SB0918**. Thank you for your time and consideration.

¹ "Children and Teens: Statistics." (2020) RAINN. <https://www.rainn.org/statistics/children-and-teens>

² "Parents & Families." (2019) *Children's Mental Health Matters: A Maryland Public Awareness Campaign*. <https://www.childrensmentalhealthmatters.org/find-help/parents-families/>

³ "Family and Community Health." (2020) *Maryland Department of Health*. https://phpa.health.maryland.gov/mch/Pages/IPV_Reporting.aspx
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