



## **HB1372/SB0965 - Blueprint for Maryland's Future - Revisions**

Presented to the Honorable Anne Kaiser and Members of the House Ways and Means Committee,  
The Honorable Maggie MacIntosh and Members of the House Appropriations Committee,  
The Honorable Paul Pinsky and Members of the Senate Education, Health & Environmental Affairs Committee  
The Honorable Guy Guzzone and Members of the Senate Budget & Taxation Committee  
March 15, 2020

---

### **POSITION: SUPPORT**

NARAL Pro-Choice Maryland urges **favorable reports on HB1372/SB0965 - Blueprint for Maryland's Future – Revisions**. Our organization is an advocate for reproductive health, rights, and justice. We strive to ensure every individual has the freedom to decide to if, when, and how to form their families, and when parenting, to do so in good health, in safety, and in dignity. We all know that a solid education brings opportunities of economic security and realize goals in building one's family. Every Maryland public student has the right to the same rigorous education as their peers. However, there have been too many disparities in the educational outcomes among our youth, and it now time for our state to make the long-term and deep investment to address the many challenges we face with our school systems.

We support the immediate implementation of the Blueprint, prioritizing that funding go more quickly to low wealth school districts, as well as programs that relate directly to recovery from the coronavirus pandemic and the inequities that it exacerbated. We appreciate that among the factors recognized in the Blueprint are aspects relating to inequity, which includes gender, as discrimination and stereotypes regarding one's gender can affect perceptions about a student's capabilities or career goals. Again, it should be made clear that at-promise or at-risk students should include those that identify as LGBTQ+, as well as pregnant and parenting students. It will not be enough to simply offer some wrap-around services to help address the challenges that many students may face in their families or communities, but also in poor school climates where discrimination or harassment significantly affect school attendance and class participation. We look forward to the investments that will be made with goals toward benefitting all students, particularly those in concentrated areas of poverty, by hiring more highly qualified and diverse educators, and compensating them what they are worth. Our hope is that the accountability and implementation strategies identified in the Blueprint will help reduce ways that schools discriminate by choosing to invest resources for some students, but not all, and raise awareness of the intersectionality of discrimination that occurs among youth with multiple identities. We are also appreciative of the investment made in school-based health clinics that have become important to students who otherwise would find difficulty in addressing physical and mental health concerns, and engaging in preventative care during their adolescent years. Our movement remains hopeful that assessment and implementation activities will see what we see – the lack of certified health education instructors teaching in Maryland schools is preventing youth from receiving vital evidenced-based curriculum to make inform decisions related to sexual and reproductive health and rights.

For these reasons and much more, NARAL Pro-Choice Maryland **urges favorable reports on HB1372/SB0965**. Thank you for your time and consideration.