


F R O M	Name & Title	Mary Beth Haller, Acting Commissioner	Health Department AGENCY REPORT	
	Agency Name & Address	Health Department 1001 E. Fayette Street Baltimore, Maryland 21202		
	Subject/ Position	23-0185R – Reproductive Options for Everyone FAVORABLE		

To: President and Members
of the City Council
c/o 409 City Hall

September 25, 2023

The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) is pleased to have the opportunity to review Council Bill 23-0185R, entitled “Reproductive Options for Everyone.” This encourages City government entities to refrain from using City funds to store, catalogue, provide, monitor, or collect certain information that could be used to retaliate against an individual seeking abortion care, unless otherwise required by Maryland or federal law.

Although BCHD does not provide abortion services, the agency recognizes that every individual has the fundamental right to reproductive freedom without government interference. Reproductive health care is an essential part of health and well-being. All residents need access to comprehensive health care, including abortion, reproductive health counseling, birth control, prenatal care, safe childbirth, childbirth spacing, and parenting support. Each service needs to be available, affordable, and accessible so people can make choices that preserve health.

Council Bill 23-0185R would affirm the City’s position as being in agreement with the state regarding the right to safe abortion care. With the enactment of several state laws in 2023, Maryland not only affirmed the right for its residents to obtain abortion care, but also protected those from other states who come here to seek abortions. SB 786/H 812 – Health – Reproductive Health Services – Protected Information and Insurance Requirements prohibits clinical information about patients who have obtained legally protected health care in Maryland – including abortion – from being shared out of state by the State-designated exchange, unless otherwise request by the patient. This means that someone can obtain an abortion in Maryland without fear that their medical records will be shared outside of Maryland. Additionally, companion bill SB 859/HB 808 – Health – Reproductive Health Protection Act prohibits people from being required to testify or produce evidence in another state about health care that they received legally in Maryland, even if that health care is illegal in the state where the testimony would be requested. The bill also protects health care professionals from being prosecuted for performing care that is legal in the state in which they provided it.

For the reasons noted above, BCHD requests a favorable position on Council Bill 23-0185R.