



On the Beat

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Rockville, MD

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AUGUST 2023

Abortion Amendment: MD Voters Decide in 2024 General Election

In the 2023 Maryland legislative session, pro-abortion legislators succeeded in passing HB705/SB798. This bill would create a fundamental right to abortion in the Maryland State Constitution. The law will implement a ballot question in the November 2024 General Election, asking voters by simple majority to amend the state constitution.

The measure would add the following text as a new article to the Declaration of Rights in the state constitution:

Article 48

"That every person, as a central component of an individual's rights to liberty and equality, has the fundamental right to reproductive freedom, including but not limited to the ability to make and effectuate decisions to prevent, continue, or end one's own pregnancy. The State may not, directly or indirectly, deny, burden, or abridge the right unless justified by a compelling State interest achieved by the least restrictive means."

How does this change things in Maryland? Currently, abortion is legal in Maryland throughout all nine months of pregnancy. Even viable unborn babies are unprotected because decisions lie in the hands of the abortionist to assess the physical and mental burden on the mother. In the case of minors, parental rights are easily bypassed as the ultimate judgment to the patient's maturity to choose an abortion is decided by the abortionist. Maryland law always benefits the abortionist.

The amendment would prohibit any legislation restricting abortion such as: measures to protect the health of the mother; late-term abortion; partial birth abortion; fetal pain; heart beat limitations; parental rights. The wording of the article is very concerning. It is speculated that the amendment would allow: increased public funding of abortion; hamper pro-life free speech and sidewalk counseling; deny medical providers their conscience rights; threaten life affirming services provided by pro-life pregnancy centers.

It is important to note that while the term "reproductive freedom" is not defined in Maryland law, the bill sponsors say it would include new rights broader than abortion rights. Some of these rights may include commercial uses of human embryos, and transgender rights including the use of puberty blocking drugs and surgical mutilation of genitalia-even among children.

In summary, this newly created right to reproductive freedom would abolish the rights of the defenseless baby in the womb. The diabolical forces have control of our laws, but they want more. They want to steal all hope. How do we respond? What will be our plan of action? Maryland has long had a strong pro-life core. All need to unite with that core community to raise awareness and get out the vote to oppose this deadly amendment. Pray, Fast, Act! Right to Life of Montgomery County pledges to assist in these efforts.



"What about my rights?" 12 week baby

Maryland Legislative Action 2023

MD legislators enacted several bills that will expand abortion access on college campuses, and shield abortionists from criminal investigations in violation of out of state restrictions.

Pro-abortion legislators enacted HB477/SB341 which requires Maryland public colleges and universities to make a “reproductive health service plan “for students, which includes offering abortion, or establishing a network of local abortion providers to refer students to for abortions. Sadly, there are no provisions in this law to offer services to students who choose life, like providing prenatal care services.

A package of abortion shield bills (HB808/SB859 and HB812/SB786) were also enacted. Governor Wes Moore signed the new laws that prohibit Maryland entities from assisting in abortion-related investigations and court proceedings that originate in other states, shielding abortionists from out of state restrictions. The laws prevent interstate cooperation in criminal investigations such as human trafficking.

Despite this difficult legislative session, Maryland Right to Life has been a strong pro-life asset in Annapolis. They review and analyze many pieces of legislation. They lobby, testify and promote legislation. To stay informed visit their website at MDRTL.org and sign up for the Take Action Alerts.

Assisted Suicide Bill Fails to Advance

The End of Life Option Act (HB933/SB845) failed to advance in the legislature this 2023 session despite the well-funded efforts of Compassion&Choices (formerly the Hemlock Society). The Dignity Mandate, a Maryland grassroots advocacy group opposing assisted suicide, and MDRTL were successful in suppressing the bill.

On a positive note, MD legislators passed HB271/SB3, legislation that appropriated \$12 million to 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. This appropriation will help maintain the universal phone number for a national suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline. This positive action received unanimous support.

It is important for legislators to know that legalization of assisted suicide may increase overall suicide rates. Their concern to prevent suicide should seriously consider this connection. Exploring this concern in detail is important but a quick look at suicide rates in states where assisted suicide is legal may give insight. For example, Oregon’s suicide among adults, excluding physician assisted procedures, rose 49% from 1999-2010, a rate over 20% higher than the national rise of 28%.*

Point this out to your legislators in the coming session.

*Maryland Against Physician Assisted Suicide



Maryland March for Life 2023

On February 27, 2023 thousands of pro-lifers marched to the statehouse in Annapolis to call on lawmakers to respect life from conception to natural death. The cold, rainy weather did not deter them from congregating in Lawyers Mall as legislators peered from their office windows.

Encouraging words were spoken by the keynote speaker Gloria Purvis. She focused on the issue of race and the misconception that black women need abortion as a matter of equality and empowerment.

“The answer to equality is not to remove the pre-born child from the difficult situation,” Purvis said to cheers and applause. “It’s to remove the difficult situation.” At the conclusion of her keynote address, Purvis urged pro-life supporters not to “get down on these women who are single, who are poor, who have chosen life.”

“They are the ones heeding the pro-life message because they are choosing life even in difficult circumstances,” she said, asserting that women need to be accompanied and supported throughout their pregnancies. “They are heroes.”

She noted how her personal life was impacted by abortion. When Purvis became pregnant as an older mother, her doctor urged her to consider an abortion since there was a concern her child would be deformed. Purvis and her husband insisted on bringing the child to term.

“Even after all that, it was like running the gauntlet to get to delivery,” Purvis remembered. “When I went to have my ultrasounds, it was always about termination.” Pausing, Purvis added that there was “one other thing” she wanted to say.

“Maybe I do it better by showing,” she said, calling forward her daughter, Lourdes. “I want you to see what this doctor tried to deprive me of. She’s healthy. She’s beautiful. And she’s a child of God. And, Maryland, this is why we march.

Talented Pro-Life Advocate Takes the Challenge

Montgomery County is privileged to have the Students for Life's Capital Area Regional Coordinator living here in Bethesda. For the past year, Shaohannah Tavares (Faith) has been working steadily with college students in the DMV and with county residents. Shaohannah was born in China, adopted, and grew up in Montevideo, Minnesota. At a young age, after hearing a post abortive pro-life activist speak at her church, Shaohannah realized the seriousness of abortion and the harm the abortion industry inflicts on women and children. During and after college, Shaohannah volunteered and worked on numerous political campaigns for pro-life candidates and served in public policy roles at the Maryland General Assembly. There, she felt the call and desire to become more involved in the pro-life movement and use her abilities to help end abortion. This decision started her involvement with Students for Life of America. Besides planning mobilizations like the upcoming Protect Your Kids from Planned Parenthood rally (September 30), her work includes speaking to many local groups of the pro-life movement in Maryland and DC. She spoke to almost 60 groups at churches and schools last year on various topics, from pro-life apologetics, IVF/surrogacy ethics, Planned Parenthood's abortion business, how to embrace the controversy of activism, and how the overpopulation myth/one child policy impacted her life and adoption story. **To get more information on how to start a Students for Life group, or to book Shaohannah as a speaker, she can be reached at stavares@studentsforlife.org.**

More on Shaohannah's amazing life story*

Shaohannah Faith is grateful to be alive. Born under China's oppressive One Child Policy, she was abandoned as an infant in a box in the Guangxi region in southern China. Later, as a toddler, a loving Minnesota woman adopted her and brought her to the United States.

Many other babies, especially girls, suffered worse fates, dying by forced late-term abortions or infanticide, the knowledge of which makes Shaohannah even more thankful for her own life.

"I knew about China's one-child policy for pretty much as long as I can remember," she recalled. "The pressure that they put on people to have only one child, and especially in a male-driven society, to have a boy. I knew that I was one of the many girls who was abandoned and basically left to die because of the policy."

Today, as a young adult, Shaohannah is a pro-life advocate who works to save other babies from similar fates. As the Washington, D.C.-area regional coordinator for Students for Life of America, she speaks with college students and lawmakers about the value of every human life.

"I love that I get to do something that I'm passionate about," she told the newspaper. "I'm very blessed in that I have a wonderful team, and it's a team of people who come from different backgrounds ... but we can all unite around this fact that abortion ends human life, and we're going to work to see abortion become unthinkable in our lifetime."

Shaohannah said she is not angry at her birth parents because she realizes how terrible the One Child Policy was.

"It's about this culture of death. They've created this devaluing of life in the womb, and we have that here as well. It's not something new," she said. "To me, that's why part of this fight for preborn lives matters so much, because it's taking a stand against ... desensitization and dehumanizing."

Under the Chinese Communist Party mandate, which ended in 2016, most families were only allowed to have one child. Human rights advocates reported numerous forced and coerced sterilizations and abortions including up to the ninth month of pregnancy, and a report from the Chinese Health Ministry estimated 336 million abortions under the policy since 1980.

Shaohannah commented: "I understand that in a country like China, there is a lot of pressure from the government. The choices that they may have had to make might not have been the choices they would have wanted for me. But I'm very grateful for the fact that they chose an option where I was able to be rescued, and live."

She said she feels thankful that her birth mother gave her the gift of life, and she wants to help others do the same for their babies.

"A message that I want to convey is that life is a gift," Shaohannah said. "It's a gift that I've been given that I'm allowed to continue fighting for, and see it cherished more than it was when I was born. *The Epoch Times & LifeNews March 2023





Honk for Life!

On Saturday, April 29, I drove to the Potomac Family Planning Center abortuary at 966 Hungerford Dr. in Rockville and entered at the south end of the office complex, got my crucifix out of the car and walked a short distance to the sidewalk in front of the abortuary. I chatted with a couple of counselors and then started to pray the rosary walking toward the north entrance. I pray one decade as I walk between the two entrances. After completing the third decade I saw a family of geese strolling in the parking lot heading toward the south entrance. We didn't know they were on a mission. When the geese family of 8 got to the south end they paused at the entrance. Just then a car with tinted windows came roaring in, the kind with people that don't want to hear anything from counselors but just want to get straight to the abortion facility. They saw the geese family and stopped and watched them for quite a while. I stood there with my crucifix wondering how long they would watch the geese. When they finished watching the geese instead of heading to the abortuary in the back of the complex, the car drove straight toward the north exit and parked midway between the exits very close to where all the praying pro-lifers walk by. Three decades later the car headed out of the north exit and onto the highway. As they left, I raised my crucifix and blew a kiss at the car as if to say, "Thank you for not aborting your baby." The car drove south, made a U-turn and drove back toward the north. As it went by the driver rolled down the window and gave us a big wave. We all rejoiced at how someone in heaven sent the geese family to meet the car as it drove in to save a baby from abortion.

John Naughton is an RTL board member and long-time pro-life activist in Montgomery County, MD, and can regularly be found at the Potomac Family Planning Center owned by Earl McCleod. This incident took place at that particular abortuary.

Montgomery County Fair August 11th-19th

The County Fair is RTL's biggest outreach event. The booth is a beautiful tribute to the unborn child. The display provides fairgoers the opportunity to see and touch models of the developing child. Free pro-life literature is available providing information on abortion and other life issues. Stop by and visit!

If you would like to volunteer contact Tharpa Roberts at:
RTL-OMC@SNKMAIL.COM or 301-962-5611.

Save the Date!

Students for Life Presents:

Protect our Kids from Planned Parenthood Rally

Date: Saturday, September 30, 2023

Time: 11:00 AM

Purpose: Defund Planned Parenthood, raise awareness of how Planned Parenthood is hurting women and children (born & pre-born) through abortion, wrong sex hormones, sex ed, etc.

Location: TBD; to sign up for more information, email Shaohannah at stavares@studentsforlife.org or call/test at 540-656-3027



Thank you for your donations and supporting our fundraisers. We are committed to being a voice for the unborn.

Contact us 301-770-LIFE
RTLMOCOMD@gmail.com