



Celebrating 50 Years of Advancing Justice

“...This bill is about a woman’s right to choose what we do with our body, when and where.”

- Health and Government Operations Chair, Joseline Pena-Melnyk

Dear Jessica,

Things are moving really quickly and so we once again have a list of asks of you. But this is a good thing! It means bills are moving and we need that to happen before the March 20th "cross-over" deadline!

Below I've listed out the updates and asks on some of our most important bills - from the Reproductive Rights Package of 2023 to the End Spousal Rape bill.

And once again, feel free jump to the good stuff below where I list out who to contact for which bills!

REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS PACKAGE OF 2023

HB705 – Declaration of Rights – Right to Reproductive Freedom

Chair Pena-Melnyk did a phenomenal job defending this bill on the House floor. She successfully defeated multiple amendments and now the bill is set for third reader, most likely today.

Please take a moment to [contact YOUR Delegate](#) THIS MORNING and ask them to VOTE IN FAVOR of HB705!

SB798 - Declaration of Rights - Right to Reproductive Freedom

This bill was successfully voted out of the Senate Finance Committee and on second reader yesterday when it was laid over by motion until TODAY. Amendments can be introduced - and fought off! - today, and then it will be back for third reader. Call YOUR SENATOR TODAY and ask them to vote in favor of SB798!

Similarly, [SB341 - Public Senior Higher Education Institutions - Reproductive Health Services Plans - Requirements](#) was voted out of Committee and was also on second reader in the Senate yesterday. Please contact YOUR SENATOR TODAY and ask them to vote in favor of SB341!

The House Judiciary Committee heard [HB808 – Reproductive Health Protection Act](#) on Wednesday and we are so incredibly grateful that we had none other than THE ATTORNEY GENERAL on our panel to testify in support of this important bill. Contact the Committee and ask them to Vote Favorably on HB808. Meanwhile, also contact the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee and ask them to Vote Favorably on [SB859](#).

Support for Survivors

SB129 - Criminal Law - Sexual Crimes - Repeal of Spousal Defense

Sponsor: Senator Kelly/Secretary Lee (Judicial Proceedings)

The Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee heard incredibly powerful testimony just last night directly from victims who were sexually assaulted by their spouses, only to be retraumatized by the justice system that could not prosecute due to the marital relationship. Victims deserve more, and hopefully this is the last year anyone will have to endure this. Call JPR and ask them to vote in favor of SB129.

SB36 – Family Law – Grounds for Divorce It is now up to the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee to vote on this bill that removes barriers for people seeking divorce and updates our laws surrounding the process. Contact the members of JPR and ask them to support SB36.

Finally, some exciting news!

[HB3 - Maryland State Police Gun Center – Firearms Surrendered Under Final Protective Orders](#) was voted out of the House this week! And it's cross-file, SB185, has made it to second reader in the Senate and is expected to make it through third reader! Thank YOUR elected officials for voting on this small but important bill!

As always, we depend upon you to let elected officials know how much this legislation means to you and our community. Please take a moment to take action today!

Feeling a little overwhelmed by it all? Scroll down below for a recap of who to contact!

Onward together,



TAKE ACTION TODAY!

- [Contact YOUR Delegate](#) and ask them to vote in favor of HB705 – Declaration of Rights – Right to Reproductive Freedom!
- [Contact YOUR Senator](#) and ask them to vote in favor of SB798 and SB341 both in support of our reproductive rights!
- Ask [members of Senate Finance](#) to vote FAVORABLY on:
 - SB786 - Health - Reproductive Health Services - Protected Information and Insurance Requirements.
- Tell the members of [Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee](#) that you support:
 - SB859 – Reproductive Health Protection Act
 - SB36 – Family Law – Grounds for Divorce
 - SB129 - Criminal Law - Sexual Crimes - Repeal of Spousal Defense
- Let the members of the [House Judiciary Committee](#) know you want HB705 – Reproductive Health Protection Act enacted into law.

P.S. As always, if you appreciate the work we do, whether in the General Assembly or through our [direct legal services](#) across the State, [give here!](#) And if this email was forwarded to you by a friend, make sure to sign up for our legislative alerts [here!](#)

P.P.S. **Save the Date for the WLC's [Annual Celebration and Awards Ceremony on May 3rd at 6pm at Citron!](#)** Join us in presenting the Rosalyn B. Bell Award to Marla Zide, Esq.; the Dorothy Beatty Memorial Award to Robyn Elliott; and the Access to Justice Award to Natasha M. Dartigue, Esq. and Debbie Feinstein, Esq. For more information or to buy tickets, click [HERE](#).

P.P.P.S. Save the date for these upcoming events from our partners and friends!

- Join Leadership Baltimore County for a [Rebalance, Rediscover, Reinvent](#) event on how leaders support women at home, and work, and in the community on Thursday, March 16th 8:30-10:30am in Owings Mills.

40th LEADERSHIP
BALTIMORE COUNTY

**REBALANCE
REDISCOVER
REINVENT**

How leaders support women at home, at work and in the community

**THURSDAY, MARCH 16
8:30 - 10:30 AM**

BECO Towers, 10461 Mill Run Circle, Owings Mills

Speakers

Moderator

Janet Currie
President
Bank of America
Greater Maryland

Heather Iltis
President & CEO
Maryland Nonprofits

Natasha Wainwright
Owner
Natasha's Just Brittle

Sloane Brown
Podcast/Interview
Host

\$30 LBC MEMBERS, \$35 NON-MEMBERS
[Register at leadbaltimore.org](http://leadbaltimore.org)

EVENT PARTNERS

   

Have an event you'd like to share with us? Send us an [email!](#)

About The Women's Law Center of Maryland: The vision of the Women's Law Center of Maryland is a legal system that provides justice and fairness for women. The Women's Law Center's mission is to ensure the physical safety, economic security, and autonomy of women throughout the State. We work towards this goal by providing direct legal representation, information and referral services, and legislative advocacy.

Our efforts to promote justice, fairness, and equality for women are only possible because of friends like you.

[Give Today](#)

The Women's Law Center of Maryland, Inc. is a charitable organization designated as tax-exempt under Internal Revenue Code section 501(c)(3). A copy of our financial statement is available upon request. Documents and information submitted under the State of Maryland Charitable Solicitations Act are available from the Office of the Secretary of State of Maryland, Annapolis, MD 21401 for the cost of copying and postage.



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