



Women's Law Center of Maryland

Celebrating 50 Years of Advancing Justice

Dear Jessica,

As we inch closer to cross-over day, more bills are getting voted out of Committee and even passing out of their respective originating chambers. This week saw some significant movement on important bills!

[Senate Bill 341 - Public Senior Higher Education Institutions – Reproductive Health Services Plans – Requirements](#)

Part of the leadership's Reproductive Rights Package of 2023, this bill will ensure that all public universities have a plan in place to provide for, or refer for, reproductive health care. It was voted favorably out of its committee last night. Next step, a full Senate vote.

Contact [YOUR Senator](#) and ask them to Vote for SB341!

[HB3 - Maryland State Police Gun Center – Firearms Surrendered Under Final Protective Orders](#)

A bill requiring data collection for guns surrendered after a Final Protective Order is issued, HB3 has passed the House! It now goes to the Senate, which is still waiting to vote on its cross-file [SB185](#).

[HB4 - Criminal Law - Sexual Crimes - Repeal of Spousal Defense](#)

This bill, which will prevent marriage from being a defense to sexual assaults, has passed the House in prior years, but failed on *sine die*. All eyes are now on [SB129](#) in hopes that they pass identical language. The hearing for the Senate version has been scheduled for March 9th.

[HB14 - Family Law - Grounds for Divorce](#)

By updating our divorce laws, HB14 will make it easier for people with financial barriers to obtain a divorce they need to move on with their lives. It has passed the House and now we wait for the Senate to vote on its cross-file, [SB36](#).

Contact the members of the [Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee](#) and ask them to SUPPORT SB185, SB129, and SB36!

Of course, this week also saw the bill hearings for 3 other bills in the Reproductive Health Care Package: [SB798 - Declaration of Rights- Right to Reproductive Freedom](#), [SB786- Reproductive Health Services – Protected Information and Insurance Requirements](#), and [SB859 - Reproductive Health Protection Act](#).

Those bills couldn't come a moment too soon, given the news we are awaiting

to hear in *Alliance for Hippocratic Medicine v. FDA*, [where anti-abortion groups have sued the Federal Food and Drug Administration](#) over its initial approval of mifepristone, one of the drugs used in medicated abortions. We anticipate a decision from the U.S. District Court for the District of Texas any day now and its impact will reach far beyond that state; it could essentially ban medicated abortions **across the nation**.

While it is unprecedented, it is not entirely surprising that extremist organizations are again trying to insert the government into decisions that should be made by medical providers and their patients. It is clear that the *Dobbs* decision to send abortion rights back to the states was not the end game – **these groups will stop at nothing to impose restrictions across the entire country. That is why the Reproductive Health Care Package is essential to retaining our rights, our access, and our bodily freedom.**

We anticipate voting will happen quickly on all of these bills and will send out an alert when it is time to reach out to YOUR legislators. In the meantime, look below my signature for some upcoming events that will galvanize our collective movement.

Onward together,



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!

- **DC RALLY SPEAK OUT **IN THE EVENT OF A NEGATIVE RULING IN THE ALLIANCE CASE**** This DC rally will center patient and provider voices to show the distressing, direct impact to care this ban will have. By hosting a speak-out, PPFA and PPMW will create a platform for providers, patient advocates, and partners involved in direct care to be heard by supporters, the media, and others at the foot of the Supreme Court who will hear challenges to this ban. We will need everyone's help to recruit for this event so, once we have more information (including a ruling), please share this far and wide across your networks. There will also be opportunities to volunteer so please be on the lookout for volunteer requests!

Where: Outside SCOTUS

When: **12pm-1pm**, on the Saturday following the ruling:

If the ruling is released Wednesday (3/1) - Tuesday (3/7), the rally will be Saturday March 11th

If the ruling is released Wednesday (3/8) - Tuesday (3/14), the rally will be Saturday March 18th

Feel free to contact [Francesca McDonald](#) if you have any questions!

- Hosted by the Women Legislators of Maryland, Executive Alliance, Planned Parenthood of Maryland, and Pro Choice Maryland, the **2023 Gender Justice Rally** will be held March 6th at 6pm at Lawyer's Mall in Annapolis. Register to attend [HERE!](#)

LAWYER'S MALL – ANNAPOLIS

MARCH 6

6-7:15 pm

Hosting Organizations:

Executive Alliance | Planned Parenthood of Maryland
Pro-Choice Maryland | Women Legislators of Maryland

MARYLAND
**GENDER
JUSTICE**
2023 RALLY

- 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 Iliff
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

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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