



OPPOSE HB 1

Anti-Women's Health

Patron Delegate Bob Marshall

HB 1 – which requires that all the laws of the Commonwealth be interpreted to grant fertilized eggs the same rights, privileges, and immunities, as people – would have far reaching and dangerous consequences. HB 1 impacts thousands of laws and puts the government, lawyers, and courts in the middle of our personal and private decisions.

H.B. 1's broad re-definition of "person" is not necessary to provide a wrongful death cause of action for a fetus. The General Assembly could simply amend the language of Virginia's current wrongful death law directly. The true purpose of H.B. 1 is to lay the legal foundation to ban access to abortions and contraception in the Commonwealth.

The independent Quinnipiac University poll finds Virginia voters oppose this bill 58 – 32 percent.

HB 1 has wide-ranging consequence for a woman's health and for a family's personal and private decision-making.

- **This bill would undermine the ability of women and family to make personal and private decisions:** The bill's purpose is to ban all abortions in the Commonwealth. While we may not all agree about abortion, we can agree that this is a personal decision that should be made by a woman, her family and her doctor, not the legislature. Everyone's life and circumstances are different; we must respect people's personal choices even if we wouldn't make the same decision.
- **This bill could be used to ban commonly used FDA approved methods of birth control, including the pill and emergency contraception:** If the Supreme Court ever reversed course in its interpretation of the definition of the word "person," these methods of birth control could be banned. These contraceptive methods can prevent a fertilized egg from implanting in the uterus and prevent pregnancy from occurring. Banning the most effective forms of birth control interferes with a couple's efforts to plan their family, endangers women's health (especially for women with health conditions that make pregnancy life-threatening), and increases the number of unintended pregnancies in Virginia.
- **This bill could have far reaching, dangerous consequences on important life decisions Virginians make every day:** For example, giving legal status to fertilized eggs could block stem cell research from being used for life-saving care; and could even deny a pregnant woman life-saving medical treatment for a disease, like cancer, if the treatment might harm a fertilized egg.
- **This bill endangers women's health and lives by interfering with doctors' ability to treat miscarriages and ectopic pregnancies.** A woman experiencing a miscarriage or with an ectopic pregnancy may need emergency treatment to prevent serious damage to her health or even save her life. But by granting legal status to a fertilized egg, the bill raises the specter that a doctor who provides the care the woman needs would be subject to criminal prosecution and civil suits.
- **The bill has far-reaching, unforeseen consequences.** Giving legal rights to fertilized eggs could impact literally thousands of laws – from when property rights are granted, to inheritance rights, to who can file a lawsuit. It would allow lawyers and the courts to reinterpret every Virginia law and regulation that contains the word "person," clogging up the court system at the expense of the Commonwealth's taxpayers.
- **This bill would lay a legal foundation to outlaw abortions in Virginia in the event of a reversal of current Supreme Court precedent, even for rape or incest victims, or when the life of the woman is at risk.**