



## OPPOSE HB 261 Mandatory Ultrasound Patron Delegate Mark Cole

**HB 261** mandates every pregnant female to undergo an ultrasound **48 hours** prior to having an abortion procedure. The bill also requires the Department of Health to compile information on facilities that perform free ultrasound services or so called “crisis pregnancy centers.”

### **Health care decisions are best made by individuals and their medical providers.**

- The government should not be in the position of mandating medical procedures. Lawmakers are not doctors. Routine ultrasound is not considered medically necessary as a component of first-trimester abortion.
- A physician and patient, working together, are the best judges of which procedures are medically necessary. Patients should NOT be forced to undergo any procedure against their will or better judgment. This bill puts government into the examination room and lets politics come between a woman and her physician.
- This bill curtails a woman’s constitutional rights to privacy and liberty by subjecting her to possibly unwanted and unnecessary medical procedures.

### **Mandatory ultrasounds place undue burdens on women seeking legal and safe abortion care.**

- This bill doubles the waiting period from **24 to 48 hours** and sets yet another roadblock for a woman’s access to her constitutionally protected right to privacy and access to abortion.
- The 48 hour requirement is a delay tactic that imposes additional costs and prolongs a woman’s access to a procedure she has already agonized over.
- A 48 hour waiting period and mandatory ultrasound increase a woman’s difficulty in obtaining abortion care – Women especially affected are:
  - Women in abusive relationships, young, rural, and low-income women who may have to travel long distances, lack transportation, need childcare and/or must take time off of work.

### **HB 261 opens up requires healthcare providers to make referrals to fake clinics.**

- If the doctor does not have ultrasound equipment, a woman must find another doctor to perform the ultrasound prior to the abortion.
- HB 261 directs the Dept. of Health to compile of list of “facilities that provide free ultrasounds.” It is well known that these facilities are “crisis pregnancy centers” and are not medical offices, not bound by HIPPA and not regulated by any state health board. CPCs’ mission is to persuade women to change their minds about having an abortion sometimes using misinformation about risks of the procedure.

Leading medical organizations, such as the American Medical Association, American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG), American Medical Women’s Association, and American Public Health Association oppose mandatory diagnostic tests that are unnecessary and add to healthcare costs. ACOG’s guidelines for Women’s Health also oppose “intervention by legislators into the realm of medical decision-making or with the doctor-patient relationship, either in requiring or proscribing specific medical advice to pregnant women”.<sup>1</sup>

#### **Virginia Pro-Choice Coalition**

ACLU of VA · Virginia League of Women Voters · Jewish Community Relations Council  
NARAL Pro-Choice VA · National Assoc. of Social Workers · National Council of Jewish Women of VA  
National Council of Jewish Women of VA · Planned Parent Advocates of VA · Virginia NOW

<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., AM. COLL. OF OBSTETRICIANS & GYNECOLOGISTS, GUIDELINES FOR WOMEN’S HEALTH CARE: A RESOURCE MANUAL 432 (2007, 3d Ed.) (noting ACOG’s opposition to biased informed consent requirements and intervention by legislators into the realm of medical decision-making); AM. MED. WOMEN’S ASSOC., POSITION PAPER ON PRINCIPLES OF ABORTION (noting AMWA’s opposition to legislation “that interfere[s] with the doctor-patient relationship, either in requiring or proscribing specific medical advice to pregnant women”).