



February 28, 2022

Assemblymember Jim Wood, Chair
Assembly Health Committee
1020 North Street, Room 390
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Letter in Opposition to AB 576 reimbursing Chemical Abortion Providers

Dear Chairman Wood and Members of the Assembly Health Committee,

On behalf of the Right to Life League and tens of thousands of pro-life Californians across the state, I urge you to vote NO on AB 576. The bill's intent is to redirect Medi-Cal funding to fully reimburse abortion providers for killing unborn children via "medication" abortions, in other words, chemical abortion pills.

AB 576 will amend SECTION 1. Section 14131.07 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, to read:

14131.07. The department shall fully reimburse providers for the provision of medication to terminate a pregnancy that aligns with clinical guidelines, evidence-based research, and the discretion of the provider.

All pregnancies end, either naturally through miscarriage, stillbirth, or delivery, or unnaturally through surgical or chemical means that terminate the life of the unborn child in the womb. AB 576 makes no provision to reimburse healthcare providers for providing medications or other healthcare treatments that terminate a pregnancy through the normal, natural processes of childbirth, or for treatments or medications necessary in the event of miscarriage or stillbirths.

AB 576's unequal financial treatment clearly prefers abortion over childbirth in violation of the California Constitution, pursuant to *Committee to Defend Reproductive Rights v. Myers*.¹ In 1981, conservative forces in the state legislature sought to limit access to abortion services through various budget acts. In *CDRR v. Myers*, the California Supreme Court struck down the legislature's ban on Medi-Cal funding of abortion.

¹ 29 Cal.3d 252 (1981)

The Court in *Meyers* emphasized that the state could not intervene in the very intimate decision about whether to give birth or have an abortion, e.g.,:

By virtue of the explicit protection afforded an individual's inalienable right of privacy by article I, section 1 of the California Constitution, however, the decision whether to bear a child or to have an abortion is so private and so intimate that each woman in this state -- rich or poor -- is guaranteed the constitutional right to make that decision as an individual, uncoerced by governmental intrusion. Because a woman's right to choose whether or not to bear a child is explicitly afforded this constitutional protection, in California the question of whether an individual woman should or should not terminate her pregnancy is not a matter that may be put to a vote of the Legislature.

If the state cannot directly prohibit a woman's right to obtain an abortion, may the state by discriminatory financing indirectly nullify that constitutional right? Can the state tell an indigent person that the state will provide him with welfare benefits only upon the condition that he join a designated political party or subscribe to a particular newspaper that is favored by the government? **Can the state tell a poor woman that it will pay for her needed medical care but only if she gives up her constitutional right to choose whether or not to have a child?**

There is no greater power than the power of the purse. If the government can use it to nullify constitutional rights, by conditioning benefits only upon the sacrifice of such rights, the Bill of Rights could eventually become a yellowing scrap of paper.

In *Meyers*, the Court ruled the legislature violated the California constitution by financially favoring childbirth over abortion using a “conditioning of public benefits” framework.

AB 576 plans to fund chemical abortion over childbirth in clear violation of the California state constitution, and should be soundly rejected by this committee. Please Vote NO on the bill.

Very Truly Yours,



Susan S. Arnall, Esq.



Vice President of Legal Affairs
Right to Life League