



## Guest column: Bill places women's safety above 'financial interests of abortion industry'

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By **Guest writer**

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Toward the end of this legislative session the Michigan House and Senate passed a significant number of bills that will have an impact on communities across the state.

Some were more contentious than others. One piece of legislation mischaracterized as "controversial" would protect the health and safety of women who, regrettably, choose the path of abortion.

While most Republicans and many Democrats supported the bill, a small number of opponents preferred to employ over-the-top hyperbole in order to taint the point and purpose of House Bill 5711. This was unfortunate.

Public policy matters pertaining to abortion tend to be divisive. But HB 5711 is not about pro-life or pro-abortion rights politics. That's because the bill does not prohibit a woman from obtaining an abortion nor does it create a barrier for that path.

What the legislation does do is make sure that any woman who pursues an abortion would enter a facility that is both licensed and inspected by the State of Michigan for health and safety standards.

Currently, those requirements are lacking. Of the 32 locations in Michigan that perform abortions, only 4 are licensed by the state as surgical facilities. As such, the other 28 clinics are not licensed and are rarely, if ever, inspected for basic standards related to cleanliness and a safe, sterile environment.

The reforms found in HB 5711 are overdue. No person would want to see a loved one, a female relative or friend, walk into a surgical facility where sanitation, cleanliness and confidentiality are, at best, questionable. The public demands better. Women deserve better. Ensuring a safe environment upholds the dignity women expect.

Additional measures included in the bill are both sound and reasonable. Under the legislation, a woman will be informed that coercion to abort is illegal, yet the abortion could proceed provided the patient is aware of the law.

The legislation also provides for the humane disposition of an aborted child. Never again will an abortionist be allowed to dispose of aborted children as "medical waste," which is what took place in Eaton County last year



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when 17 victims of abortion, along with patient names and medical records, deplorably, were found in a common trash dumpster.

In March, this and several other abortion industry abuses emerged during a Senate Licensing and Regulatory Affairs subcommittee hearing. The Bureau of Health Systems testified that the state provides minimal oversight of abortion facilities because "so few clinics are licensed."

House Bill 5711 will remedy this problem. Elected officials on both sides of the aisle agreed and supported the bill to ensure facilities meet basic health and safety standards.

Regardless of one's position on abortion, there is no reason why an abortion facility should be any less clean or safe than a tattoo parlor or a veterinary clinic. HB 5711 is good public policy that makes sure a woman's health and safety is placed ahead of the financial interests of the abortion industry.

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