

Physicians in Illinois offer women the information they need to make important decisions about their pregnancies consistent with their existing ethical, legal and professional obligations. House Bill 1919 is unnecessary to assure informed consent. Moreover, it will harm women by interfering with the physician-patient relationship. HB unnecessarily imposes vague and disruptive requirements which can lead to traumatic results for some women. It will also waste precious taxpayer dollars.

**HB 1919 is based on the false premise that women in Illinois are not being given complete information prior to an abortion.**

- HB1919 purports to ensure that women seeking abortion give “voluntary and informed consent.” *However, existing legal, ethical and professional obligations already demand that physicians provide all patients undergoing any medical procedure all necessary information about risks, benefits and alternatives so the patient can provide “voluntary and informed consent” to the procedure. HB 1919 is unnecessary to informed consent.*
- HB 1919 asserts that it is “critical to the psychological well-being of a woman considering an abortion that she receive complete and accurate information on the reality and status of her pregnancy and her unborn child.” *It is impossible to know what “reality and status” of a pregnancy or unborn child refers to. We know, however, that health care professionals in Illinois provide the information needed to make an informed decision about abortion. This includes information about the risks, benefits and alternative available to their patient.*
- HB 1919 purports to protect “the unborn child” from a woman’s “uninformed decision to have an abortion.” *HB 1919’s focus on protecting the unborn from the woman’s decision reveals the true intent of the legislation – to try to prevent women from terminating pregnancy, or question any rational basis for doing so, even when they have made a fully informed decision that it is in their own best interest to do so.*

**HB1919 imposes vague and unnecessary requirements.**

- HB 1919 requires that every woman seeking an abortion be offered the “opportunity to receive and view an active ultrasound.” *“Active ultrasound” is not a medical term that tells physicians what is required of them. Medical professionals use ultrasounds to date pregnancies and rule out ectopic (tubal) pregnancies before abortion. Any patient who wishes to view an ultrasound image already has that opportunity.*
- HB 1919 makes a finding that ultrasounds are essential to “diagnosing ectopic pregnancies.” *While many physicians use ultrasound to diagnose an ectopic pregnancy, it is not “essential” to such a diagnosis. Moreover, why, if it were essential, does the bill only impose the ultrasound requirement when a woman chooses abortion, and not when she chooses to continue her pregnancy?*

**HB 1919 imposes unnecessary burdens on medical providers and the State and will be traumatic for some women.**

- HB1919 requires women to affirmatively refuse, in writing, an offer to view an ultrasound. *HB1919 makes no exception for a woman terminating a wanted pregnancy because of a fetal anomaly or to preserve her own health, or because the pregnancy resulted from rape or incest. For these women in particular, HB 1919 is destructive of the physician-patient relationship and can create a traumatic situation.*
- HB 1919 imposes an unnecessary one hour delay after an ultrasound. *Forcing all women to wait an hour before they can begin their procedure serves no medical purpose and for some women can have negative medical consequences.*
- HB1919 forces the State to collect information that serves no epidemiologic purpose. *In these trying economic times, it is astounding that the legislature would impose additional burdens on State government without any public health benefit.*