



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY, MARYLAND**

TESTIMONY TO THE ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY COUNCIL

RE: Resolution 30-18 Recognizing and Declaring the Humanity of Preborn Children

POSITION: Oppose

DATE: September 4, 2018

BY: Niecy Chambers, President

The League of Women Voters (LWV) takes positions on public policy issues after an established process of study and consensus. In 1983, League members adopted a national position **to protect the constitutional right of privacy of the individual to make reproductive choices.**

In Maryland, the LWV worked with many other groups to codify the provisions of Roe v. Wade in State law, through legislation (SB162) passed by the General Assembly and sent to referendum in November 1992. Question 6 won by large margins, including the vote in Anne Arundel County, and became State law December 3, 1992 (MD Health-Gen Code § 20-209).

Resolution 30-18 flies in the face of the provisions of what is now Maryland law. **Citizens voted that the State may not interfere with the decision of a woman to terminate a pregnancy before the fetus is capable of sustained survival outside the womb.** The law ensures that people who refuse to participate in an abortion for reasons of conscience will not be penalized; but it also rejects “obsolete provisions prohibiting abortion referrals, counseling or assistance in obtaining an abortion.”

Resolution 30-18 violates the County Council’s obligation, as the County Board of Health, “to administer County Health programs in accordance with the requirements of State law” (Charter Sec. 553). To the extent that the Department of Health is an Executive Branch function, it may also violate Charter Sec. 309 (Noninterference with the executive branch) by calling for “public health efforts to reduce the incidence of these terminations.”

Resolution 30-18 deals with an issue that has no place before County Council. It demonstrates a low opinion of women’s intelligence and ability to understand the ramifications of a legal, intensely private, medical procedure. Moreover, it prioritizes the rights of the unborn, who **by definition**¹ are not citizens, over those of the citizens whom the Council was elected to serve.

The League of Women Voters of Anne Arundel County strongly opposes Resolution 30-18 and urges the County Council to reject this ill-considered measure.

¹ Article XIV, U.S. Constitution All persons **born or naturalized** in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside.