



The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

WOMEN'S HEALTH CARE PHYSICIANS

December 1, 2021

Dear Madame Chair and Members of the House Health Policy Committee:

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) represents nearly 1000 OBGYNs practicing women's health care in the state of Michigan.

ACOG **OPPOSES** HBs 5558 and 5559 as this legislation would criminalize research utilizing fetal tissue, a critical resource in developing treatment for multiple medical issues impacting our patients and your constituents.

There is already a strong legal and ethical framework around the donation of fetal tissue and other anatomical gifts requiring explicit consent. If it is unclear whether consent is authentic or if it contested by another party, physicians and the medical ethicists who oversee these issues will err on the side of caution and deny the use of that organ or tissue.

Furthermore, physicians are bound by their ethical oath to serve the wishes of the patient. In the case of fetal tissue, this option is only discussed after a plan of care for the patient is confirmed. For OBGYNs that perform abortion care, law prohibits any financial or profit motive for donating human tissue.

The ability to donate fetal tissue for medical research is not linked to an increase in the number of abortions; limiting fetal tissue donation or research will not reduce the number of abortions. Rather, this restriction will prevent research that could lead to breakthroughs in medical care and hamper efforts to better understand, diagnose, and treat diseases. We urge you to support advances in medical care and oppose these bills.

Sincerely,

Lauren Owens, MD, MPH
Michigan Section ACOG Fellow Advocacy Chair