

TO: Financial Estimate Committee, Secretary of State Dennis Richardson, Chair
FR: Forward Together, Kalpana Krishnamurthy, National Field and Policy Director
RE: Initiative Petition 1, Draft Estimate of Fiscal Impact
DA: July 24, 2018

Forward Together respectfully offers the following public comments to the Financial Estimate Committee's Draft Statement of Fiscal Impact for Initiative Petition 1 (IP 1).

Forward Together envisions a country where we are all at home. A world where we take care of each other, respect each other, and where everyone is better off. Where we recognize the shared leadership and sacrifice of people of color, women, immigrants, LGBTQ and Indigenous people in building this country. When we join together and fight for every single one of us, we can build a nation that works for all of us — a world where all families have the rights, recognition and resources they need to thrive free from oppression. Forward Together is a multi-racial organization that works to transform culture and shift policy to ensure that all women, youth, and families have the rights, recognition, and resources they need to thrive.

We would like to note that the timeline of this process has felt too rushed to adequately review and research this fiscal statement. This is a complicated issue and IP 1 is not yet through the verification process. More time and consultation with outside stakeholders would ensure that this has been thoroughly researched. We will still provide the following feedback on this draft despite having limited time and limited information on the assumptions and research that went into this draft.

Regardless of how much money you make or what kind of insurance you have, everyone should have the ability to access reproductive healthcare and determine when and whether to become a parent. This fiscal statement does not take into account one of the greatest implications of this measure and that is the impact on individual family choices and resources as it relates to family leave and other financial decisions that will be impacted by losing access to abortion coverage. We all need time to care for our families without compromising our economic security and losing access to health care or cutting care would absolutely impact leave taken by individuals and families. Voters should be informed of the potential long-term workforce impacts of this measure due to pregnancy and family leave and other state-funded services that may be utilized if this measure passed.

Second, the current estimate has not considered the administrative costs of implementation to the state or the impact passage of IP 1 may have on other healthcare providers such as county and tribal governments. Nor does it acknowledge the lack of obstetrical care in general, especially for people living in rural parts of the state and for people of color. This measure would contribute to capacity challenges we already cannot seem to resolve as a state. This

should be acknowledged in the statement as an impact even if the exact financial cost is indeterminate. We would also argue that the healthcare programs impacted by this measure should be named specifically in the statement so that voters would be able to understand how it impacts them or their family members directly.

Finally, the current draft statement underestimates and does not accurately describe the full impact of the constitutional amendment. We must take into account mid-term and long-term impacts to state programs and services that are indeterminate but will be significant over time. The current estimate is a bare minimum and only addresses increased costs for labor and delivery but does not include the impact on other state programs that are vital to the immediate, mid- and long-term health and wellbeing of the parent and their families. And while their costs may be difficult to estimate over time, they should at least be acknowledged in the statement to increase state costs, because under no scenario will those costs be reduced or remain flat. It is misleading to fail to flag this for voters.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer public comment regarding the draft Fiscal Impact Statement for IP 1.