2020 Florida Legislative Session – Committee Meetings
November 14, 2019

SB 404/HB265 – Parental Consent

Two bills aiming to restrict abortion for young women under the age of 18 are being fast-tracked for passage in the Florida Legislature. Though not identical SB 404 and HB 265 would force a young person, faced with an unintended pregnancy, to obtain parental consent prior to receiving an abortion. This goes beyond current law that requires parental notification. Most health care professionals oppose these laws and fear they will make it increasingly difficult for young people, who already face many challenges when accessing abortion care, to obtain the health care services they need.

Research indicates young people usually confide in a parent or guardian when faced with an unintended pregnancy. Those who do not reach out may fear for their safety or be victims of abuse. In cases where a minor does not wish to request consent, she must petition the court for a hearing to obtain a judicial waiver. However, both the waiver and consent process create unnecessary delays in accessing abortion care. Delays potentially push the procedure later into a pregnancy creating a greater risk of complications.

To read the bills’ text search 2020 Florida Legislature SB 404 and/or 2020 Florida Legislature HB 265. Look for Bill Text: PDF

HB 265 has already passed its only committee stop in the Florida House. The Senate bill (SB 404) is scheduled for 3 committee hearings and it’s likely that Health Policy committee will vote during the early part of December.

What can you do to oppose these bills?

Call or email your senate and house representatives as well as watch out for, and act upon, LWVFL action alerts as they arise.