

From ABC 7 News:

Va. House Passes Abortion Clinic Bill

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Richmond, Va. (AP) - A bill that would require abortion clinics to meet the same standards as outpatient surgery centers on Tuesday passed the House of Delegates.

Del. Robert Marshall, said the bill is necessary to protect Virginia's women from an industry that is too loosely regulated.

"The administration claims they're safe," Marshall said of the clinics. "No one's looked at these clinics - but they're safe? Do they use Ouija boards? Is it clairvoyance?"

A similar bill has been killed the past several years in the Senate Education and Health Committee.

Abortion rights activists argue that few clinics would be able to meet the requirements set forth by the bill, and claim the legislation is a backdoor attempt to make abortions difficult to obtain.

The House adopted an amendment that would waive the bill's structural requirements for abortion clinics as long as patients can be safely removed from the buildings on a gurney or stretcher.

"The major objection, the claimed hysteria, the oppression that I'm allegedly ... putting on women in Virginia and abortionists is that we'll have to rebuild the buildings - well, now you don't," said Marshall, a perennial sponsor of anti-abortion measures.

Del. Kristen Amundson, D-Fairfax, dismissed Marshall's claims that the clinics are unsafe and called the legislation "a bill that is in search of a problem."

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[previous page](#)

