Obstetricians and Gynecologists Against the Commonwealth of Virginia Amendment for "Fundamental Right for Reproductive Freedom"

(https://www.elections.virginia.gov/election-law/proposed-constitutional-amendment-question-1/)

As 3 Professors of Obstetrics and Gynecology with > 70 years of service to the women of Virginia, we want to communicate:

- The "Proposed Constitution Amendment, Question 1" is about legalizing and enshrining third trimester abortions from 28 to 40 weeks and is not about 'reproductive freedom.'
- The Proposed Constitution Amendment confuses and obfuscates the real issue which is third trimester abortions. This is inappropriate and deceptive to Virginians.
- There is absolutely no case where abortion is medically necessary to protect the health of the mother in the third trimester. If there is ever a problem with mom or baby, we can deliver the baby, send baby to the neonatal intensive care unit, and take care of the mother which is the safest course of action for both mother and child. Abortion has no benefit over delivery, and these children most often do well with appropriate management.
- The proposed Amendment states that the physician can perform an abortion in the third trimester for the "mental health of the pregnant individual", which will be exploited to permit abortion at any point in pregnancy.
- The proposed Amendment also states that third trimester abortion cannot be regulated when "in the professional judgement of the physician the fetus is not viable". If this was the purpose the writers of the Amendment had in mind, they would not given such other broad protections to third trimester abortion.
- If this passes, adult sexual partners can encourage and take minors for abortions without parental support and guidance, increasing vulnerability of young women.
- This amendment prevents any legislation in the future about a complicated and deeply nuanced issue. It will never be changed without a new Constitutional Amendment.

Obstetricians for the Health of Virginian Women and their families,

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