

As a life-long North Dakota resident; currently living the past 12 years in Grafton, I care deeply about those struggling to build their family in our state (especially as my husband and I struggle for 9 years to grow our family), I strongly urge you to move forward on HB 1146, access to insurance benefits for infertility, so it can advance in 2023. This important legislation will help North Dakotans build their families when faced with any conditions that can cause infertility. North Dakotans need your support now.

I would like to be open and vulnerable about a challenge my husband and I are experiencing, it is a story we only share with our close family and a few friends, and a few others know about our challenge but not the details or what the experience is like. Although you can't see our struggle from the outside in our hearts we feel a missing piece. Despite our years of efforts we have yet to be able to expand our family. There has been much hurt and pain in our hearts as we align to overcome our fertility challenges. We are excited to someday share our life with our children. The fertility journey has been long, lonely, disappointing and so many other hard emotions, beyond the financial burden. In my heart I know we have children waiting to join our family, but they seem just out of reach. And yet we remain hopeful and hold a knowing in my heart I'm meant to be a mom.

I know a bill cannot magically make me pregnant or the 1 in 8 other couples struggling to get pregnant. However you can help support us and maybe that helps us get pregnant. We have worked with medical reproductive endocrinologists, gynecologists, fertility acupuncturists, chiropractor, abdominal massage therapist, mental therapists, and fertility coaches. Most of which has been self paid for. We have seen positive outcomes but no live pregnancy yet. Unfortunately a lot of IVF is trial and error figuring out what medication combination and amounts work well for each person to get quality eggs and a hospitable uterus ready for implantation. Every person is different and each cycle is different. What works for one person may not work for someone else. The doctors are trying to get it right and sometimes need a tweak from one cycle to the next. This of course causes financial burden to get the combination just right in repeated cycles, especially in the tougher cases like ours.

I need your support, along with the 1 in 8 couples in our state living with the disease of infertility. There are so many women and couples we've met on our fertility journey who are struggling as well to grow their families, some have sooner success than others. Each case is different and should be treated likewise. Many people like myself do not openly talk about it unless we are in company where we feel safe to share as it is triggering and painful. You don't know who has or is going through fertility challenges.

It is time for North Dakota to update its insurance law to include coverage for the standard of care for patients with infertility.

This pro-women and pro-family legislation is designed to ensure the best outcome for mothers and their babies. As proven in other states, insurance covering in vitro fertilization (IVF) decreases the chance of multiple births, and lowering multiple births decreases overall health care costs and results in healthier babies and healthier moms.

Please support North Dakota families by moving this bill forward. Thank you!

Robin Holt

Grafton, ND