



Chairman Jordan L. Kannianen and Members of the Senate Finance and Taxation Committee –

My name is Sierra Heitkamp and I am the Legislative Director for North Dakota Right to Life. I am testifying today to represent the interests of our members across the state of North Dakota.

Since the overturn of Roe V. Wade on June 24, 2022, there have been many questions regarding what this means for women and families who find themselves in unplanned pregnancies in North Dakota. At North Dakota Right to Life, we questioned ourselves as to how our vision and goals may have to evolve moving forward to adequately protect those most vulnerable from conception to natural death.

After many conversations, the answer became clear – not only will we continue our work in protecting life at all stages, but we also want to back legislation that educates our citizens, encourages life, and provides aid to those who qualify. A woman or family who finds themselves with an unexpected pregnancy should never feel that abortion is their only option to achieve a successful, happy life.

After discussing HB 1177 with our members and other partners in the pro-life committee, we believe that this is a wonderful step in the right direction for mothers and families in our state. Since adult diapers are already sales tax exemption in the state of North Dakota, this would level the playing field for our well-deserving families.

Based on information from the Charlette Lozier Institute (link for the study here: <https://lozierinstitute.org/abortion-reporting-north-dakota-2020/>), "*[t]hirty-nine percent of the abortions were on women with no children, while 22 percent were on women with one child and 39 percent on women with two or more children.*" The take away from this information is that 61% of the women in our state who have had abortion already have children. If our state is adequately providing the environment for life to flourish at all stages, why would a woman feel the need to have an abortion performed, especially if she already has a child?

I ask this committee today for a **Do Pass recommendation on HB 1177** in order to protect mothers facing unplanned or crisis pregnancies as we continue to promote and encourage life at all stages.

Thank you for your time today and I am available by phone or email to answer any questions.



Sincerely,

Sierra M Heitkamp
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