

Human Services Committee

House Bill 1373

Chairman Ruby and members of the committee:

First, let me note that there are many reasons I believe you must put your support behind this bill, but one of those reasons is particularly close to my heart, and that is its impact on in-vitro fertilization (IVF).

I am a mother of two, made possible through IVF.

For two years, I wished for a baby every day. For close to 18 months, I spent countless hours at Sanford Reproductive Medicine, until we finally tried IVF as one of our last resorts to realize our dream of becoming a family. The IVF treatment that brought me our firstborn, Arthur, was no small feat—it was physically and mentally draining, and I would never wish the struggle of infertility on anyone. However, it was so worth it because it helped bring us him. Arthur brightens my world every single day.

When I unexpectedly became pregnant with my second-born, Eliza (the greatest surprise ever!), Sanford Reproductive Medicine took me right back into their care, to ensure that my hormone levels could continue to sustain my pregnancy with her all on my own. The doctors there care so much about their patients. I feel so blessed to have had access to quality reproductive healthcare right here in North Dakota, but I worry that other families in the future will not have this access because of HB 1373.

HB 1373 would effectively end access to IVF in North Dakota and impose criminal and civil penalties on doctors, like mine at Sanford, and mothers, like me. This bill is not only a violation of privacy but also a direct attack on families like mine who rely on reproductive medicine to realize their dreams of parenthood.

Many politicians tote themselves as “pro-family,” but I find myself questioning how truly “pro-family” policies like HB 1373 are. IVF helped me build my family. Proceeding with IVF was a deeply personal choice between myself and my husband, and I feel fortunate that the government and politicians did not need to be a part of our decision then, but unfortunately, they have become part of our decisions now, as we have conversations about our remaining embryos. Is this really the appropriate role of government? To tell us how to build our families?

I ask that you vote in opposition of this bill and move forward with a “do not pass” recommendation for the House.

Thank you,

Megan Homuth