

Testimony on HB 1373

Chairman Ruby and Members of the House Humans Service Committee:

I write as someone who, as an ordained United Methodist Minister, taught an Ethics in Medicine class to college nursing students.

HB1373 is a seriously misguided effort by the sponsors to put their **personal religious beliefs** into state law. The bill is based on a **very specific religious view** of when human life begins, namely the position of the Roman Catholic Church and some Protestant Evangelical Churches. Virtually all mainline Protestant Churches--United Methodist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, United Church of Christ, Episcopal, in addition to most of Judaism reject such a misleading and unscientific definition of a child or a person.

The Webster dictionary defines a child as “a young person especially between infancy and puberty.” This is the commonly accepted understanding of “a child.” The meaning of words actually matters and has consequences.

HB 1373 defines “unborn child” as “an individual living human child before birth from the beginning of biological development....” This definition is based on a lack of understanding of the development of human life and is also based on a **religious belief** rather than on medical science.

According to medical science when the human sperm and egg join together, they form a single cell called a zygote. A zygote is not a child or a person.

According to the Mayo Clinic website, “the zygote travels down the fallopian tube toward the uterus. At the same time, it will begin dividing to form a cluster of cells resembling a tiny raspberry — a morula.” The morula, which is a microscopic cluster of cells, is not a child or a person.

Also from the Mayo Clinic website, the next stage is: “The rapidly dividing ball of cells — now known as a blastocyst -- has begun to burrow into the uterine lining (endometrium). This process is called implantation.” A blastocyst is not a child or person.

Thankfully, in this country we are all free to hold our own religious beliefs, but this bill is an example of legislators who believe it is their job to impose their **personal religious beliefs** onto the rest of us via state law.

If the committee believes that this is NOT the job of the legislature it will give this bill a “DO NOT PASS” recommendation.

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