

Chairman Ruby and Members of the Committee,

I am writing this testimony **IN OPPOSITION** of HB 1373.

I am an embryologist at the only IVF fertility clinic in North Dakota. I am appalled that this is even a bill. As someone with specialized training in IVF laboratory procedures, the passing of this bill would stop infertility treatments for the residents in the state of North Dakota. The bill does not directly state that IVF would stop; however, anyone who performs these types of procedures would see that this house bill is big red flag.

In order for IVF to be successful, multiple eggs need to first be retrieved from the female after ovarian stimulation. Then a procedure called ICSI, intracytoplasmic sperm injection, is performed where sperm is directly injected into the egg. Of those eggs that are injected, only around 70-80% of those are successfully fertilized. Of those that continue to develop about 30-50% will make it to blastocyst stage. Of the transferred embryos only around 40% result in a live birth.

Under this bill, the eggs that do not fertilize successfully and the embryos that arrest or simply stop growing in development would be considered “unborn children”. That would be a huge liability to the IVF laboratory as this bill would make those situations “offenses of murder or assault”. Doctors and laboratory staff would no longer risk their licensures or jobs in this state to help infertility patients.

I strongly encourage you to oppose bill HB1373 so that we can continue to provide care to our patients. Infertility is a medical diagnosis, and North Dakotans should have access to treatment of this medical disease. We care strongly for the women and men of our state, and for the 1 in 6 couples that battle infertility. Please take this opportunity to show your support for your friends, family, coworkers and the citizens of your state to access these services by passing HB1373.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Wadeson, MT (ASCP)^{CM}