

Dear Members of the House,

I am writing to express my concern and opposition to the proposed House Bill 1373. I was born and raised in North Dakota. I'm a daughter, a sister, a wife, a best friend, a hard-working employee, a coach, and most importantly, I'm a mom. The full extent of this bill weighs heavily on myself and my family; redefining the definition of a "human-being" is valid, however what comes after the fact needs to be reconsidered, restructured, and educated on.

The termination of an embryo at any stage after fertilization to be considered unlawful, unless falling under the very minimal exceptions, is jarring for healthcare professionals and families across the state. Have victims of assault resulting in pregnancy been considered? What about the husband and wife who heard the terrible news that they will never be able to conceive their own baby naturally, or the newlywed husbands who are wanting to start their own family in the near future? If this bill passes as currently written and you were one to vote in favor, you have not only brought your own personal beliefs into the law but you've overlooked and have not done your due-diligence in educating yourself in what the full effects will be.

My question to you is this: if you know that you're meant to be a parent but, for whatever the circumstance may be, you are unable to have a baby on your own and adoption is not a fit for you, wouldn't you do what you can to have a baby with your own DNA? My sister and brother-in-law will be amazing parents one day, and are currently in the process of that through IVF with a surrogate. She has had more miscarriages and D&C procedures in the last four years than one should ever have to physically or mentally endure, and the only viable and safe option for them at this point is surrogacy. They are longing to hold their own child in their arms one day and know that being parents is what they are meant to be in this life, so why should they be restricted and limited? If this bill passes, they will be robbed of ever having that opportunity. There are many individuals in the world who are so easily capable of having their own children, but are unfit to do so and nothing is stopping them. My husband and I are extremely lucky and

grateful that we have been able to have our own children without any complications; however we know that if the roles were reversed for us there would be no question in regards to IVF.

I beg you to please put personal beliefs and religion aside, and to look at this bill as currently written as a whole. Please consider all situations and future families that this will affect. The majority of North Dakotans want our population to continue growing and to progress with the rest of the country. Please don't let this be a starting point of separating the people against the state and for North Dakotans not feeling wanted or understood. This is said to not be an anti-IVF bill, but they cannot convince us otherwise unless changes are drastically made before approval. We should all take this as an opportunity to better educate ourselves and others, and to look at what is best for our people.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sarah Halladay

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