

Good day members of the Committee—my name is Whitney Benter and I am a constituent born and raised in Bismarck, ND. I live here with my husband, two children, and am currently due any day now with our third.

I am urging you to give Bill HB1373 a **DO NOT PASS**.

I was browsing through the written testimonies thusly submitted and saw an overwhelming response in favor of this bill from men and from God-fearing Christians.

I am neither. And yet, I have been pregnant five times and have suffered two miscarriages. I have ended up in the Emergency Room due to complications from pregnancy, I have been classified as high risk due to a myriad of conditions resulting from my pregnancies. I won't go into a ton of detail on it, but my right foot is still currently numb to this day from nerve damage I sustained while being pregnant with our second child four years ago.

I believe this makes me directly affected by the fallout verbiage on this Bill much moreso than my male counterparts writing in favor of it. As for the constituents writing in favor of this bill citing their religion and/or their God—I'd like to appeal to one of the foremost cornerstones of our Country and cite the Separation of Church and State by which a governing body shall not favor one religion over another. Despite anyone's religious affiliations, they should not make their faith an influential bias while working for a State governing body. Simply put, this Bill should not be a stepping stone for someone's proselytization.

The personhood wording on the Bill would negatively impact IVF, miscarriages, miscarriage care, high risk prenatal care, and other basic medical care women should receive without any interference from their government. It casts a gray area on whether or not doctors could administer the very care they've been offering to women for generations (D&Cs, care for ectopic pregnancies, MTP-medically terminated pregnancy, etc).

The introduction of bills and wordings like this are the reason we are losing pregnant women all over our country (Nevaeh Crain, Porsha Ngumezi, Josseli Barnaca, to name a few from TX, plus many more). These deaths have been medically evaluated as "avoidable," and yet—they happened because medical staff were left to distinguish whether or not they would be legally held liable for treating a pregnant person. So women died. And women will continue to die from completely avoidable medical circumstances because our nation keeps siding with uninformed politicians (anyone who does not hold an OB/GYN or OB-GYN medical doctorate), white males and Christian nationality over science and a common sense approach.

Let's leave reproductive care to the professionals; women and their doctors. Please vote **DO NOT PASS on Bill HB1373**.

Whitney Benter