

My name is Heather Lentz, and I am here today to express my strong opposition to HB 1373. As a resident of North Dakota and someone who uses an intrauterine device (IUD) for birth control, this bill directly impacts my personal autonomy, health, and legal standing.

HB 1373 seeks to define the moment an egg and sperm meet as the official beginning of life. This definition would, in effect, criminalize widely used and medically approved forms of contraception like IUDs, which prevent pregnancy by stopping a fertilized egg from implanting in the uterus. Under this bill, my choice to use an IUD would make me a criminal—month after month, simply for making responsible reproductive decisions about my own body.

IUDs are one of the most effective and widely recommended forms of contraception. They are not only used for birth control but also for managing painful medical conditions like endometriosis and heavy menstrual bleeding. If this bill becomes law, it could strip me and thousands of other North Dakotans of a medically sound, legal, and necessary form of reproductive healthcare.

Furthermore, this bill would create a dangerous precedent where individuals who use contraception are subject to legal consequences for private medical decisions. It would undermine the rights of patients and doctors, turning basic healthcare into a legal battleground.

I ask you to consider the real-world consequences of HB 1373. It does not protect life—it punishes individuals for preventing unintended pregnancies. Instead of focusing on restricting reproductive healthcare, lawmakers should work to expand access to education, contraception, and healthcare services that actually reduce unintended pregnancies and promote family well-being.

I urge you to vote NO on HB 1373 and protect the rights of North Dakotans to make personal medical decisions without fear of criminalization.