

Chairman Ruby and members of the House Human Services Committee,

As a husband and father to a daughter, I am writing to strongly oppose House Bill 1373. This bill not only undermines reproductive rights but also threatens access to critical medical care, creating dangerous legal and ethical dilemmas for doctors and families. As someone who wants my wife, daughters, and all women in North Dakota to have access to safe and necessary healthcare, I urge you to reject this harmful legislation.

House Bill 1373 seeks to redefine “human being” and “person” to include an unborn child from the moment of fertilization. While this may seem symbolic, the reality is that this extreme change could have serious medical consequences:

- **Interference with Life-Saving Medical Care** – Pregnancy complications such as ectopic pregnancies, severe infections, and life-threatening conditions like preeclampsia often require urgent medical intervention. If an embryo or fetus is granted full legal personhood, doctors may hesitate or be legally restricted from providing immediate, necessary care for fear of prosecution, leading to preventable maternal deaths.
- **Criminalization of Miscarriage** – Up to 20% of known pregnancies end in miscarriage, and many require medical intervention, including medication or surgical procedures. Under this bill, any pregnancy loss could come under legal scrutiny, subjecting grieving families to invasive investigations and criminalization of natural biological processes.
- **Barriers to Fertility Treatments** – The language of HB 1373 could have a chilling effect on in-vitro fertilization (IVF) and fertility treatments, as embryos created in a lab may be legally considered “persons.” This could limit treatment options for families struggling with infertility, making it harder for couples to conceive.
- **Increased Risk for Doctors and Hospitals** – Physicians should not have to choose between following best medical practices and avoiding legal consequences. The ambiguity of this bill could deter doctors from providing essential reproductive care, leading to fewer trained specialists in the state and forcing patients to seek care elsewhere.

This bill does not protect life—it endangers it. It places politicians in the middle of deeply personal medical decisions that should be made between a patient and their doctor. As a father, I want my daughters to grow up in a state where they have access to compassionate, high-quality healthcare without government interference. I urge you to oppose House Bill 1373 and instead support policies that protect the well-being of all North Dakotans.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I trust you will do what is right and vote against this dangerous legislation.

Sincerely,

Brandon Baker