

Opposition to House Bill 1373

February 4, 2025

Dear Chair Ruby and Members of the House Human Services Committee,

I am writing this testimony to express my strong opposition to HB 1373 and urge a **“Do Not Pass”** recommendation. North Dakota voters sent a resounding message in 2014 when they rejected a personhood measure by 64%, however, members of the ND Legislature continue to introduce anti-abortion, anti-choice, anti-contraception and personhood bills every two years when they meet in Bismarck.

HB 1373 will have far-reaching consequences if passed. Not only does this bill attack a pregnant individual’s bodily autonomy, but it also fails to consider ectopic pregnancy, in vitro fertilization (IVF) treatments, and failed miscarriages, to name a few.

I was at 14 weeks gestation with my first pregnancy while living in the Minneapolis area in 2003 when I knew something was wrong. It was a holiday weekend, so I had no choice but to go to the emergency room in the middle of the night. While waiting for my Obstetrician to arrive, I began to experience severe headaches, nausea, low blood pressure and eventually began to hemorrhage. The ER staff were unable to find an ultrasound technician at the hospital to verify the status of my pregnancy. Dropping blood pressure and worsening hemorrhaging eventually caused me to go into respiratory arrest. I woke up to a dozen panicked faces surrounding me, an oxygen mask covering my face and several bags of intravenous fluids running into my arms. My doctor had just arrived and was unable to verify the status of my pregnancy. As the medical staff couldn’t determine what was causing the continued hemorrhaging, I underwent an emergency D&C. That procedure saved my life. I’ll never know if the fetus was still alive, or if it was an incomplete miscarriage, but I’m thankful I was able to go on to have two healthy, happy baby boys who are now amazing young men. I can’t help but wonder what the result would be if this had occurred in present-day North Dakota. Would I be charged with murder for opting to have a D&C without knowing the status of my pregnancy? Would my doctor have also been complicit in “murder”? Or would I have been left to hemorrhage on the table until testing could be done to verify whether it was incomplete miscarriage? My story is just one of many.

I’ve watched the testimony of several women in the past week as they bravely testified in favor of legislation that would ensure fertility care and IVF in North Dakota. Some have had successful pregnancies through IVF, and many more are struggling and hoping they too will have success. Their strength and bravery amaze me and I have no doubt these women will be incredible parents eventually. However, HB 1373 could bring an end to their fertility journeys and crush those dreams. North Dakota is already suffering from a severe provider shortage in rural areas. Healthcare providers are hesitant to provide life-saving care to pregnant individuals

due to the looming threat of criminal charges. Fertility specialists are leaving for blue states where reproductive laws and procedures allow them to practice without fear of breaking laws.

We hear repeatedly that our young people are leaving the state in droves. HB 1373 and North Dakota's already draconian abortion laws and theocratic regulations are pushing them away. This state has become a place where people come to die, not to live.

If you want to welcome young people looking to raise a family, you need to quit legislating them away. If you want healthcare providers to work in our state, you need to remove the constant scrutiny and threat of prosecution.

I urge you to listen to the majority of your constituents and give HB 1373 a firm "NO" vote. Instead, I urge you to support HB 1477 and HB 1478 to show the women of North Dakota that you hear them and support their rights to contraception and, when they choose, the right have children.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stacie M. Hansen". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Stacie M. Hansen
Valley City, ND