

Dear Chairperson and members of the Committee,

I urge you to reject pass HB 1373. To define a fetus in such a way will endanger lives. The government has no right to take away individual ownership of personal medical decisions. Nor does it have the right to deny the ability to start a family when there are ways around infertility, because this bill will prohibit IVF procedures.

It must be pointed out that the concept of “life begins at conception” is neither scientific nor a part of any (ancient) traditional religious teaching. There is no basis for this statement other than some people “feel” it is true. Regardless of any religious preachings, however, our rights guarantee us to a freedom of and from religion and religious governance.

The bill stipulates that it doesn't apply to the “unintentional death” of a fetus resulting from a procedure to save the mother when ACCOMPANIED by REASONABLE STEPS to save the life of the fetus. Who determines what steps are reasonable? Is the state of North Dakota going to threaten doctors with murder charges if they don't meet medically untrained lawmakers' standards? What if there is no viability to the fetus? Further, is the life of the mother so unimportant to North Dakota that if she's in danger, she must still wait for the fetus to be saved? She could die in the meantime. This bill is dangerous, ill-defined, and uninformed.

Finally, I'd like to point out that while individuals have the right to exercise their freedoms, those freedoms must not infringe upon the rights and freedoms of others. A fetus, or “human being” in this case, has no right to use another person's body for food and shelter without their consent.

Vote no on HB 1373.

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