

February 4, 2025

RE: Opposition to House Bill 1373

Chairman Ruby and Members of the Committee,

My name is Erin Gullickson, a citizen of North Dakota, I am a patient who has undergone invitro fertilization (IVF), a prior health care worker with several years spent in Obstetrics and Gynecology, a mother who has buried a child, and a compassionate advocate for those who choose to keep their reproductive healthcare and medical records private.

I've read through many of the testimonies submitted prior to my own, topics thoroughly covered include religious beliefs, God's favor, and biblical scripture, medical definitions, terminology, and women's rights.

What I hope and pray remains in your thoughts as this bill is debated and following its outcome are the voices of those who freely chose to speak of their own personal reproductive healthcare journeys. These are the voices I noticed spoke in opposition to this bill. They have stepped out of the personal right to healthcare, privacy and protection to share their own stories.

We, who wanted to expand our families and were given the privilege to attempt IVF are all thoroughly educated with all of the statistics, routines, medications, and possible outcomes. Along with this comes an excruciating and difficult timeline of procedures, events, and decisions to make. None of us take any of these decisions and choices lightly. Bottom line, some of these decisions directly involve ending what this bill defines as 'life', which would relate to the offenses of murder and assault.

If we are to define the beginning of life by language offered in this bill as, 'beginning of biological development at the moment of fertilization upon the fusion of a human spermatozoon with a human ovum', then we must acknowledge that the majority of families not wrestling with reproductive issues discover 'life' began in utero after 5-6 weeks of pregnancy, or later.

If, as Christians we are going to argue we fully understand the Almighty mind of God and/or all of the biblical texts already shared to clearly define God's definition of when life begins, then surely we can explain the priest who curses a pregnant woman's bowels in Numbers 5, or men striking a pregnant woman in Exodus 21, both which result in the death of the unborn.

Please pay close attention to the voices who willingly share their private, personal, reproductive experiences and stories. We/these are the constituents who would be gravely affected by the passing of this bill. Our healthcare providers would be directly, negatively impacted by this bill. I strongly encourage you to oppose this bill. Please leave the private and personal healthcare decisions in the hands of properly trained physicians and their patients. As it is, too many vulnerable people have already had to divulge private medical information and personal stories to speak out in opposition.

Chairman Ruby and Members of the Committee, I ask you, as a North Dakota constituent, to oppose this bill.

Sincerely,

Erin Gullickson  
Benedict, ND 58716