

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION
HB 1373

February 4th, 2025

Chairman Ruby, and members of the House Human Service Committee,

My name is Lisa Hermosillo, and I am here to urge you to vote a **DO NOT** pass recommendation on HB 1373. There is no doubt in my mind, that the notion that life begins at conception is in fact not evidence-based, but an attempt to religiously justify infringement and control of women in every level of government.

How exactly does the legislature plan to be able to pinpoint and narrow down when fertilization actually occurs? Do we have a single Legislator that has worked as a nurse, healthcare provider, a doctor, nurse practitioner, OR an OBGYN? A Legislator that has lost a baby to a failed IVF treatment or a loved one who has experienced the devastation that so many families have? It is not only concerning but also very frustrating that we continue to circle back to bills such as this one. If the legislature wants to define life as “at the moment of fertilization” is it a fair assumption to make that there will be additional provisions set forth ensuring that zygotes and mothers will qualify and maintain adequate care? For instance, a mother would be able to qualify for additional benefits such as life insurance? Insurance coverage? Can they claim the zygote on tax returns? The mother would be able to start collecting child support payments? WIC benefits individually for both the mother and the zygote and will be carried over through the other embryonic and fetal stages?

If this personhood bill passes, what will be the process when IVF fails? Will you also hold embryo banks accountable if something were to happen to embryos? Who would be held criminally liable, the doctor or the mother? How about eggs that are no longer needed by families? We are tiptoeing around some dangerous waters... Can we please just allow families to choose how and when they want to start a family on their own?

Lastly, HB 1373 has the potential to encourage healthcare workers in our state to uproot and seek employment elsewhere where they will not face continual attacks of legal threats to their licensure or ability to do their job. It's well known that we are struggling with shortages in healthcare. Retention rates are low, and this bill may very well be a deciding factor for workers to turn down or not even consider job opportunities in ND.

The very fact that this bill does not include protections for IVF is emotionally and mentally manipulative and cruel to women, their spouses, and significant others. There's enough uncertainty happening and it's not right to cast this type of fear onto North Dakotans.

Out of all the challenges we face as a state, it is more than shameful that this bill was even introduced.

No, despite what some Legislators seem to believe, we are not a pro-life state, instead, we are a pro-regulation, pro-control, state.

v/r

Lisa Hermosillo

“A mother by choice. A mother for choice.”

District 38

Minot Air Force Base