

Re: HB 1477

Erin Lee, 6207 17th St N, Fargo, ND 58102

Human Services Committee Members:

Hi, my name is Erin Lee. I live in Fargo and work as a nurse practitioner at Sanford Health in the OB/GYN clinic. I will soon also be working at Sanford Reproductive Medicine (I did in the past from 2008-2015 and will be doing so 1 day/week again). I'd like to convey my support for HB 1477— protection for infertility services.

No couple wants to experience infertility. It affects somewhere around 15% of couples. Sometimes it is from a medical condition. Sometimes it is female factor; sometimes it is male factor. Or occasionally it is both. Some need help with ovulation medications, some need IUI (intrauterine insemination where sperm is placed into the uterus with a small catheter). And then, occasionally couples need IVF (in vitro fertilization where an egg is joined with a sperm in lab, to see if an embryo will grow (which doesn't always happen)).

I feel couples should have the opportunity to pursue infertility treatments and access to this. If they didn't have access in our state, they would possibly have to travel very far to receive services. Some might say, why don't they just adopt? Have you checked the price of adoption lately and how hard the process is? Some couples wait YEARS and never are asked. We need protections for infertility services so they can try on their own or with donor egg or donor sperm if needed.

I'm not going to list all of the reasons that people might need to pursue these treatments, just know that there are many. Living in an agricultural state, where many are farmers, one of the most common causes for low sperm counts is chemical use (farmers can often have lower sperm counts due to spraying their crops and the fertilizer that is applied). Why would you not consider letting them have access to insemination or IVF where some assistance could be provided so that person could have a biological child of their own? Or if they couldn't, that they could use a donor?

This is basic health care, and I believe it should be a personal right.

Please consider supporting HB 1477. I would also be happy to answer questions you have. You can email me at erinlee79@outlook.com or erin.lee@sanfordhealth.org.

Thank you for your time!