

RE: Support of House Bill 1477

My name is Emily Lindquist. I am a North Dakota resident and intended parent through IVF. I am writing in support of House Bill 1477 written by Karl Hanson.

I am in support of HB 1477 because I believe everyone has the right to parenthood, regardless of how their baby is conceived or comes into the world. Below is my personal journey.

In 2021, we started trying to grow our family. We were naive to loss and assumed two pink lines meant we'd bring a baby home in about 8 months. We had our first two miscarriages that year. Doctors told us to just keep trying and that loss is more common than people think.

Early 2022, we lost our third baby. Doctors realized something wasn't right and began running a series of tests. From blood panels to screening for clotting factors to countless ultrasounds, nearly one hundred tests were conducted but nothing was uncovered as to why we can't stay pregnant. Our third baby was genetically tested as well, we learned she was perfectly healthy and there was no explanation for her death. We were told to try again.

In the fall of 2022, we lost our fourth baby. Genetic testing on him showed he didn't have any abnormalities that caused his death either. We completed genetic testing on my husband and me just in case there is something wrong with us that led to our miscarriages but still, we had no answers. So we tried again.

Spring of 2023, we lost our fifth baby. My doctor was out of ideas and referred me to another hospital, Sanford Reproductive Medicine, where we found the amazing team who I see now. Reproductive Endocrinologist Dr. Christina Broadwell and her team make my husband and me feel seen after everything we've been through. In my first round of tests at Sanford Reproductive Medicine, we found that I have Adenomyosis and Hashimoto's Disease—both of which increase the likelihood of miscarriage.

After my autoimmune diagnosis, I saw a functional medicine doctor to learn how I can put the disease into remission. I entirely changed my diet, balanced my hormones, and did everything thinkable to see if it would make the difference needed inside my body.

The summer of 2024, we tried again and were sure our sixth pregnancy would last. But it didn't. We miscarried again.

At that point, Dr. Broadwell at Sanford Reproductive Medicine recommended we try IVF utilizing a Gestational Carrier for the most likely chance of having a living baby.

I was heartbroken by the idea of another woman carrying our baby and "giving up" on myself. But after realizing that it ultimately doesn't matter how our baby joins the world as long as they are here, I am at peace with it and excited about our decision to proceed this way.

We began our IVF journey in October of 2024 and we have 8 healthy embryos.

Three weeks ago, we matched with a Gestational Carrier. We are honored and humbled that a selfless woman in Minot is willing to carry our baby so they can live. We are hoping to transfer one of our frozen embryos within the next six months, and there is finally a light at the end of the dark tunnel we've been in for four years.

Four years ago, we never thought we would lose a baby. We certainly never imagined IVF would be part of our journey to parenthood. Since it has to be, we are incredibly grateful for the team at Sanford Reproductive Medicine—the only remaining IVF clinic in North Dakota. Without them and their dedication to creating life, we wouldn't have any hope or direction for our future family.

Thank you for taking the time to read my story and consider my support for HB 1477. I hope our journey provides insight on why reproductive and fertility treatments are necessary for growing families in North Dakota and worth protecting.

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