

I am writing to express my strong support HB1477 protecting IVF treatment in the state of North Dakota, and to emphasize the importance of ensuring that fertility treatments remain accessible and affordable for those who need them. I am currently a reproductive endocrinologist currently practicing at the one IVF center available in the state of North Dakota, Sanford Reproductive Medicine Institute. I have been practicing in the field for 13 years, of which the last 5 have been within the state of North Dakota. I was born, raised and educated in this state and consider it a privilege to give back and provide this essential care to people and communities within North Dakota and surrounding states.

As we know, modern fertility treatments like in vitro fertilization (IVF) have revolutionized the ability for many couples and individuals to build their families. The opportunity to pursue parenthood through IVF is a benefit that was largely unavailable for most of history, and in many parts of the world, it is still not accessible. It is crucial that we protect and preserve access to this life-changing treatment within the state of North Dakota.

1 in 6 people experience the disease of infertility. Although, not every couple requires IVF therapy to conceive and build their families, over 3% of all babies born in the United States each year are conceived with the use of IVF. This results in ~100,000 births / year and over 8 million individuals have benefited from this amazing technology since its inception. Everyday there are dedicated and highly trained people that deliver this care throughout the country. We are lucky to have these skilled individuals within the state to provide this for our population.

That 1 in 6 does not include those facing cancer and other medical illness that require life saving treatments that can cause unintended negative impacts on their fertility. It does not include individuals / couples carrying genetic inheritable diseases that use our treatments to reduce the risk of passing genetic disorders to their children. These numbers also do not reflect those individuals within the LGBTQ communities that depend on these treatments to build their families.

Unfortunately, IVF and other fertility treatments are often vulnerable to being excluded or restricted by changes in legislation, whether due to misunderstandings about the medical process or broader political agendas. Protecting the right to IVF coverage is not only about preserving access to an important medical treatment—it is about safeguarding the ability to have a family. For many individuals and couples, the ability to access IVF is their only path to parenthood, and it is a right that should be protected.

I have the privilege to see the profound impact this treatment can have on individuals and families. I share the heartache and the joy with them, and strive to be the best physician I can to provide this care in an ethical and successful way. I urge you to support this important bill, so that the opportunity to create a family is one that is available to all within the state of North Dakota.

Christina Broadwell, MD