

Chairman Ruby and Members of the Committee,

I am writing this testimony in support of House Bill 1477.

My name is Margaret Prozinski and I am a wife, a daughter, a friend, but most importantly a mother. I have two beautiful twin girls Eden and Estella who were conceived through IVF. For those of you who are reading today and have children of your own, I want you to imagine for a second what life would be like without your children. The words that come to my mind as someone who has children but yearned for much time to hold them in my arms, are empty and grief. That sense of longing is an unbearable weight and an ache that I won't forget and continue to feel. For many families like mine, assisted reproductive technologies like IVF offer the chance to bring children into the world and experience the joy, laughter, and love that is parenthood.

House Bill 1477 is crucial because it ensures that fertility treatments remain accessible and are not subjected to legal or political barriers that could jeopardize the futures of countless families. Without the security of reliable access to these treatments, individuals and couples who desperately want to become parents could see their dreams and hopes dashed.

It is important to recognize that fertility treatments are not just medical procedures; they are an emotional journey. The physical, emotional, and financial toll that families endure during this process cannot be overstated. The decision to undergo IVF is often not made lightly—it involves deeply personal choices and the courage to confront the uncertainty of the future.

In 2024, my family embarked on another attempt to grow. Over the past year, we underwent three IVF transfers. Two of them ended in heartbreaking loss, and one simply did not take. Each loss brings its own wave of grief, with its own challenges, but with the unwavering support of my team at Sanford Reproductive in Fargo, we have found the strength to keep going. Sanford Reproductive is the only IVF clinic in North Dakota, and despite the constant threat of parenthood bills and efforts to abolish the very treatments they provide, often fueled by religious and political beliefs, this clinic continues to operate, offering families like mine the chance to pursue their dreams of parenthood. Without their help, we would not have the courage to keep going down this difficult road in the hopes of giving our daughters a sibling.

But without the protection of House Bill 1477, families like mine—who are already fighting so hard to achieve our dreams of parenthood—would face even greater hurdles. We would not only have to contend with the emotional and physical costs of IVF, but also the very real fear of legal or financial barriers, based on religious or political ideologies, that could prevent us from continuing our journey altogether.

Please support this bill to protect families and ensure that fertility treatments remain an accessible, compassionate option for those who need it. As I mentioned at the beginning of my testimony, I am a wife, a daughter, a friend, but most importantly, I am a mother. And I know that every one of us knows someone, whether a family member, a close friend, or a colleague who is walking this difficult path. This bill is not just for my family, but for countless others who are trying, just as I did and continue to do, to fulfill their dreams of becoming parents.

Sincerely,
Margaret Prozinski