

Chairperson Ruby and members of the Human Services Committee.

I am asking you to vote yes and support House Bill 1477. As someone who has been standing in front of you since 2019 repeating myself and fighting for North Dakota families experiencing infertility, we need to protect access to care. One in six North Dakota Residents has trouble getting pregnant or sustaining a pregnancy, this includes those experiencing a miscarriage, male factor infertility, and those who have a diagnosis of cancer.

Infertility affects a significant portion of our population, and the advancements in assisted reproductive technologies have provided hope to many aspiring parents. By enacting HB 1477, North Dakota will affirm the rights of individuals to receive fertility treatments, make informed decisions regarding their reproductive genetic material, and enter into necessary agreements with health care providers. This bill also protects healthcare providers, health carriers, and manufacturers, allowing them to offer services and products related to fertility treatments without undue restrictions.

Furthermore, HB 1477 prohibits any state agency or political subdivision from implementing policies that impede access to assisted reproduction services or fertility treatments. This protection is vital to ensure that personal reproductive decisions remain free from governmental interference.

I urge the committee to support HB 1477 and advance it through the legislative process. Focus must remain on advancing policies that ensure access to essential medical care, support reproductive health, and uphold the rights of North Dakotans to build their families without unnecessary barriers. This bill represents a significant step forward in promoting reproductive health rights and supporting individuals and families in North Dakota.

Dr. Tara Harding