

Chairman Ruby and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to you today as a concerned citizen and a practicing Women's Health Nurse Practitioner in North Dakota who believes that access to contraception is a fundamental right for all individuals. I am requesting your support for HB1478 ensuring that affordable and reliable contraception is accessible to everyone in our state.

Access to contraception is essential not only for preventing unintended pregnancies but also for its vital role in managing various medical conditions. Contraceptives are commonly used to treat a wide range of health issues such as polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), endometriosis, heavy menstrual bleeding, and irregular cycles, among others. For many individuals, access to contraception can mean relief from painful symptoms, improved quality of life, and prevention of long-term health complications. Denying access to these medications for medical reasons is not only a health issue but an infringement on personal well-being.

When individuals have access to affordable, reliable birth control, they are better able to plan their pregnancies, reducing the need for abortions. In a state that (unfortunately) has so many people that feel they should control a woman's right to make decisions about her own body, I certainly hope that the connection between reliable contraception and subsequent reduction in unintended pregnancies is easy to comprehend. Unfortunately, for some, the use of contraception to prevent a pregnancy while trying to escape an unsafe and abusive relationship is also a reality. By making contraception more accessible, we can ensure that people have control over their reproductive health and can make the decisions that are best for their lives and futures.

Barriers to contraception—whether political, financial, logistical, or cultural—still exist in our state. It is crucial that we work toward removing these barriers and ensuring that all residents of our state can access contraception, whether for reproductive purposes or to manage medical conditions, without unnecessary obstacles including politics in their doctor's office.

I urge you to support policies and bills like HB 1478 that make contraception more accessible and affordable to the incredible women of our state. Your sister, daughter, niece, friend, or family member will thank you.

Respectfully,

Alli Harrison