

Hello. My name is Kaydee Pederson. It is an honor it is to be here in support of House Bill 1147. I'd like to start by telling you all a little bit about me and why this bill is so important to me.

As I said, my name is Kaydee Pederson. I am thirty years old. I live in Minot with my wonderful husband Matt. We've been married for over four years, and we are ready to begin the next phase in our life: starting a family and becoming parents.

Starting a family was never going to be easy for us however. I was diagnosed at birth with a genetic disorder called Turner Syndrome (TS). One common characteristic of TS, besides short stature, is infertility. TS can cause underdeveloped ovaries, premature ovarian failure, and diminished ovarian reserve. In simple medical terms, most women with Turner Syndrome are missing vital parts of the reproductive system: functioning ovaries and viable eggs.

It was never secret from me that because I have Turner Syndrome, having kids naturally was not going to be an option for me. Knowing this fact all my life and being open about it does not make the heartache of infertility any easier. Every pregnancy announcement brings a tinge of jealousy I wish I didn't feel. Each hug from my nieces and nephews makes my heart yearn for my own child to hold. I try to keep these feelings inside because it is not anyone's fault I have to take a different route toward family building.

My amazing and supportive parents kept my heart open about adoption being my future option to build my family. No doctor or medical provider, that I can recall anyway, ever discussed my future fertility options with me. Who would expect a teenager or a college student to fully understand the emotional and financial impact infertility will have on their future? To be perfectly honest, it did not occur to me until a few years ago there could be another path besides adoption for me and my husband to take to grow our family.

Knowing we have a choice like IVF using the gift of egg donation gives me so much hope I didn't know I could have. I never dreamt it would be a possibility for me to experience being pregnant or giving birth. IVF with donor eggs allows me that chance. The fact that our future child, or children, will not share my DNA has never fazed me. DNA is just a blueprint. Donor egg or adoption, the child raised in our home will be loved, cherished, and most importantly, wanted.

Want and love however are sometimes not enough. Anyone experiencing infertility can tell you that. We have the science, medicine, and technology to do amazing things to help those affected by infertility, which is a medical condition. Cost should not be a factor in deciding to receive care for treating a medical condition. Right now, cost is one of the biggest factors preventing my husband and I moving forward with treatment. The \$20,000 lifetime maximum coverage our current insurance provides still leaves us with a minimum of \$10,000 out of pocket for one attempt to try the treatment route we need to go through. We recently became debt free, aside from our mortgage, and we're saving all we can to pay for treatment ourselves. It takes time to save though, and frankly, after so many years of believing I had no route but adoption, I'm impatient. I know though that we've worked too hard over the last fourteen months to get out of debt, so my impatience has to take a back seat for our future financial security.

I was born with underdeveloped ovaries and no eggs. In my case, nature literally said "No." Science for years has been saying "Maybe." I truly believe when my husband and I are able to move forward with treatment financially that God will say "Yes."

This bill is a huge step forward toward that yes. This bill represents hope. Hope North Dakotans affected by infertility need.

Thank you.