

May 5, 2021

Dear Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services,

I am writing in support of LD 1539, An Act to Provide Access to Fertility Care, because infertility has impacted me and my family.

My husband and I were married October 4th, 2014 with no reason to believe we would ever have any trouble starting a family. After six months with no luck, we reached out to the local OB provider. They recommended we go back after we had tried for at least a year. After a year went by, I went back to get more testing. We had "unexplained infertility", meaning there is nothing to explain it. To make a long story short, we ended up trying for almost four years before we knew we needed to get more help. We started off with Intrauterine Insemination (IUI) and after a few rounds and a few early miscarriages, the doctor recommended we try IVF instead. In the midst, they took me in to do an exploratory surgery to see if the shape of my uterus could be the culprit for my recurrent miscarriages. We had our egg retrieval in November 2018. After having a biopsy with a mock cycle, we transferred our first of two embryos in July 2019. This again ended in miscarriage. After much research, together with our provider, we did more testing. I had a recurrent loss blood panel, ultrasound, and a couple more biopsies to finally discover that I produce too much Natural Killer Cell, which was causing my body to fight off the embryos. For our second (and final embryo), we had a new medication regime and I had done everything to get my body and mind in a perfect space to become a mom. In January 2020, we transferred our embryo who became our now seven-month-old son, Benjamin. After six years, we finally became parents.

With all that said, we have spent over \$30,000 out of pocket to pay for these treatments. It will cost us at least another \$15,000-\$20,000 to go through another IVF cycle, since we do not have any embryos left. Unfortunately, we can't expand our family anymore because of the cost. Passing this bill may allow us to give Benji a brother or a sister and a chance to complete our family.

I consider us to be incredibly fortunate that we had success with IVF. Please vote that LD 1539 ought to pass for so many others who deserve that same chance. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Meghan Benner