

To Committee Chair Senator Wiklund, Vice Chair Senator Mann, and committee members,

Thank you for this opportunity to submit public testimony on Senator McEwan's bill SF 1 on establishing reproductive health rights, also known as the Protect Reproductive Options (PRO) Act. I would like my testimony to be entered into the public record.

Like many Minnesotans, I was devastated by the Supreme Court's decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* to rescind nearly a half century of reproductive freedom established by *Roe v. Wade*. As a young woman of childbearing age, having autonomy over my own body is essential for my life, career, and wellbeing. I am choosing to pursue a PhD in neuroscience at the University of Minnesota, a rigorous path that would be made nearly impossible by being forced to give birth to and raise a child. I am grateful that I currently have the right to make these types of choices in my own life. I strongly believe that this bill will help ensure that women and all people will be able to make health care decisions in their own best interest, now and in the future.

I would also like to point out that there are no other situations in which a person is required to use their body or life to save another person. No one can be forced to donate an organ, even to save someone else's life; the United States Supreme Court has ruled that police officers are not obligated to protect citizens by sacrificing their lives. I respect the religious debate about when a life begins, but that should be wholly removed from public policy decisions. Women, as equal citizens of this country, cannot and should not be required to sacrifice their physical and emotional wellbeing for the sake of carrying a pregnancy to term.

I am very proud that Minnesota has, thus far, been a leader in protecting the right to reproductive choice. However, as we have seen in both national and local politics, this right is constantly under attack. The PRO Act is an invaluable opportunity to preserve safe and legal abortion in our state. It will also have important ramifications for the ability of people in our neighboring states, all of which have severely restricted or banned abortion. By supporting this bill, you can help your fellow citizens access potentially life-saving reproductive care. I spent about fifty hours this past election season door knocking across the Minneapolis suburbs, listening to voters about the issues they care about, and many people voiced support for protecting abortion. I hope you will listen to their voices, and mine, and support the PRO Act.

Thank you very much for your time and service.

Sincerely,
Rachel Dick
Minneapolis, MN