

March 20, 2024

Re: Support for Senate File 1704

Dear Senator Wiklund and members of the Committee:

My fiancé, Ryan, was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia back in January 2014 (at the age of 26) and has been in remission since April 2014.

Since remission, he has had a significant number of expensive medical issues stemming from his already expensive life-saving treatments including osteonecrosis- which is bone deterioration, teeth deterioration, cataracts in both eyes, and infertility.

We had been friends for a couple years prior to diagnosis, and together for about a year at time of diagnosis, so a family was not yet on our radar.

He was told his treatment would leave him infertile and was given roughly two days to decide if he would like to save sperm for future. At the encouragement of a nurse at the U of MN, Chrissy, he decided he would opt to save for the future. He paid over \$300 a year to save the sperm for several years- totaling over \$3300 to date.

Despite being told he would be infertile post-treatment, we tried for a couple years to see if we could get pregnant naturally because we knew how expensive the IVF process can be. We finally took official tests and steps to check fertility and we confirmed all sperm to be inactive, so we looked into alternative IVF routes.

We began the process of egg retrieval in June of 2021, which was both intense and costly. I had some insurance coverage thankfully, but the medications are not covered, and they are SO EXPENSIVE (I think we spent roughly \$8K which is a lot less than most), but we were able to get three viable embryos out of the process.

We implanted our "top embryo" in October 2021, which came with more cos, but we welcomed our sweet girl, Kennedy, in June of 2022.

We didn't have to pay for storage of our remaining two embryos for the first year, which sounds nice, but doesn't make much difference if you are already pregnant... can't really do much with them anyways.

Once we received the first bill for our embryos, we made the decision to no longer store Ryan's sperm because between the two bills and a new baby it was a lot of money. It felt like a selfish choice the process of egg retrieval was so awful for me-both emotionally and financially- that I decided I never wanted to do that again, but the "what-ifs" became very prevalent. What if the remaining two weren't successful, what if something happened to me and Ryan wanted future children, what if something happened to our relationship, etc.

We continue to pay \$313 to store our remaining two embryos every 6 months until we decide we are in a place where we can create another human. It is so hard because we know that there is really no such

thing these days are a "financially secure time" to have another child. We have had many medical issues this past year with Ryan having a hip replacement (and still needing the other one replaced) and seizures- all which have been directly related to past treatments. There are obviously no guarantees with these remaining two embryos, and we know we will have more costs associated if we do get the chance to utilize them.

Cancer treatment took so much from Ryan. We are so grateful that he is alive, but it has cost him so much emotionally, physically, and financially. We have been so blessed with support, but patients like him should not be forced to make these kinds of decisions based on whether they can afford fertility preservation.

We need to be doing better for cancer patients and survivors. They already fight so hard. We need to fight for them. Please support Senate File 1704.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Stein
11071 S. Diamond Lake Rd.
Champlin, MN 55316
763-742-6295
jenniferraestein1@yahoo.com

