

March 20, 2024

The Honorable Melissa Wiklund
Chair, Senate Health and Human Services Committee
2107 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155

The Honorable Paul Utke
Ranking Member, Senate Health and Human Services Committee
2403 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: Support for Senate File 4602 as amended

Dear Senator Wiklund, Senator Utke, and members of the committee:

20 rounds of chemotherapy

365 nights in the hospital

26 sessions of radiation

Over 60 doses of spinal chemotherapy

2 clinical trials

3 states

5 hospitals

2 bone marrow transplants

1 major spinal surgery

And countless blood and platelet transfusions

Nothing can prepare you for watching your teenage daughter go through all of this before reaching the age of 18. At the same time, we consider ourselves to be one of the fortunate families – our daughter Bella has been cancer free for over 2 years and is thriving as a college sophomore. As you can imagine, however, the brutality of the treatments that saved her life also caused significant health problems that she will deal with her entire life – fertility being one of them.

Since Bella was diagnosed early, she had the opportunity to participate in a fertility preservation clinical trial for young women about to undergo chemotherapy. At the age of 14, when other girls her age were deciding what to wear to school, she made the decision to have one of her ovaries removed and preserved in order to give her a chance at having biological children one day.

As difficult as this was for us as parents, we, again, consider ourselves to be fortunate – she had an opportunity that not many young adults have. As Bella gets closer to the time when she begins to think about starting a family, we are thankful that she has an option. Yet, this option will not be an easy one. It will require specialists, procedures, and an unknown number of medical appointments and medications, and it is not guaranteed to be successful.

She has been through more than anyone should have to go through and has fought hard every step of the way to get where she is today. We write this letter to ask you as lawmakers and decision makers to be sure that financial issues are not the obstacle that prevents her from having children. Cancer took away 4 years of her life, her ability to go to high school, spend time with friends and family, participate in sports and activities, learn to drive, and so much more. We ask that you not allow it to take one more thing away from her.

We ask for your support of Senate File 4602.

Respectfully,

Marla and Sean Sciara

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