

17 March, 2024

Senator Melissa Wiklund, Chair
Committee on Health and Human Services
2107 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

RE: Support MN Building Families Act - SF 1704 (Maye Quade)

Dear Chair Wiklund and Committee Members:

On behalf of Men Having Babies, I am writing to express our strong support for The Minnesota Building Families Act and to urge the Commerce Finance and Policy Committee to advance this bill out of Committee. Men Having Babies is a nonprofit organization that provides guidance, advocacy, and financial assistance for over 16,000 current and future gay surrogacy parents worldwide.

The Minnesota Building Families Act updates access to critical reproductive healthcare. It improves care by requiring coverage for infertility and fertility preservation for men and women in private and public health plans. It covers in vitro fertilization (IVF) and other infertility treatments, as well as fertility preservation for cancer patients and others at risk of medically induced infertility. The bill reflects the recently updated medical definition of infertility, which includes the LGBTQ+ community.

According to the CDC, one in seven people with a uterus has trouble getting pregnant or sustaining a pregnancy. Infertility cuts across socioeconomic levels and all racial, ethnic, and religious lines. The intersection of race, ethnicity, and immigrant status with environmental and social determinants of health puts many marginalized communities at a higher risk of infertility. The American Medical Association, the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, and the World Health Organization recognize infertility as a disease. As such, infertility should be covered by health insurance like other diseases.

Without insurance coverage, people are forced to shoulder the entire cost of fertility services themselves, adding financial stress and debt on top of the already considerable emotional toll of infertility. Many can't afford to start treatments. Others stop prematurely when their savings run out. Access to building a family should not be a privilege afforded only to those with means.

Minnesota should join the growing list of 21 states that require fertility coverage and join the small and growing number of states providing protections for their LGBTQ+ communities, as well. As proven in these states, insurance covering in vitro fertilization (IVF) decreases the chance of multiple births, and lowering multiple births decreases overall healthcare costs and results in healthier babies and families.

Sincerely,

Ron Poole-Day, Executive Director