

Submitter: Aubrey Cecil
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care
Measure: SB491

As an Oregonian who is currently in the midst of infertility, I ask you to advance SB 491.

Infertility is often called the carousel of hell. If you've gone through it, you know it's an apt description. Every month is an unending cycle of grief, hope, and grief again. But you stay on, unable to get off because to do so means giving up something that seems to come so easily to everyone else. Giving up means letting go of your dreams for what the rest of your life looks like, what the rest of your family's life looks like. You hold on until you can't, and sometimes that can't is something you have no control over.

My husband and I are blessed with a beautiful seven year old daughter- she came to us with trying for only seven months, and at the time, I truly didn't know how lucky we were. When our daughter was one, we started discussing when we wanted another. But financially, it wouldn't be responsible to start- not yet, anyway. Around that time, my career path shifted, and it was three years until we felt stable enough to start trying again.

The first few months were hopeful and exciting- we would have a new baby, and our daughter would have a sibling! I became pregnant within four months of removing my IUD, but lost the pregnancy after only a few short weeks. We mourned, and told each other that we would keep trying.

Now, three years later, we're still trying. We've done a fair amount of testing, paying cash out of pocket as we can for any testing we can afford at the time. Thus far, along with the HSG, SIS, surgical hysteroscopy, etc, we've had three rounds of TI and four IUIs. None of it was covered, barring part of the surgery. So far, we've spent over \$15,000 to try and build our family, with no real answers to show for it, and certainly no results. This doesn't include the therapy costs to deal with the deluge of emotions, depression looming large, that come with infertility. The invisible costs, though, have been the worst. It's hard to feel joy for others when they have happy news when it serves as a stark reminder as what we have lost.

We have our IVF consult in 10 days as I'm writing this. We're waiting on the projected costs. I am aware that I'm writing from a place of privilege, given that I already have a living child and that IVF is an option for us. That is what makes this bill so important. One in eight couples experience infertility- ONE IN EIGHT! That's one in eight couples who are stuck on this same cycle of grief and hope month after month, year

after year. That's one in eight couples who have to re-evaluate what they are able to do in order to accomplish a basic human function that they so desperately want. That's one in eight couples who did not ask for this and have no way out except for medical intervention or a miracle that feels less possible each day and each negative test.

I urge you to please advance SB 491. The financial aspect is incredibly daunting, which is what makes this bill so important. So many people on this carousel have to get off because they cannot pay for it any longer- they cannot have a family because fertility treatment is often prohibitively expensive. Families stall where they are, dreams gone because of a lack of easily accessible health care. Please join the 19 other states that have moved forward towards accessible fertility treatments, not just for those with the means to pursue it. Oregonians deserve the chance to build their families as they choose, and should not be stopped by a medical condition or conditions that they have no control over. Things like endometriosis, diminished ovarian reserve, cancer, or, like me, unexplained. No one wishes for infertility- it's something that happens to you. It's something that happens to one in eight.

Each month, even as the likelihood of conceiving recedes into an unlikely horizon, I still hope. Give others the chance for hope as well, not just those who can afford it outright.

Thank you,

Aubrey Cecil