

Submitter: Marissa Bonus  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care  
Measure: SB491

My name is Dr Marissa Bonus and a fellow physician in the reproductive endocrinology and infertility department at OHSU.

Thirty-six years ago my older brother, was hospitalized for a week when he was only 4 months old. He was admitted to the hospital for high fevers and abnormal blood counts. The doctors couldn't figure out the cause and they attributed the aberrant lab values to an unidentifiable viral illness. As he grew older he never met his developmental milestones. Just before his first birthday his health rapidly declined. He required a nasogastric tube to eat and had persistent fevers. Corey died a week after his first birthday. The night before he died, he was diagnosed with hematophagocytic lymphohistiocytosis (HLH), a rare and incurable disease that, at that time, was presumed to be inherited.

A year after my brother died, they decided that having more children was a priority for them. There was a 25% chance of my parents having another child affected with HLH who would not survive. My parents were determined to not to have another child with HLH and they decided to pursue alternative options. My parents adopted my older sister and then turned to intrauterine insemination with donor sperm to have me. If my brother had lived and my parents had not used a sperm donor, then I wouldn't be here today.

My parents demonstrated that there isn't 'one way' to create a family and they inspired me to take care of patients just like them. Infertility comes in many different forms and this bill opens doors to families who may not have otherwise been able to have children. Oregonians deserve to create families in their own, unique way. I hope you all consider supporting this bill.