

Submitter: Kaitlin Druffel  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care  
Measure: SB491

I am writing you today in support of SB491.

When I was 25, I was diagnosed with a chronic autoimmune disease that was slowly destroying me. I had just gotten engaged to my best friend, and the man I loved. We were young, but my partner and I spent a significant amount of time and money with doctors to get me better. Even with insurance, this cost us thousands of dollars and we were told that we should expect to continue to endure many of these expenses for the rest of our lives. No one could tell us what caused my disease, I was just told I was unlucky. The only positive that came out of it was, my fiance and I realized how deep our love ran, and how much we were willing to invest in building a life together.

Years later, after getting married and working to budget our lifestyle for my disease, we were given additional bad news as we started to work towards building our future family together. We were told we had fertility problems and the likelihood of convincing a child naturally was incredibly slim. We were unlucky again and our best option was IVF. We were already used to paying thousands a year for my disease, and now we were supposed to add the cost of IVF on top of this? Would it really be fair to tell us we had to choose between keeping me alive and healthy vs having a child due to money? Both situations were not the fault of our own, sometimes the cards just don't fall in your favor. No one chooses an autoimmune disease and no one chooses infertility.

We are incredibly blessed for me to work for an employer who has IVF insurance so we were able to make the decision easily. This is not the case for the vast majority of people. Having a child should not be for the privileged who can afford it or who work for the few employers who are kind enough to care. The cost of IVF is astronomically high and not something that the average person can easily pay for out of pocket.

IVF is not an easy journey physically or emotionally and is not something anyone would go through unless they had an immense amount of love to give to a child. As a resident of the progressive leader for our nation, I hope we can continue to be proud Oregonians with your support of the passage of SB491.

Thank you,  
Kaitlin