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On Behalf Of: My Fertility Health Inc  
Committee: Senate Committee On Health Care  
Measure: SB491

Thank you all for the opportunity to share today.

We live by a motto in our home, "We can do hard things". We have the privilege of raising this beautiful little girl after 10 long grueling years - emotionally, financially, physically and mentally with a diagnosis of unexplained infertility and becoming parents through embryo donation and gestational surrogacy. Her birth story is one we know God had a hand in. They say it takes a village to raise a child but sometimes it takes a village to have one.

While Oregon continues to navigate wildfires and the "hard things" we face in our careers to serve the communities like we love, like the pandemic, one thing that remains, we can do hard things.

I'm a nurse and business owner here in Oregon & my husband a firefighter for the past 20 years faces potential danger each day he leaves for his 24 to 48 hour shift. Firefighters and first responders have a 1.5 to 2 greater risk of experiencing infertility.

"In addition to the danger of putting out fires, firefighters and are at an increased risk for different types of cancer due to the smoke and hazardous chemicals they are exposed to in the line of duty. There have been multiple studies that show this increased risk for cancer." - Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

Access to coverage for all, including first responders and front line workers could be critical for fertility preservation for those interested in future family building.

The NIH did a study around stress and infertility showing that "41.3% of the infertile women had the symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder. Due to the relationships of post-traumatic stress disorder with the quality of life and infertility stress, providing regular designed psychological interventions is recommended for infertile individuals."

While we do the hard things every day, one thing we have learned over the past few years is the importance of family. With fertility on a finite time-bound spectrum, having access and coverage to grow your family needs to be inclusive, comprehensive and an essential part of healthcare for Oregonians. This seems like the "easy thing" to provide to Oregonians with the opportunity to have a family while facing infertility is one of the hard things we navigate.

Thank you,

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