

February 11th, 2025

Support House Bill 2959, Oregon Family Building Act, in Oregon is not just a matter of policy; it is a deeply personal journey for many, including my own family. The stark reality is that no one dreams of facing infertility, yet it is a challenge that countless individuals and couples endure. No one wishes to be born with an unexplained idiopathic endocrine condition that leads to infertility, nor does anyone aspire to serve their community as a first responder while grappling with the risks associated with exposure to carcinogens that may jeopardize their dreams of family.

The above are our personal and specific examples. Our story is a testament to the emotional and financial toll that infertility can take. After seven years of heart-wrenching recurrent miscarriages and the pain of losing nine pregnancies, we found ourselves at a crossroads. The desire to become parents was unwavering, yet the path was fraught with obstacles. Ultimately, we welcomed our daughter through embryo donation via a gestational carrier—a journey that required immense resilience and significant financial investment. She is the joy of my lifetime and often referred to as my greatest “Roaring Adventure.” They say it takes a village to raise a child; I believe that sometimes it takes a village to have a child.

House Bill 2959 aims to address the gaps in support for families like ours who face infertility challenges. It recognizes the need for better access to healthcare and resources for those who have invested not only their hopes but also their financial resources in the pursuit of parenthood. By advocating for this bill, we not only honor our struggles but also pave the way for others who may be silently facing similar battles.

In supporting House Bill 2959, we are not just fighting for legislation; we are championing a cause that will provide essential support and recognition for the many individuals and families who long to experience the joys of parenthood without the burden of overwhelming obstacles. With the median household income in Oregon just over \$75,000, the lack of infertility coverage has significant physical, emotional, and financial health impacts on individuals and families trying to conceive.

The physical health impacts include delayed or inadequate treatment, as many people without insurance delay or forgo necessary medical interventions, which reduces their chances of conception. Additionally, some may opt for lower-cost but less effective treatments or transfer multiple embryos in IVF to save money, increasing the risk of complications like multiple pregnancies. Chronic stress from infertility can lead to high blood pressure, sleep disturbances, and weakened immune function.

The emotional and mental health impacts are equally concerning. Higher rates of anxiety and depression are common, as infertility is linked to psychological distress, and financial burdens amplify feelings of helplessness and isolation. The emotional and financial stress can also strain

marriages, friendships, and family relationships, while many individuals may struggle with feelings of inadequacy, guilt, or grief when they cannot afford treatment.

As part of a first responder family, I know firsthand the sacrifices that individuals and families make in serving our beautiful State of Oregon. We also witness the love and support from an incredible first responder community, yet for many departments and agencies, fertility services are not covered by health insurance.

I share today in support of HB 2959, both as a former patient with a diagnosis of unexplained infertility and as someone with over 25 years of experience in wellness nursing and as an Oregon business owner. As a native Oregonian, I actively work in the fertility space as the co-founder of My Fertility Health, Inc., co-founder of Oregon Fertility Advocates and in a clinical capacity with Pacific NW Fertility, serving those who seek reproductive health and fertility support while accessing family-building resources.

Please approve HB 2959.

Thank you,
Mollie Huyck
Clackamas County