

May 4, 2023

House Health Care Committee
Vermont State House
115 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05633-5301

Dear Chair Houghton, Vice Chair McFaun, and Health Care committee members,

I am writing to express my strong support for H.369, “An act relating to health insurance and Medicaid coverage for fertility-related services” and respectfully ask that the committee advance this bill next year. This legislation would require private health insurance plans and Vermont Medicaid to provide coverage for fertility care.

Health insurance policies in Vermont should provide coverage for fertility diagnostic care, fertility treatment, and medically necessary fertility preservation.

I have been a public high school teacher in Vermont for five years, and for the majority of that time, my husband and I have been walking through a journey of primary infertility and repeat pregnancy loss. Over the past 4 years, I have experienced an endometriosis diagnosis, three heartbreaking miscarriages (one after an originally successful IVF transfer), and a seemingly endless parade of negative pregnancy tests. This experience has deeply affected every area of my life. As a result of my infertility, I carry deep and complex grief every day. I struggle with social isolation in a community where I have yet to find anyone who shares my experience. I feel lonely in a society that centers families. I manage grueling medical treatments. I grapple with financial burdens from healthcare that most of my peers simply do not have to deal with. All of this feels like a full time job.

I will always remember the day, early in 2020, when I learned that my husband’s and my health insurance, which we had through my job as a VT public school teacher, did not provide any coverage for fertility treatment. It felt like being kicked when I was already knocked down: not only did we have to face this unexpected, life-altering loss, but we had to face it without insurance coverage. I felt hopeless, angry, and invalidated. I wondered why treatment which felt medically necessary for me was treated as “elective” in Vermont.

My husband and I have had to seek out insurance creatively in the years since that discovery: he currently works at Starbucks part time, just so that we can have insurance that will provide us with coverage for treatment. In the near future, he will likely need to give up this job in order to make space for his upcoming counseling practicum, and I will need to find a job teaching outside the state of Vermont. I do not wish to leave my teaching job – I love the school where I work, and I care deeply for my students. However, unless a change is made, I will have no other options. This is why I feel so strongly that Vermont, like all other states in New England, should provide coverage for fertility care. Making this change would make a huge difference in

my life and in the lives of many people who are going through the very difficult experience of infertility.

Thank you for your consideration.
Sincerely,

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