

To the House and Senate Appropriation Committees,

My name is Britney Hatch and I'm one of your constituents located in Rutland County. I'm writing in support of a FY26 one-time budget request from Empty Arms Vermont (which would fall under VDH's Family & Child Health) that focuses on strengthening peer support for pregnancy and infant loss.

I support Empty Arms Vermont \$40,000 one-time funding request.

This issue is important to me because in 2021 I was thrown into a world I had never imagined for myself. At 28 weeks pregnant I went into labor delivering my son Malakai, who was dead.

There was no warning, No traumatic incident, or any genetic reason for his passing. With the grace and kindness of my hospital providers I was connected to this group. Even with all the doctors appointments, therapy sessions, and support of friends and family in my close circle.(whom i am very grateful for) This group is honestly what saved me.

The education and support for women and their families, by others who know how you truly feel in this world cannot be compared. Please know the work done here goes far beyond women being able to discuss their loss. But I believe it truly fosters growth and repair for mental health and breaking unhealthy familial and societal bias.

I ask that you support this request as well in your committee discussions.

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