

Chairman LeRe, Vice Chair White, ranking member Leland, and members of the committee- Thank you for allowing me to tell you my story and why HB 64/ SB 288 are so important.

My name is Carrie Lauterbach, I reside in Oakwood Ohio, and am here as a proponent of HB 64 and Senate Bill 288, especially the provisions regarding Fertility Fraud. I am here today because I am the product of FF (fertility fraud) and would like to tell you about my experience as a doctor conceived child.

After taking a direct-to-consumer DNA test, I discovered I had 6 half siblings and consequently discovered all the half siblings are related to the Fertility Doctor our mothers used to conceive us. My parents went to a fertility doctor in Cincinnati to conceive both my sister and me. There they were asked to complete paperwork in which they chose an anonymous sperm donor who they believed would closely resemble my father. They were also told that the donor was a medical student at a nearby University. It turns out the doctor used his own sample instead of that of the anonymous donor my parents had chosen. Unfortunately my parents' story was echoed by other families who used the same fertility doctor. The fact that a medical professional, a doctor, would take advantage of a vulnerable family in this way is shocking. But perhaps not as shocking as the fact that it wasn't illegal to do so. And even today in the State of Ohio, it is not a crime to commit Fertility Fraud. Which is why it is so important for you to pass this legislation.

I would also like to share with you why I take such offense to what the doctor did. I am not just the product of FF, I am a medical professional who works in OB, **and** I also needed fertility treatment when it was time for my husband and I to start our family. Fertility treatment builds a unique doctor-patient relationship, based on trust, rapport, compassion, and understanding through a series of visits over weeks, months and sometimes years. There are many emotional highs and lows throughout the fertility treatment journey which patients experience and share with their doctors -creating that unique bond. In fact, many families use the same fertility doctors to conceive multiple children- which is what my parents did as well. Yes, the doctor used his own sample for both of us. Because of my experience with fertility treatment, and understanding the oaths medical professionals take, I find the doctor's actions particularly reprehensible. I can only imagine how the parents must feel when they learn of the deception by their trusted doctors. Many of these families are too ashamed to even talk about what the doctor did. I am here today because I don't want other families to discover and deal with the pain involved in finding out that such an egregious act was performed to conceive their children. We all know that Fertility Fraud is immoral and unethical, it needs to be illegal as well. I ask you to make sure the individuals who perform such acts in Ohio are held accountable. Please don't allow other families go through the pain, embarrassment, and heartache of finding out such deceit. Please vote for and swiftly pass HB 64/SB 288.

Thank you,

Carrie Lauterbach

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