

Chairman LaRe, Vice-Chair Swearingen, and Ranking Member Leland my name is Carrie Lauterbach, I reside in Dayton, Ohio. I am here as a proponent of House Bill 64 because I am a product of fertility fraud. I would like to tell you my story as a doctor conceived child.

After taking a direct-to-consumer DNA test, I discovered I have 6 half-siblings and consequently discovered all 7 half-siblings are related to the fertility doctor our mothers used to conceive us. My mother went to a fertility doctor in Cincinnati to conceive my sister and me. The doctor asked my parents to complete paperwork selecting traits of a sperm donor who would closely resemble my father. The sperm donor was to be a medical student, but instead the doctor used his own sperm without the knowledge and consent of my parents. My father has since passed. I wish my mom could be here but she is so ashamed and embarrassed that she does not want to talk in public about what the doctor did. My parents really trusted the doctor. He seemed to connect with them on a personal level, understanding the emotional highs and lows associated with fertility treatment. And I am all too familiar with the highs and lows that go along with fertility treatment having gone through treatment myself. Fertility treatment is unique in that the doctor-patient relationship is based on trust, rapport, understanding and compassion built through a series of visits over many weeks, months and sometimes years. Many women use the same doctor to conceive more than one child which is what my parents did as well. Yes, the doctor used his sperm not just for myself, but for my sister also. The amount of pain involved for my mother is far greater than I could ever imagine. She, like victims of other crimes, is too ashamed and embarrassed to tell her story. She is the reason I am here today. I don't want another family to discover and deal with the pain involved in finding out that such an egregious act was performed to conceive their children.

As we all know, the act itself is unethical, but the fact that it is not illegal is shocking. Many of my half-siblings and I would like to change that, ensuring any doctor who would perform such an act in Ohio would be held accountable. We would like you to make the act of a doctor utilizing his own sperm without the consent and knowledge of his trusting patients to be illegal. This is a profound betrayal of the doctor-patient relationship. Committing such a fraudulent act upon a family must result in punishment. We ask you to make sure no other families have to go through the pain, embarrassment, and heartache of finding out such deceit. I feel the punishment should match the crime and not be a financial "slap on the wrist" but rather a criminal act befitting a person who perpetrates such a deep level of deceit and fraud.

Thank you for your time, I am happy to answer any questions.