

To Rep. Jamie Becker-Finn, Chair of the Judiciary, Finance and Civil Law Committee, and members of the committee.

I submit this written testimony in strong support of HF 91, a bill to repeal abortion restrictions.

My dear friend got devastating news at week 16 of a much-wanted pregnancy, that a lethal and untreatable condition had been detected, preventing bone formation. The fetus might survive to term, but at birth, she'd lack a functional rib cage, so her tiny lungs wouldn't be able to expand and contract, and she would suffocate and die. My friend's California doctors said they would support her, whatever her decision, without fear of civil action, as they could feel here in Minnesota.

Agonized by the thought of this suffering, my friend opted for an abortion. Not because she wanted one. No one wants an abortion. But because she felt it was the right thing to do. Her doctors explicitly assured her that the anesthesia dose would prevent the fetus from feeling pain. They provided high quality, compassionate care not because they were required to by law, but because they practice ethical and sound medicine.

Because she was in California, her doctor was not required to ask personal questions like "why are you getting this abortion?" and report her answers, like doctors must do here in Minnesota.

Her California doctor was not required to make completely false statements like, "abortion may increase your risk of breast cancer," as they must do here in Minnesota.

I do medical research. My husband is an ER doc. I strive to conduct and publish the most accurate and ethical research that I can. My husband and clinical colleagues strive to provide the best and most ethical medical care that they can. Minnesota abortion providers do the same.

Abortion is reproductive healthcare. HF 91 is needed to repeal laws that single out abortion, stigmatize it, and restrict it in ways not applied to other kinds of healthcare.

Does a surgeon ask, "are you getting these implants because you're a breast cancer survivor? Or are they purely cosmetic?" Or, "did you get this lung cancer because you smoke?" Or, "did you get this cancer because you didn't go in for your colonoscopies?" Does a urologist ask, "are you getting this penile implant for medical reasons? Or purely for sexual pleasure?" Does an ER doc ask, "were you drinking when you drove your car into the tree, shattered your legs, and killed another person?" Are they required to report such information to the state? Do they give adequate anesthesia because they're required to by law? No. Personal ethics, standards of care, codes of practice, medical boards, ensure that they provide high quality medical care. Abortion care should be treated no differently.

Please support HF 91. Thank you very much for your time and service.

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