

2023 HOUSE HUMAN SERVICES

HB 1171

2023 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Human Services Committee Pioneer Room, State Capitol

HB 1171
1/17/2023

Relating to prohibiting a forced or coerced abortion; and to provide a penalty.

Chairman Weisz called the meeting to order at 2:22 PM.

Chairman Robin Weisz, Vice Chairman Matthew Ruby, Reps. Karen A. Anderson, Mike Beltz, Clayton Fegley, Kathy Frelich, Dawson Holle, Dwight Kiefert, Carrie McLeod, Todd Porter, Brandon Prichard, Karen M. Rohr, Jayme Davis, and Gretchen Dobervich. All present.

Discussion Topics:

- Consistent definition of abortion and coercion.

Rep. Steiner introduced HB 1171, speaking in support.

Sen. Myrdal spoke in support of bill.

Christopher Dodson, Executive Director of the North Dakota Catholic Conference, supportive testimony (#13823).

Robin Johnson, citizen from Hebron, ND, spoke in support of bill.

Additional written testimony:

Doug Sharbono, North Dakota citizen, supportive testimony (#13723).

Sierra Heitkamp, Legislative Director for North Dakota Right to Life, (#13760).

Chairman Weisz adjourned the meeting at 2:29 PM.

Phillip Jacobs, Committee Clerk

2023 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Human Services Committee Pioneer Room, State Capitol

HB 1171
1/17/2023

Relating to prohibiting a forced or coerced abortion; and to provide a penalty.

Chairman Weisz called the meeting to order at 2:38 PM.

Chairman Robin Weisz, Vice Chairman Matthew Ruby, Reps. Karen A. Anderson, Mike Beltz, Clayton Fegley, Kathy Frelich, Dawson Holle, Dwight Kiefert, Carrie McLeod, Todd Porter, Brandon Prichard, Karen M. Rohr, Jayme Davis, and Gretchen Dobervich. All present.

Discussion Topics:

- Consistent definition of abortion and coercion.

Chairman Weisz called for a discussion on HB 1171.

Rep. Porter moved a do pass on HB 1171.

Seconded by Rep. Prichard.

Roll Call Vote:

Representatives	Vote
Representative Robin Weisz	Y
Representative Matthew Ruby	Y
Representative Karen A. Anderson	Y
Representative Mike Beltz	Y
Representative Jayme Davis	Y
Representative Gretchen Dobervich	Y
Representative Clayton Fegley	Y
Representative Kathy Frelich	Y
Representative Dawson Holle	Y
Representative Dwight Kiefert	Y
Representative Carrie McLeod	Y
Representative Todd Porter	Y
Representative Brandon Prichard	Y
Representative Karen M. Rohr	Y

Motion carries 14-0-0.

Carried by Rep. Frelich.

Chairman Weisz adjourned the meeting at 2:40 PM.

House Human Services Committee
HB 1171
1/17/2023
Page 2

Phillip Jacobs, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HB 1171: Human Services Committee (Rep. Weisz, Chairman) recommends **DO PASS** (14 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1171 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.

2023 SENATE JUDICIARY

HB 1171

2023 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Judiciary Committee
Peace Garden Room, State Capitol

HB 1171
4/3/2023

A bill relating to prohibiting a forced or coerced abortion; and to provide a penalty.
--

9:01 AM Chairman Larson opened the meeting.
Chairman Larson and Senators Braunberger, Sickler, Estenson, Luick and Myrdal are present. Senator Paulson is absent but joined the meeting at 9:07 AM.

Discussion Topics:

- Pregnancies
- Human Trafficking
- Unborn babies

9:01 AM Representative Steiner introduced the bill.

9:03 AM Christopher Dodson, North Dakota Catholic Conference testified in favor of the bill and provided written testimony #27185.

Additional written testimony:

Sierra Heitkamp #27194
Arielle Neumann #27172

9:09 Chairman Larson closed the public hearing.

9:09 AM Senator Myrdal moved to Do Pass the bill. Motion is seconded by Senator Luick.

9:10 AM Roll call vote was taken.

Senators	Vote
Senator Diane Larson	Y
Senator Bob Paulson	Y
Senator Jonathan Sickler	Y
Senator Ryan Braunberger	N
Senator Judy Estenson	Y
Senator Larry Luick	Y
Senator Janne Myrdal	Y

Motion passes 6-1-0.

Senator Estenson will carry the bill.

This bill does not affect workforce development.

9:10 AM Chairman Larson closed the meeting.

Rick Schuchard, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

HB 1171: Judiciary Committee (Sen. Larson, Chairman) recommends **DO PASS** (6 YEAS, 1 NAY, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1171 was placed on the Fourteenth order on the calendar. This bill does not affect workforce development.

TESTIMONY

HB 1171

**Do Pass Testimony
of Doug Sharbono, citizen of North Dakota
on HB1171
in the Sixty-seventh Legislative Assembly of North Dakota**

Dear Chairman Weisz and members of the House Human Services Committee,

I am writing as a citizen and believe HB1171 is needed legislation. This legislation is common sense and gives law enforcement clear direction on how to enforce these difficult situations. HB1171 truly assists real reproductive rights giving the woman the protection of making the life-giving decision to continue her pregnancy without adverse pressure.

Please give HB1171 a Do Pass.

Thank you,

Douglas B. Sharbono

Doug Sharbono
1708 9th St S
Fargo, ND 58103



Chairman Robin Weisz and Members of the House Human Services Committee –

My name is Sierra Heitkamp and I am the Legislative Director for North Dakota Right to Life. I am testifying today to represent the interests of our 3700 members across the state of North Dakota.

Since the overturn of Roe V. Wade on June 24, 2022, there have been many questions regarding what this means for women and families who find themselves in unplanned pregnancies in North Dakota. At North Dakota Right to Life, we questioned ourselves as to how our vision and goals may have to evolve moving forward to adequately protect those most vulnerable from conception to natural death.

After many conversations, the answer became clear – not only will we continue our work in protecting life at all stages, but we also want to back legislation that educates our citizens and encourages life. A woman or family who finds themselves with an unexpected pregnancy should never feel that abortion is their only option to achieve a successful, happy life.

Our organization has heard personal testimony from those who have reached out to us about their own stories. Stories where young women found themselves in crisis pregnancy and they were forced by their partner or family member to terminate the pregnancy as this would be an “easy” solution. Today I ask for your support on HB 1171 to protect those most vulnerable from conception to natural death. Not only does this include the human life created in an unplanned pregnancy but also the life and safety of the mother involved.

I ask this committee today for a **Do Pass recommendation on HB 1171** in order to protect mothers facing unplanned or crisis pregnancies as we continue to promote and encourage life at all stages.

Thank you for your time today and I am available by phone or email to answer any questions you may have.



Sincerely,

Sierra M Heitkamp
Sierra M Heitkamp
NDRL Legislative Director



*Representing the Diocese of Fargo
and the Diocese of Bismarck*

103 South Third Street
Suite 10
Bismarck ND 58501
701-223-2519
ndcatholic.org
ndcatholic@ndcatholic.org

To: House Human Services Committee
From: Christopher Dodson, Executive Director
Subject: House Bill 1171 - Prohibiting Forced Abortions
Date: January 17, 2023

The North Dakota Catholic Conference supports House Bill 1171 to prohibit the use of force or threat of force to coerce a woman to get an abortion against her will.

At the outset, the committee should note that HB 1171 does not have anything to do with prohibiting abortion itself. Instead, it prohibits forced or coerced abortions. No matter how someone feels about abortion itself, everyone should agree that no woman should be coerced into an abortion.

Coercion happens. Those who work with women facing unexpected pregnancies and those who work with women who have abortions can attest to this. HB 1171 does what the state can do to address this problem.

House Bill 1171 mirrors legislation already enacted in North Dakota. In 2015, the Legislative Assembly added to the human trafficking law an enhanced penalty for a human trafficker if the trafficker forced or coerced a victim to have an abortion in the course of conducting the crime of trafficking. The language was carefully crafted with former Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem to make sure the law fit within constitutional confines, was enforceable by states attorneys, and was protective of victim rights. It passed the House unanimously and with only one dissenting vote in the Senate.

The 2015 law is a good law, but it only applies to those narrow circumstances involving human trafficking. Forcing an abortion should be a crime no matter who is the perpetrator and no matter who is the victim. House Bill 1171 accomplishes this by making it a crime for anyone to force a woman to have an abortion.

For these reasons, we urge a "Do Pass" recommendation on HB 1171.

I Arielle Neumann, private citizen and resident of Grand Forks AFB ND District 42 recommend a DO PASS for HB 1171.

This would protect women from forced abortions by making it a Class C Felony. This would protect women who do not want an abortion but are being forced to by a family member, friend, or the father of the child. This bill would protect life at all stages from conception to birth, and the expectant mother.

Sincerely,

Arielle Neumann



*Representing the Diocese of Fargo
and the Diocese of Bismarck*

103 South Third Street
Suite 10
Bismarck ND 58501
701-223-2519
ndcatholic.org
ndcatholic@ndcatholic.org

To: Senate Judiciary Committee
From: Christopher Dodson, Executive Director
Subject: House Bill 1171 - Prohibiting Forced Abortions
Date: April 3, 2023

The North Dakota Catholic Conference supports House Bill 1171 to prohibit the use of force or threat of force to coerce a woman to get an abortion against her will.

At the outset, the committee should note that HB 1171 does not have anything to do with prohibiting abortion itself. Instead, it prohibits forced or coerced abortions. No matter how someone feels about abortion itself, everyone should agree that no woman should be coerced into an abortion.

Coercion happens. Those who work with women facing unexpected pregnancies and those who work with women who have abortions can attest to this. HB 1171 does what the state can do to address this problem.

House Bill 1171 mirrors legislation already enacted in North Dakota. In 2015, the Legislative Assembly added to the human trafficking law an enhanced penalty for a human trafficker if the trafficker forced or coerced a victim to have an abortion in the course of conducting the crime of trafficking. The language was carefully crafted with former Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem to make sure the law fit within constitutional confines, was enforceable by state's attorneys, and was protective of victim rights. It passed the House unanimously and with only one dissenting vote in the Senate.

The 2015 law is a good law, but it only applies to those narrow circumstances involving human trafficking. Forcing an abortion should be a crime no matter who is the perpetrator and no matter who is the victim. House Bill 1171 accomplishes this by making it a crime for anyone to force a woman to have an abortion.

For these reasons, we urge a **Do Pass** recommendation on HB 1171.



Chairwoman Diane Larson and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee –

My name is Sierra Heitkamp and I am the Legislative Director for North Dakota Right to Life. I am testifying today to represent the interests of our 3700 members across the state of North Dakota.

Since the overturn of Roe V. Wade on June 24, 2022, there have been many questions regarding what this means for women and families who find themselves in unplanned pregnancies in North Dakota. At North Dakota Right to Life, we questioned ourselves as to how our vision and goals may have to evolve moving forward to adequately protect those most vulnerable from conception to natural death.

After many conversations, the answer became clear – not only will we continue our work in protecting life at all stages, but we also want to back legislation that educates our citizens and encourages life. A woman or family who finds themselves with an unplanned pregnancy should never feel that abortion is their only option to achieve a successful, happy life.

Our organization has heard personal testimony from those who have reached out to us about their own stories. Stories where young women found themselves in unplanned pregnancy and they were forced by their partner or family member to terminate the pregnancy as this would be an “easy” solution. Today I ask for your support on HB 1171 to protect those most vulnerable from conception to natural death. Not only does this include the human life created in an unplanned pregnancy but also the life and safety of the mother involved.

I ask this committee today for a **Do Pass Recommendation on HB 1171** in order to protect mothers facing unplanned pregnancies as we continue to promote and encourage life at all stages.

Thank you for your time today and I am available by phone or email to answer any questions you may have.



Sincerely,

Sierra M Heitkamp

Sierra M Heitkamp

NDRL Legislative Director