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January 29, 2024

The Honorable Jeion A. Ward
Chair
Labor and Commerce Committee
Virginia House of Delegates
Richmond, Virginia 23219

RE: HB 560 – Support

Dear Chair Ward and Members of the Labor and Commerce Committee:

On behalf of the Alliance for Fertility Preservation (AFP), I am writing to express our strong support for HB 560 and to urge the Labor and Commerce Committee to advance this bill out of Committee.

The AFP is a national 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to expanding fertility preservation information and resources for patients facing potential infertility caused by cancer treatments. According to the National Cancer Institute, approximately 85,980 Americans between the ages of 15-39 are diagnosed with cancer each year. Due to improvements in treatment, about 86% these patients will survive. Some cancer treatments, however, can cause iatrogenic infertility when chemotherapy, radiation, and surgery damage reproductive cells (eggs and sperm), reproductive organs, and/or endocrine functioning; they can also adversely impact the ability to carry a pregnancy.

HB 560 requires the Health Insurance Reform Commission to consider including coverage for the diagnosis and treatment of infertility and standard fertility preservation procedures in Virginia's essential health benefits benchmark plan. This benefit would significantly improve access to the standard of care for patients with infertility and those diagnosed with cancer or other conditions that may cause infertility.

Fertility preservation has been considered part of the standard of care for age-eligible cancer patients for more than fifteen years, and is recognized by all the relevant medical associations, including the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) and the American Society for Reproductive Medicine (ASRM). Currently, sperm, egg, embryo, and ovarian tissue banking are viewed as standard fertility preservation procedures.

Patients facing iatrogenic infertility have recognized, effective options for preserving fertility, but the high cost is often a barrier. Expenses can range from several hundred dollars for sperm banking to approximately \$15,000 for egg banking. Without insurance coverage, these standard treatments are unaffordable for many patients.

The AFP believes that fertility preservation is a critical part of cancer care, and that Virginia should join the growing list of states that require fertility preservation coverage when medically necessary. For this reason, we respectfully encourage you to support HB 560.

Sincerely,



Joyce Reinecke,
Executive Director