

Utah Alliance to Protect Parenthood After Cancer Treatments

February 16, 2023

Re: Support HJR 8 -- Help young adult cancer patients protect parenthood after cancer treatments

Dear Chairs McCay and Members of the Senate Revenue and Taxation Committee,

As members of the Utah Alliance to Protect Parenthood After Cancer Treatments (UAPPACT) we ask for your support of HJR 8, Joint Resolution for Fertility Preservation Coverage, which would provide coverage of fertility preservation services to PEHP state employees and their family members with cancer.

It is important to clarify that HJR 8 ONLY covers fertility preservation (NOT utilization of this tissue at a later time, i.e., IVF) and ONLY covers cancer patients (or patients with medical conditions that require intense cancer therapies) if their life-saving therapy puts them at risk for infertility/sterility.

The UAPPACT's mission is to help raise awareness about the reproductive side effects of cancer treatments, educate legislators and business leaders about the challenges young adult cancer patients suddenly face when they learn about their treatment options and work together to find solutions to protect parenthood after cancer treatments for young adults living in Utah.

The Utah Cancer Registry estimates that 1,579 Utahns ages 15-39 are diagnosed with cancer annually—about 10 percent of cancer cases in the state.

A significant barrier to parenthood for young adults living with cancer is the lack of insurance coverage for fertility preserving procedures and the fact patients often have a narrow window to begin treatment. Insurers have long avoided covering fertility preservation by classifying it as a type of *infertility treatment* and, therefore, treating it as something elective. We believe, however, that this irreversible side effect of cancer treatment should be covered in the same way that other side effects of treatment are covered. For example, anti-nausea drugs, prosthetics, and breast reconstruction are all viewed as part and parcel of cancer care – and, as a result, they are covered by insurance.

States and regulatory bodies across the country have increasingly been recognizing these procedures for what they are – medically necessary treatments that are needed to mitigate a side effect of cancer treatment – namely sterility and infertility.

Utah can lead the way and become the first state to pass legislation, that would help teachers, firefighters, police officers and all state employees preserve their fertility if one day they were stricken with cancer.

Thank you for your consideration!

Alliance for Fertility Preservation
American Cancer Society-Cancer Action Network
American Society for Reproductive Medicine
Association for Clinical Oncology

Huntsman-Intermountain Adolescent and Adult Cancer Program
Leukemia & Lymphoma Society

RESOLVE

Society for Utah Medical Oncologists

Susan G. Komen

Utah Academy of Family Physicians

Utah Fertility Resource Center

University of Utah Health

University of Utah Huntsman Cancer Institute

Several Private Citizens