February 2, 2017

The Honorable Della Au Belatti
Chair, House Health Committee
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 402
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: HB 664 and HB 677

Dear Chairwoman Belatti and Members of the Health Committee:

As the President & CEO of RESOLVE: The National Infertility Association, a nonprofit that represents men and women all over the country who face fertility problems, we support HB 664 and HB 677.

On behalf of the over 28,000 Hawaiians who are trying to overcome the disease of infertility and have children, we urge the Health Committee to pass these bills, which update Hawaii’s law providing coverage for in vitro fertilization (IVF).

The updates are discussed below:

1. **Removing the five-year waiting period.** The American Society for Reproductive Medicine (ASRM), which is the professional society in this field, defines infertility as the failure to conceive after one year (12 months) of intercourse; earlier evaluation may be justified after six months for women over the age of 35. Hawaii’s old requirement of five years is obviously much longer. Waiting five years, however, can materially hurt a woman’s chance of conceiving with IVF, because female fertility is time sensitive and beginning around age 32-35, declines quickly.

Hawaii’s five-year waiting period is by far the longest waiting period in any of the laws mandating infertility insurance in this country. This bill will bring Hawaii’s law in step with other states. And, it will help infertility patients obtain needed treatment on a timely basis.
2. **Eliminating the requirement that only the spouse’s sperm may be used.** It makes sense medically to cast off this requirement because more than a third of infertility is caused by “male factor,” that is, a problem with the man’s sperm. Some husbands may also be carriers of a sex-linked disease. If pregnancy can’t be achieved with a husband’s sperm, then patients should be able to use sperm from a donor. Also, same-sex couples and unmarried women may need donor sperm to have a family. The proposed change in the bills will help Hawaiian citizens in these circumstances, too.

The updates are straightforward: they will help bring Hawaii’s law in step with current practice; they improve the quality of care; their goal is equality and non-discrimination; and they are pro-family. We hope you will vote to pass HB 664 and HB 677.

On behalf of people with infertility who are trying to build families, we support this legislation and urge you to pass it.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Collura
President & CEO