



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
**WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM**

BILL NUMBER: <b>HCR 28</b>		DATE: <b>3/12/2026</b>
COMMITTEE: <b>Health and Mental Health</b>		
<b>TESTIFYING:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>ALLISON DUNCAN</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>3/10/2026 4:35 PM</b>
<b>THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.</b>		

**Written Testimony in Support of HCR 28 – Infertility Awareness Week**

My name is Allison Duncan, and I am writing in support of HCR 28 to recognize Infertility Awareness Week in the state of Missouri. Although I am unable to attend the hearing in person, I wanted to share my story and why this resolution is meaningful to me and many families across our state. Infertility is often a silent struggle, yet it affects one in six couples worldwide. Behind that statistic are real people and families who deeply want to become parents and who are navigating an incredibly difficult and emotional journey.

My husband and I are one of those families. Over the past several years, we went through three IUIs and two rounds of IVF, and we also experienced the heartbreaking loss of a pregnancy. We were also diagnosed with diminished ovarian reserve, which meant our window to build a family was smaller and the path forward became even more uncertain.

After years of trying, we ultimately made the painful decision to stop pursuing treatment. While we have accepted that we may never become parents, the grief of that reality is something we will always carry.

Infertility teaches you very quickly how isolating it can feel. You attend baby showers while silently grieving. You celebrate the joy of others while carrying a heartbreak that many people cannot see. For a long time, I felt like I was walking through this journey alone because infertility is something people often do not talk about openly.

Today, I am choosing to turn that pain into purpose. By sharing my story, I hope to help other individuals and couples facing infertility know that they are not alone and that their struggles deserve to be seen and understood.

Recognizing Infertility Awareness Week in Missouri would help bring this often invisible struggle into the light. It encourages conversation, reduces stigma, and reminds those who are facing infertility that they are not alone.

I respectfully ask that you support HCR 28 and help bring awareness and compassion to the many individuals and families in Missouri affected by infertility. Infertility may be invisible, but the people living through it should never be.

Sincerely,  
Allison Duncan



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>ARNIE C. "HONEST-ABE" DIENOFF-STATE PUBLIC ADVOCAT</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>314-440-9000</b>	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: <b>STATE PUBLIC ADVOCACY</b>		TITLE: <b>STATE PUBLIC ADVOCATE</b>	
ADDRESS: <b>P.O. BOX #1535</b>			
CITY: <b>O' FALLON</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>	ZIP: <b>63366</b>
EMAIL: <b>ArnieDienoff@Mail.Com</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>In-Person</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>3/12/2026 11:59 PM</b>	

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I am in Support of this Bill and recognition of "Infertility Awareness Week."**



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>ASHTON GAVELEK</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE:      ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>3/11/2026 7:31 PM</b>
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**Infertility awareness is crucial to families needing support, resource, information, choices , options anything and everything that make an impossible and overwhelming journey better.**

**I would never have found a community in St. Louis with awareness and even harder was it to find help while going through surrogacy.**



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>AUDREY KELCH</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>3/11/2026 7:01 AM</b>	
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**There are so many people I know that had to use IVF to start their family and have to spend so much money because their body which is not their fault at all. IVF needs to be supported and recognized more because it affects so many people and helps so many people in such a positive way.**



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>CAITLIN KELCH</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE:      ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>3/11/2026 10:49 AM</b>
<b>THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.</b>		

**Infertility affects all of us. If it is not something a person directly is going through it's someone they love. Please give this disease the spotlight it so deserves. More research, development and compassion is needed in this area desperately.**



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>CHLOE ROBINETT</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>3/12/2026 8:13 AM</b>	

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I am a 30 year old Jefferson City MO resident, and life long MO resident. In my early 20s my husband and I began trying for a child after we got married and bought our first home. In my gut I knew something was wrong but the cost of infertility related treatment concerned me. I was continously pushed off by my OBGYN and was even told we "just werent trying hard enough". At 24 I finally went to see a fertility specialist, Dr. Wilshire in Columbia MO....we had a slew of tests ran on both my side and my husband's side and came to find out I had severe PCOS and my husband had male factor infertility due to a DNA deletion of the Y chromosome (severe Azoospermia Factor). Our only hope for having a family was to save for adoption or endure fertility treatment. We WON a free IVF treatment and it was our only way forward in the economy following COVID, we recently sold our house and downsized to fund our most recent transfer. A mother and father's dream for a family is one that may take everything they have to achieve, for some.

Im now 30 with my IVF miracle baby and another IVF pregnancy that im praying sticks with us as we've had some complications thus far.

Infertility effects 1 in 6 couples. This is common and deserves awareness. Theres countless women and men like myself and my husband who deserve to know that they are not alone, that treatment is available. The vast amount of people who I alone have educated in regards to infertility tells me that we need more advocates out there and I urge the state of MO to be that advocate as well.

Thank you for your time.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>CHRISTINA KELCH</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>3/10/2026 9:59 PM</b>	
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I support there being a formal Infertility Awareness week in Missouri. My daughter and her husband struggle with fertility due to her health condition. Through IVF she has been pregnant 3 times, each ending in a loss. There are so many people who struggle with infertility. Officially recognizing this will bring so much awareness to the various reasons and will help these couples know they are not alone.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>ELIZABETH FRATTURA</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>618-910-8180</b>	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: <b>THE STORK FOUNDATION FOR INFERTILITY</b>		TITLE: <b>FOUNDER</b>	
ADDRESS: <b>6265 OLD CARPENTER RD</b>			
CITY: <b>EDWARDSVILLE</b>		STATE: <b>IL</b>	ZIP: <b>62025</b>
EMAIL: <b>stork@storkfoundation.org</b>	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>3/10/2026 7:12 PM</b>	

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Infertility affects 1 in 6 couples, yet it is still widely misunderstood and often invisible. For many families, the journey to have a child involves years of emotional, physical, and financial hardship. Treatments like IVF can cost tens of thousands of dollars, and most insurance plans in Missouri do not cover these services.

Recognizing Infertility Awareness Week helps bring this issue out of the shadows. It encourages open conversation, reduces stigma, and reminds families struggling with infertility that they are not alone.

Through The Stork Foundation, we have seen firsthand the profound impact awareness and support can have. Each grant we provide represents hope for a family that may have otherwise had to give up on their dream of having a child.

By recognizing Infertility Awareness Week, Missouri can acknowledge the millions of Americans facing infertility and help foster compassion, understanding, and support for those on this difficult journey.

Thank you for your time and for considering this important recognition.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>REGISTERED LOBBYIST:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>ELIZABETH GRACE RILEY</b>		PHONE NUMBER: <b>573-634-4876</b>	
REPRESENTING: <b>THE MISSOURI CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF OBSTETRICIANS AND GYNECOLOGISTS</b>		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: <b>PO BOX 1865</b>			
CITY: <b>JEFFERSON CITY</b>		STATE: <b>MO</b>	ZIP: <b>65101</b>
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: <b>3/12/2026 12:00 AM</b>	
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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>EMILY STOINSKI</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE:      ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>3/12/2026 6:41 AM</b>
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My name is Emily Stoinski, and I am a registered Missouri voter. I am writing today in support of HCR 28. Infertility impacts and often devastates countless Missourians. This is an issue that affects not just the women and people who can become pregnant in Missouri, but also the men in these relationships. I have watched this legislature talk about how much they want to support fathers in Missouri, well, this HCR is an opportunity to acknowledge an issue faced by these same individuals. Visibility and care dismantles shame.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>JELENA BASARA TOMASEVIC</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE:      ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>3/10/2026 10:19 PM</b>
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My name is Jelena Basara, and I am a Missouri resident, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW), and a board member of the Making a Miracle 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization. I am writing in strong support of HCR28 and the recognition of Infertility Awareness in Missouri.

Infertility is not only a medical condition; it is also an emotional and psychological journey that can bring isolation, profound grief, anxiety, depression, and other co-occurring mental health challenges. Many individuals and families struggle silently because infertility is still widely misunderstood and often stigmatized.

Through both my professional and personal experiences, I have witnessed firsthand how deeply infertility impacts people's mental health, relationships, and sense of identity. Increased awareness is essential to breaking the silence surrounding infertility and fostering a culture of compassion, understanding, and support.

Recognizing infertility awareness through HCR28 sends a powerful message to Missourians that their struggles are seen and that their stories matter.

Awareness is the first step toward education, empathy, and meaningful support for the many families in our state who are navigating family-building challenges.

I respectfully urge the committee to support HCR28 and help bring greater awareness to infertility and the individuals and families affected across Missouri.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>			
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>			
WITNESS NAME: <b>JEREMY FERKEL</b>		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>3/10/2026 10:17 PM</b>	
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Chairperson and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jeremy Ferkel, and I am a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) practicing in St. Charles, Missouri. I am writing to express my support for House Concurrent Resolution 28 (HCR 28).

Infertility is not only a medical issue—it is also a significant mental health challenge that can bring grief, anxiety, depression, relationship strain, and feelings of isolation.

Many individuals experiencing infertility describe the process as a cycle of hope, loss, and uncertainty. The emotional toll can be comparable to other major life stressors, yet it is often experienced quietly and without the same level of public understanding or support.

Resolutions like HCR 28 are important because they help bring visibility to the challenges faced by individuals and families struggling with infertility. Increasing awareness helps reduce stigma, encourages compassionate conversations, and reinforces that those experiencing infertility are not alone.

From a counseling perspective, public recognition of infertility as an issue affecting the wellbeing of many Missourians is an important step toward supporting both the physical and emotional health of those affected. Greater awareness can also encourage individuals to seek mental health support when they need it.

As a Licensed Professional Counselor, I strongly support efforts that acknowledge the real psychological impact of infertility and promote understanding throughout our communities.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to support HCR 28.

Thank you for your time and for your service to the people of Missouri.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Ferkel, LPC  
 St. Charles, Missouri



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>JILL BUZZELL</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE:      ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>3/10/2026 10:15 PM</b>

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Infertility Awareness Week should be recognized in Missouri because infertility is something that affects so many families, yet it's often talked about quietly or not at all. My own journey has included one IVF retrieval and two embryo transfers, one that ended in the heartbreaking loss of a baby, and one that blessed me with my son. Infertility is hard, hurtful, and heavy, and it's not a choice—it's a disease. Families going through it pour their heart, soul, and often their entire checkbook into the hope of growing their family. Recognizing Infertility Awareness Week would show women and families that they are seen and supported. It would also help shift the conversation so infertility is understood as a medical condition, not a personal decision. Simple recognition can go a long way in making people who are struggling feel less alone.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>KELLY SCHNEIDER</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE:      ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>3/10/2026 10:19 PM</b>
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I think that as a state this a small step in shining a light on infertility and hopefully bring about more change for the many people struggling through it. I have watched my best friend struggle with infertility for many years and seen the emotional, physical, and mental toll it has taken, let alone financial burdens. Having more awareness and understanding is a first step that we need to take to help those struggling with this disease to be seen and heard and support them in many ways.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>KYLE GAVELEK</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE:      ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>3/11/2026 9:37 PM</b>
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**Infertility has had a major impact on my family and me. I support the recognition of Infertility Awareness Week so that the next person in my position will have more support and resources than I did.**



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>PAMELA SEARS</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE:      ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>3/11/2026 11:07 PM</b>
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I am Jefferson City, MO resident who has been diagnosed with infertility. My husband and I started trying to start a family beginning in 2018 after he spent a year deployed to Fort Hood and Kuwait. I was diagnosed with endometriosis 11 months later. I had suspected endometriosis several years prior as I have a family history and it took nearly 7 years for me to be officially diagnosed after more than one doctor not taking me seriously. It also took 7 years to achieve a viable pregnancy and we just now welcomed our first child this past January. This was not my first pregnancy and there were many highs and lows throughout those 7 years - though that is a story for another day/hearing. In the meantime, I think it's very important to bring as much attention to the matter as possible. Patients should not have to push for a diagnosis for years and also should not have their infertility journeys dragged out longer than they need to be due to different barriers - bringing more awareness can help to bring about that change. Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony.



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<b>WITNESS NAME</b>		
<b>INDIVIDUAL:</b>		
WITNESS NAME: <b>PATRICIA ANNE FECHTER GATES</b>		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE:      ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: <b>Written</b>	SUBMIT DATE: <b>3/12/2026 8:19 AM</b>
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**Thank you for recognizing the journey some Missouri families must undertake to build their families.  
We appreciate your support!**