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House Committee on Children and Families  
201 W Capitol Ave Ste 310  
Jefferson City, MO 65101

5/15/23

Dear Chair Kelly, Vice Chair Hausman, Ranking Member Unsicker, and members of the Committee,

On behalf of the American Society for Reproductive Medicine (ASRM), I am writing to express strong opposition to [HB 838](#) which would curtail the reproductive rights of the residents of Missouri and leave many without access to vital family planning care.

ASRM is a multidisciplinary organization of nearly 8,000 professionals dedicated to the advancement of the art, science, and practice of reproductive medicine. Distinguished members of ASRM include obstetricians and gynecologists, urologists, reproductive endocrinologists, embryologists, mental health professionals and others.

Missouri already has abortion restrictions in place. By defining a person as including an unborn child “from the moment of conception until birth and at every stage of its biological development,” HB 838 could have unintended consequences on the treatment of infertility for those Missourians seeking to grow their families. By equating a recently fertilized egg still in a medical facility with a fully formed child, many infertile persons in Missouri may be unable to utilize In Vitro Fertilization and related procedures in accordance with best medical practices. As well, criminalizing providers who offer abortion as part of their practice could lead to an exodus of expert medical care from Missouri, as physicians seek to live and work in states that do not penalize their practice.

In allowing the government to intervene in the sacred relationship between a patient and physician, passing HB 838 would only make access to critical reproductive care more difficult and, indeed, dangerous. For these and other reasons, I strongly urge you to oppose the passage of HB 838.

For more information, feel free to contact me or Sean Tipton, Chief Advocacy and Policy officer at [Stipton@asrm.org](mailto:Stipton@asrm.org) or 202-421-5112.

Sincerely,

Michael A. Thomas, MD  
President  
American Society for Reproductive Medicine