

House Judiciary Committee
124 North Capitol Avenue
Lansing, MI 48933

October 20, 2023

Dear Chair Breen, Vice Chair Edwards, Vice Chair Fink, and members of the committee,

As a parent, I want nothing more than to ensure my child's safety and security, but the outdated laws here in Michigan block some parents from providing that security by treating them as legal strangers to their own children. This is especially true for LGBTQ families like mine who face increased legal precarity as the U.S. Supreme Court considers revisiting cornerstone protections like marriage equality. Michigan's laws currently do not protect children raised by same-sex or unmarried parents, as well as for those families formed through fertility treatment.

That was the case for my family, where my wife, who was at every prenatal appointment and who was the first person to hold our son when he was born, had to go through an invasive and costly second parent adoption to ensure that she'd be legally recognized as the parent she already was, so that our son would always stay connected to her, even if something happened to me.

Children's security, stability, and wellbeing depend on having a legal relationship with their parents. Michigan's outdated law currently fails to recognize the ways that families today are formed, and doesn't guarantee that all children born through fertility treatment have established legal ties with their parents who love and care for them. This leaves Michigan's children vulnerable.

Without clear, accessible, and affordable pathways to establishing legal parent-child relationships, families like mine could be separated, have unnecessary child welfare system involvement, or be unable to make decisions during a medical crisis because the legal relationship is not recognized.

We urgently need to update our laws here in Michigan, that's why I am writing in support of the Michigan Family Protection Act. This bill would comprehensively update Michigan's parentage laws, ensuring that all children have equal access to the security of a legal-parent relationship, no matter who their parents are or how they came into the world. Based on the Uniform Parentage Act of 2017, the Michigan Family Protection Act has been thoughtfully crafted by leading experts in parentage law to meet the needs of children and families. The bill will ensure that our state's laws remain constitutional, reflects the best practices, and protects all children in Michigan.

I hope you will report the Michigan Family Protection Act favorably out of committee. Thank you so much for your consideration, and please do not hesitate to contact me for any additional information.

Naomi Goldberg
1701 Crestland Drive
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
Goldberg.naomi@gmail.com