

**Name:** Maralee Hill

**Title:**

**Organization or Agency:**

**Topic:** HB05423 - AAC FERTILITY FRAUD.

Supports

**Testimony:**

Dear Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

My name is Maralee Hill, I am Victoria Hill's mother and we are victims of fertility fraud. I wholeheartedly support H.B. No. 5423. If I cannot present in person, I request that this letter be read and included as part of the public hearing record.

My husband and I sought out fertility treatments after being told that my husband had a very low sperm count and slow motility, and that it would be difficult for us to get pregnant in the conventional way. Dr. Burton Caldwell was recommended for his fertility program and procedure. Dr. Caldwell informed us that donors would be used and they would be residents from Yale New Haven Hospital that donated their sperm anonymously. He told us that they were vetted for medical histories and that they would try and match basic characteristics of my husband such as brown hair, brown eyes, etc.

We started treatments in 1975 which included fertility medication and daily temperatures to determine ovulation. I became pregnant and gave birth to a baby boy in 1977. My son is not a Caldwell baby. After giving birth to my son, we sought more treatment from Dr. Caldwell in order to have another child which resulted in two miscarriages. In 1984 I became pregnant and gave birth to a baby girl, Victoria, in 1985. During that time, with Dr. Caldwell, I was told that all sperm donations were anonymous and there would be no information available regarding the donors. My husband and I decided not to disclose to my children that they were donor babies and that my husband's sperm was used. We felt that there wasn't any information we could give them regarding their donor fathers and at that time donor inseminations were not recognized as they are today.

When my daughter turned 35 she was having health issues and wanted to see if it was possible to find information on her donor father through DNA testing to get a medical history. As a result of the DNA test we found out that Dr. Burton Caldwell was actually the donor. It was a shock for me as I never suspected that could or would happen. I trusted the doctor completely and never thought that he would betray his Hippocratic oath "to do no harm". And harm is what he did.

As of today's date, my daughter has 23 donor siblings and her children have 41 first cousins. We will not know if there are more until more people do DNA testing. We recently found out that a boy my daughter dated and had intimate relations with was her half brother, also a donor baby by Dr. Caldwell. This was extremely traumatic for her and myself.

Because Dr. Caldwell was the "go to" Doctor in our area for artificial insemination, as a result of DNA testing many of her donor siblings grew up in close proximity to each other and crossed paths at various times without knowing they were related. What a recipe for disaster this is.

So far there are 13 states with fertility fraud legislation that has passed. It is unconscionable that these doctors and Dr. Caldwell can get away with doing the damage that they have done to people without their knowledge and without paying any consequences. They had no right to play God with us. I believe that the victims are entitled to compensatory and punitive damages, attorneys fees, are entitled to medical records and health histories of their donors, and there is no longer a statute of limitation. Illicit inseminations must be stopped.

Thank you for your time,

Maralee Hill