

My name is Carlye Gast. I'm a Fargo resident, an attorney, and a mom of five. My middle son, Harry, is an 11-year-old Type 1 diabetic. Today I am asking you to give a "do pass" recommendation to SB 2183.

Insulin is a blessing and a curse. On the one hand, it is a miracle drug and keeps my son alive. We saw that when he was initially diagnosed: he went from a very sick, barely conscious boy to almost feeling "normal" after just a day of insulin treatment. On the other hand, insulin is a costly, constantly-needed treatment for an incurable disease. The body's need for it is relentless, and just a day or two without it could result in severe illness or death.

When Harry was first diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes nearly two years ago, we felt crippled by the expense. We paid upwards of \$1000 monthly for his insulin and supplies, and we questioned how it was sustainable. Fortunately, I was in a position to change my employer-sponsored insurance plan at the end of the year, and this relieved the burden. However, most North Dakotans do not have that luxury.

I'm not asking you to pass this bill to help me. I'm okay. I am asking you to pass it to help my son -- my hilarious, smart, soft-hearted, future engineer. It is heartbreaking when he asks me, "When I grow up, will you help me pay for my insulin if I can't afford it?" "Hey Mom, if they ever make an artificial pancreas, can I get one?" These are not the questions an 11-year-old should have.

I am also asking you to pass SB 2183 to help others. I have reached out to the North Dakota diabetic community, and I am horrified and frankly outraged by the sacrifices people have to make due to the cost of insulin: rationing and seeking insulin from others; moving to a cheaper home; traveling to Canada to purchase insulin; staying in an undesirable job just to keep a particular insurance policy; and being unable to afford other bills and necessities.

As a final note, I'd point out that within our state and country, we've recognized that early screening and preventative medicine are valuable tools that ultimately save lives and can stop conditions from developing, before they start. Mammograms, colonoscopies, and vaccines are generally covered by insurance without out-of-pocket expense. Insulin is the ultimate preventative treatment. With it, used properly, a full and productive life. Without it, death. It is that simple.

Thank you for your support.