

Disability Rights Nebraska

Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities

March 9, 2020

Dear Senators:

Disability Rights Nebraska, the designated Protection and Advocacy organization for people with disabilities in Nebraska, writes in support of LB 918.

We support creating the Commission on African American Affairs as proposed in LB 918. Disability is a natural part of the human experience and disability affects approximately 20% of all Nebraskans regardless of their geographic location, socio-economic status, or ethnic or racial category. The American Community Survey [estimates](#) (2017) among working-age people in Nebraska, 10% of persons who identified as White reported a disability whereas 18.1% of persons who identified as Black/African American reported a disability¹.

Given its central role in the lives of people who live with disabilities, a disability affects many issues that African Americans with disabilities (and their families) in Nebraska face generally, let alone creating issues that individuals and/or families with disabilities uniquely encounter. For example, drawing from Section 4 (2) of the bill: medical care, employment, education, housing, and “related” problems. Disability fits squarely within the purview of the proposed commission.

We would suggest that in the further development and implementation of the commission, the commission be ever mindful of the disability aspects or linkages within their work. To this end, we would also suggest that an African American person with a disability be named as a member so as to give sufficient voice and presence to disability-related issues pertinent to commission.

Disability Rights Nebraska recommends LB 918 be advanced.

If there are further questions or comment, please feel free to contact me at your earliest convenience: brad@drne.org or 402-474-3183.

Sincerely,

Bradley A. Meurrens, MPA
Public Policy Director
Disability Rights Nebraska

¹See <https://www.disabilitystatistics.org/>. For all ages (2017): White = 12.3%; Black/African American: 14.8%