

Disability Rights Nebraska

Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities

May 14, 2019

Dear Senators:

Disability Rights Nebraska is the designated Protection and Advocacy organization for people with disabilities in Nebraska. We work to ensure that Nebraskans with disabilities, especially those who are most vulnerable, are free from harm, abuse, and neglect, and are able to exercise the same rights, opportunities and choices available to all citizens. We support LB 631.

Medicaid often plays a vital role in the lives of people with disabilities. For many people or families with disabilities it is the only way to access necessary health services medications, etc. Many people or families with disabilities are unable to access insurance coverage in the private market, as often private market plans are too expensive and/or do not provide an adequate array of services or coverage to meet the needs of people or families with disabilities. Employer-based insurance coverage often suffers the same deficits for persons with disabilities.

Disability Rights Nebraska has supported previous legislation proposing to expand Medicaid and we are pleased to see that Medicaid expansion has been approved by referendum. We unequivocally support the creation of the taskforce proposed in LB 631 and its operative duties—key components to ensure that Medicaid expansion remains sustainable and effective.

While we would like to see an individual or family with disabilities specifically identified as a taskforce member, given the importance of Medicaid in the lives of people with disabilities (we recognize the “healthcare consumer” role could be used for this purpose, but it does not specifically refer to disability), we would not want that to be used to delay or deny the advancement of LB 631.

We would recommend advancing the bill during the remaining days of this session or resuming this important conversation during the second session in 2020.

Sincerely,

Bradley A. Meurrens
Public Policy Director