

**Judiciary Committee**

**Testimony on LB226**

**Presented by**

**Name**

**Title**

**Date**

Dear Chairperson Ebke and members of the Judiciary Committee,

LB226 provides for an additional duty for the Normalcy Taskforce of the Nebraska Children's Commission. I am Beth Baxter, testifying in my position as Chairperson of the Nebraska Children's Commission in support of this additional duty.

For committee members who may not be familiar with the Nebraska Children's Commission, it is a statutory body created in 2012 by the Nebraska State Legislature to provide a leadership forum for the collaboration in child welfare and juvenile justice reform among the three branches of government and public and private stakeholders at the state, regional, and community levels. Since its creation, the Commission has worked diligently to achieve this statutory intent and improve outcomes for children and families in Nebraska. The Normalcy Taskforce is a committee that sits under the Commission to monitor and make recommendations related to the implementation of the State and Federal Strengthening Families Act.

LB226 provides that the Normalcy Taskforce will collaborate with the Department of Administrative Services, Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Insurance, and the Department of Motor Vehicles to examine the costs and benefits of implementing or supporting a program under which children in foster care may be insured under a motor vehicle policy. This additional duty will assist the Normalcy Committee in ensuring that all youth experience as much normalcy as possible, and are prepared for the transition to adulthood by increasing access to motor vehicle transportation.

In a survey of foster youth undertaken by the Normalcy Taskforce, youth reported the need to access driver's licensing services and transportation. The ability to obtain a driver's license and a vehicle is beneficial for youth participating in normalcy activities and employment, in addition to helping youth gain critical life skills such as responsible driving, time management, and budgeting skills.

In conclusion, the Commission and the Taskforce welcomes this additional task to promote the well-being of youth in out-of-home placements and assist in the successful transition to adulthood. Thank you for your time and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.