



February 24, 2020

Senator Mike Groene, Chair
Members of the Education Committee
Nebraska Legislature

RE: LB1206

Chairman Groene and Members of the Education Committee,

My name is Adam Feser and I am a policy associate for First Five Nebraska, an early childhood policy organization dedicated to ensuring all children have access to quality early childhood environments. On behalf of First Five Nebraska, I am here to testify in support of LB1206 and thank Senator Tony Vargas for introducing it.

The Nebraska Early Childhood Professional Record System, or NECPRS, is a robust database with capacity to house profiles for Nebraska's entire early childhood workforce, including trainings, education and other credentials.

Among the many advantages to transitioning to an electronic reporting system for child care providers' trainings is increased government efficiency. Requiring government staff to travel for onsite visits to review hard copies of providers' credentials is inefficient, and also pulls early childhood educators away from their important job of guiding the healthy development of children in their care.

Child care providers tell us they love NECPRS' functionality because it provides a quick way to find training options and other important information. Utilitarian features like this will grow and be more impactful if LB1206 is passed. Using NECPRS for providers and employees to easily verify and share fingerprinting information, for instance, would be a huge value for everyone involved.

A complete understanding of Nebraska's early childhood workforce will help policymakers identify issues and successes, and make informed data-based decisions. For example, who constitutes our early childhood workforce? What are their qualifications, experience and education? How frequently do they leave their jobs? Answers to these questions and more are vital to our understanding of our early childhood infrastructure, including its strengths and areas that need improvement.

Ultimately, we feel strongly that this policy will be a net positive for child care providers, and consideration for their needs. Thoughtful implementation of a fully electronic-based system that provides for adequate time, training and technical assistance will help make the process run smoothly.

Senators took a positive step forward for government efficiency that benefits child care providers last session by passing LB590, which enabled child care licensing personnel to access NECPRS to verify providers' required trainings. LB1206 takes the next logical step to move Nebraska's early childhood infrastructure forward. This bill represents a rare opportunity to improve policymakers' ability to make informed, data-driven decisions while also making government more efficient. I hope you will advance LB1206 to General File.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'AF', is positioned below the word 'Sincerely,'.

Adam Feser
Policy Associate
First Five Nebraska