



February 3, 2025

Senator Kathleen Kauth, Chair
Members of the Business and Labor Committee
Nebraska Legislature

RE: LB94

Chair Kauth and Members of the Business and Labor Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit online comment for the public record as a proponent of LB94.

Nebraska's workforce is among the most reliable and industrious in the nation, ranking 8th in the country for children under age six with all available parents in the workforce. However, because of a lack of training or advanced education, many hardworking parents don't have adequate opportunities for career advancement. Unfortunately, the time and resources it takes for advanced training or education is often not obtainable for many of these families, especially those in low-income households.

Access to affordable quality child care is one of the biggest barriers for working parents. Based on the current market rate data, center-based care for an infant and a 4-year old, for instance, could cost \$2,270 per month. For a single parent at the uppermost income limit for this grant program or a two-parent household at the midpoint of the income limit, that would equate to more than half of their household income. This leaves parents with few options for career advancement and increased earning potential.

LB94 will help to bridge the gap by investing in a grant program to provide digital skills training and paid apprenticeships for residents in qualified census tracts. The grant program covers child care expenses for participants who receive training leading to a digital skills certification. Child care plays an essential role in helping families remain engaged and productive in the workforce, contributing to increased economic activity for the state.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide public comment. I encourage the Committee to advance LB94 to General File.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mitchell Clark". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mitchell Clark
Policy Advisor
First Five Nebraska
301 South 13th Street | Suite 600 | Lincoln, NE 68508
O: 402.261.9671 ext. 106
mclark@firstfivenebraska.org