



February 10, 2025

Senator Mike Jacobson, Chair
Members of the Banking, Commerce, and Insurance Committee
Nebraska Legislature

RE: LB457

Chair Jacobson and Members of the Banking, Commerce, and Insurance Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Elizabeth Everett, and I am the Deputy Director of First Five Nebraska. First Five Nebraska is a statewide public policy organization focused on supporting policies that provide quality early care and learning opportunities for our state's youngest children. I am here today to testify in support of the child care provisions of LB457.

Ensuring the health and safety of children in child care programs is essential for fostering a nurturing, secure environment where young minds can develop, explore and grow. As child care providers know, when parents enroll their children, they are entrusting their most precious asset to the care of others. By prioritizing health and safety, child care programs enhance parents' confidence in the services they provide. However, the approach to managing food and other related allergies varies across states.

In Nebraska, the Child Care Licensing Act requires all licensed child care programs to maintain a record for each child before enrollment. This record must be kept current and include, among other details, a list of the child's allergies. If a child care program serves a child with food or other allergies, it must make necessary accommodations, such as providing an alternative meal or snack. However, there is no current requirement for child care programs to have a policy in place for managing a severe allergic reaction should one occur.

LB457 addresses this gap. It mandates that the Department of Health and Human Services, in consultation with the Department of Education, establish a model anaphylaxis policy to guide child care programs in caring for children with known allergies. This policy would include guidelines for prevention, individualized health plans, emergency response and communication. The bill further stipulates that only those licensed child care programs that serve children with known allergies must adopt an anaphylaxis policy, ensuring that the requirements are targeted and appropriate.

This bill is a practical and reasonable approach. By only requiring programs that care for children with allergies, LB457 ensures that providers who may not be equipped to manage such care are not unduly burdened, while still protecting the children who require special accommodation.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of LB457. I strongly urge the committee to advance the bill to General File. I would be happy to answer any questions at this time.

Thank you,

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

Elizabeth Everett
Deputy Director
First Five Nebraska