

**Health and Human Services Committee
Confirmation Hearing – Courtney Miller
February 4, 2016**

**Courtney Miller
Director, Division of Developmental Disabilities
Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services**

Good afternoon, Senator Campbell and members of the Health and Human Services Committee. My name is Courtney Miller (C-o-u-r-t-n-e-y M-i-l-l-e-r) and I'm the Director of the Division of Developmental Disabilities within the Department of Health and Human Services.

I was named Acting Director on September 9th. Governor Ricketts announced my permanent appointment effective December 8th, and I appreciate being before the committee today for my confirmation hearing.

First, I'll share a little about my background and then talk about my vision moving forward.

I earned a Bachelor's Degree from Briar Cliff University in Social Work and a Master's Degree from the University of Nebraska-Omaha in Public Administration.

My career began with the Iowa Department of Human Services as an Income Maintenance Worker determining Medicaid eligibility. My husband and I moved to Nebraska in 2000 and I began my near eight-year tenure with the Department of Correctional Services, first as a unit case worker and then a unit case manager.

I transferred to the Nebraska State Patrol and managed criminal background requests and verified background information based on federal regulations and agency policy.

In 2008, my career brought me to the Department of Health and Human Services and the Division of Medicaid and Long-Term Care, as the program specialist for the oversight of transportation services for several Medicaid programs.

In 2012, I was promoted to a position responsible for the oversight of multiple, complex Medicaid programs and provided contract oversight and management, program and budget planning, problem resolution, services monitoring, supervision and policy development.

I became the Medicaid Deputy Director for Programs in 2013, with oversight of additional program areas and involvement on the strategic leadership team during a time of transition for the division.

These educational and work experiences have proven to be extremely valuable and have helped me better understand and appreciate the challenges for quality services for individuals with significant needs. Program services are incredibly important and come with complex financing mechanisms that require effective management and strong accountability.

When I was named interim director of the Division of Developmental Disabilities, CEO Courtney Phillips asked me to take a complete inventory of our service system which has become a road map to necessary improvements. This fall, we held nine town hall-style forums and we have had honest and frank conversations with families, friends, providers and advocates – critical voices associated with the programs that serve Nebraskans with developmental disabilities.

We have a team of incredibly dedicated and talented professionals within the Division who, based on their experiences and the information from our comprehensive review, are eager to tackle the opportunities before us. For example, the eligibility team is currently developing a more modern eligibility application; we are continuing to look at how we can best meet our needs through more advanced data analytics and system capabilities; our programs team is working through details of our next phase of the Medicaid waiver renewals to ensure we maximize our state dollars; and we are building partnerships across DHHS. These are just a few examples of the exciting opportunities ahead.

The Division of Developmental Disabilities is committed to a transparent, inclusive approach to addressing the challenges and opportunities ahead of us. Our key priorities are directed at the basic principles of a focus on customer service, improving access and service availability while assuring basic safeguards, improving fiscal and program accountability and performance, honoring individualization, and promoting consumer choice and self-determination.

I look forward to working closely with you, the people we serve, their families, our providers and advocacy organizations, and our state and federal partners to ensure that Nebraska's citizens with developmental disabilities receive the best possible services we can provide.

Our agency mission is to help people live better lives, and the Division of Developmental Disabilities is dedicated to fulfilling this mission for those we serve.

I'm happy to answer any questions you might have.