

**Health and Human Services Committee**  
**LB 311**  
**February 16, 2017**

**Doug Weinberg, Director**  
**Division of Children and Family Services**  
**Department of Health and Human Services**

Good afternoon, Senator Riepe, and members of the Health and Human Services Committee. My name is Doug Weinberg (D-O-U-G W-E-I-N-B-E-R-G). I am the Director of the Division of Children and Family Services of the Department of Health and Human Services. I am here to testify in opposition of LB 311.

Currently, in Nebraska, a person can have up to two felony convictions for possession or use of a controlled substance; and have participated in or completed treatment, and be eligible for SNAP benefits. The Department is supportive of those citizens who strive to overcome drug addiction and meet eligibility standards for assistance by allowing a person to have up to two felony convictions for possession or use of a controlled substance and remain eligible for SNAP benefits.

LB 311 proposes to remove all language that limits eligibility for felony drug convictions including exclusionary criterion of a felony conviction for the sale or distribution of a controlled substance or the intent to sell or distribute a controlled substance.

LB 311 proposes to remove language making all offenders eligible regardless of felony drug use or felony drug distribution. The potential inability to participate in the SNAP program will no longer serve as incentive to participate in or complete treatment and a disincentive to dealing illegal substances. As a Director at Health and Human Services, I have stewardship of tax dollars earned by the hard work of our neighbors. The Department cannot support a bill with the potential consequence of the use of tax dollars to support those who choose to sell and distribute addictive drugs to the children and families in our communities. I want to emphasize that the current language regarding disqualification is based on felony convictions, not just charges of misdemeanors convictions.

In addition, the increase in recipients would require additional Department resources to determine and process eligibility. LB 311 would increase the number of SNAP recipients by an estimated number of 746 individuals resulting in the need for additional case managers. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.