

**Health and Human Services Committee**

**LB 922**

**February 15, 2018**

**Rocky Thompson**

**Interim Director, Division of Medicaid and Long-Term Care  
Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services**

Good afternoon, Chairman Riepe, and members of the Health and Human Services Committee. My name is Thomas “Rocky” Thompson (T-H-O-M-A-S R-O-C-K-Y T-H-O-M-P-S-O-N), and I am the Interim Director of the Division of Medicaid and Long-Term Care (MLTC) of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). I am here to testify in opposition of LB 922.

As written, LB 922 would create a separate program from the Medical Assistance program, however the same benefits and services provided under the Medical Assistance program would be provided. The program would be administered by the Department of Health and Human Services.

LB 922 would extend the Medical Assistance Program to:

- children under the age of 19;
- have a family income equal to or less than two hundred percent (200%) of the federal poverty level (FPL); and
- meet all other eligibility requirements of the current program, with the exception of immigration status and precludes the determination of nonresident status for a child solely based on immigration status.

Under the Medicaid program, federal funds generally cannot be used for individuals who do not meet citizenship or immigration requirements. The primary exception is for individuals who are in need of emergency medical services. This limited coverage is for individuals who have emergent and/or life threatening medical needs and who do not qualify for Medicaid due to their immigration status.

All of the benefits, services, and program administration expenses created by LB 922 would be covered by all state general funds. Based on data from the American Immigration Council and the National Center for Children, approximately twelve hundred (1,200) youth in Nebraska may be eligible under LB 922 annually. The costs for this expansion of the Medicaid program would be over \$2.4 million in state fiscal year (SFY) 18-19 and over \$2.8 million in SFY 19-20, all of which will have to be covered using state general funds. As the department is focused on sustaining its current programs, LB 922 is not sustainable and would put additional fiscal burden on the state and the department.

For these reasons, the Department opposes LB 922. Thank you for the opportunity to testify and I am happy to answer any questions you have.