

Health and Human Services Committee
LB 265
January 31, 2013

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Good afternoon, Senator Campbell and members of the Health and Human Services Committee. I'm Thomas Pristow (T-H-O-M-A-S P-R-I-S-T-O-W), Director of the Department of Health and Human Services' Division of Children and Family Services. I'm here to testify in support of LB 265, which changes current statute to allow for someone other than a licensed foster home or relative to provide foster care.

LB 265 supports our shared commitment to place children with those with whom they are most familiar. As you know, this reduces the trauma that children experience if they cannot remain safely in their own home.

The definitions provided in LB 265 provide clarity in implementing the provisions of this bill. In addition, the allowance to waive non-safety related requirements in licensing relative homes gives us reasonable flexibility to assure that a placement with a relative can be given full consideration, and federal funding can be recurred to the greatest extent possible.

I appreciate Senator Coash's introduction of LB 265 and ask the Health and Human Services Committee to support the bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to be here today. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.