

**Health and Human Services Committee**

**LB 330**

**March 14, 2013**

**Kerry Winterer, CEO**

**Division of Children and Family Services**

**Department of Health and Human Services**

Good afternoon Senator Campbell and members of the Health and Human Services committee. My name is Kerry Winterer (K-E-R-R-Y W-I-N-T-E-R-E-R). I am the Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Health and Human Services and I am here to testify in opposition to LB 330. LB 330 would require the Department to increase the income guideline for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as Food Stamps.

The current gross income limit for SNAP is currently set at one hundred thirty percent (130%) of the Federal Poverty Limit (FPL). This means that a household size of three must have gross income of less than \$2,069 a month to qualify for SNAP benefits. LB 330 would increase the gross income limit to one hundred fifty (150%) of the FPL. This would increase the monthly gross income limit for a household size of three to \$2,442.

This increase in the FPL would be a significant expansion of SNAP in Nebraska. Based on U.S. Census figures, the Department has determined that increasing the FPL to one hundred fifty percent (150%) would increase our potential client base by approximately 34,500 households.

There is a significant difference in the Department's and the Fiscal Office's fiscal note. Our fiscal note states that an additional 19 workers plus supervisors will be required if this bill is passed. We believe this is accurate when you consider the result of the bill will be to process applications from an additional estimated 34,500 households. Please keep in mind that processing an application goes far beyond simply accepting a paper application or an online application in ACCESSNebraska. Federal requirements are that staff complete a personal interview with each applicant and then verify the information provided. We believe that the ratio of 181 cases per worker continues to be an accurate estimate of the number of workers required based on our experience today.

Our estimate is that ten (10%), or 3,450, of these households will ultimately be determined eligible for SNAP benefits at a cost of \$11.6 million in federal tax funds, clearly an expansion of the program on the back of taxpayers.

For these reasons, we are opposed to LB 330. Thank you for the opportunity to be here today. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.