

Health and Human Services Committee
LB 336
January 25, 2017

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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 in the Department of Health and Human Services. I am here to testify in support of LB 336, which was offered by my division as a budget modification to the biennial budget. The Governor has included this modification and has accounted for it in his budget recommendation to the Legislature.

LB 336, as written, proposes to allow the department to charge a reasonable fee to recover expenses in carrying out Central Registry records checks. The department may waive the fee if the requesting party shows the fee would be an undue financial hardship. The department will use the fees to defray costs incurred to carry out such records checks.

The Central Registry is a listing of individuals who have a substantiated allegation of child or adult abuse or neglect. Several entities request Central Registry checks to evaluate the background of potential employees or volunteers. Entities requesting these checks include, but are not limited to hospitals, adoption and foster care agencies, law firms, nursing facilities, third-party background check agencies, in-home service providers, schools, community service and faith-based groups. The department also performs these checks for individuals requesting self-checks as well as request submitted by out-of-state businesses. The department conducts over 120,000 central registry checks annually.

LB336 permits DHHS to charge a fee of up to \$3 per check. The 13 states that responded to our survey charge rates that range from \$7 to \$30 per check. The Department is recommending collecting a \$2.50 initial fee per request, which will allow the department to offset current expenditures by \$300,000.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today, and I urge you to advance LB 336. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.