



Testimony on LR 32
Before the Executive Board of the Nebraska Legislature
February 6, 2015
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Good afternoon Senator Krist and members of the Executive Board. For the record my name is Brad, B-R-A-D Meurrens M-E-U-R-R-E-N-S, and I am the public policy specialist with Disability Rights Nebraska. I am here today in support of LR 32.

Disability Rights Nebraska is the designated Protection and Advocacy organization for people with disabilities in Nebraska and we are charged with advocating for the rights of persons with disabilities in Nebraska.

We fully support LR 32.

We are one of the organizations that helped unearth the problems at the Beatrice State Developmental Center (BSDC), which gave rise to the creation of the Developmental Disabilities Special Investigative Committee (DDSIC). Given the systemic nature of the issues identified in LR 32, the reports from the Department of Justice as well as the DDSIC itself, a constant and vigilant public attention is required.

The DDSIC has been instrumental in raising issues beyond those initially identified by us and the United States Department of Justice. The DDSIC also has been crucial in developing solutions to these issues and holding officials accountable for implementing them.

We believe that if the recommendations stemming from the DDSIC report are to be fully implemented, continued oversight by the committee proposed in LR 32 is crucial.

Issues surrounding community-based developmental disability services and the capacity of the system to provide adequate and appropriate services for people with developmental disabilities living in the community are equally important. The ability of the developmental disability system to provide services for those who are able to move out of BSDC or whose developmental disabilities do not warrant placement in BSDC must be examined as well. The most appropriate body to adopt such a wide-ranging investigation is the DDSIC. **We encourage the Executive Board to advance LR 32.**