

Disability Rights Nebraska

Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities

March 12, 2020

Dear Senators:

Disability Rights Nebraska, the designated Protection and Advocacy organization for people with disabilities in Nebraska, writes in support of the LB 933 provisions as amended into LB 632 (AM2766).

Many Nebraskans with disabilities live in poverty. The American Community Survey estimates that in Nebraska in 2017, the [poverty rate](#) of working-age people with disabilities was 21.5% whereas the poverty rate for Nebraskans without disabilities was 8.1%. The significant cost of paying an overdue utility bill is often compounded by the additional fees and deposits. For people with disabilities with limited means, these fees may delay or prohibit reconnection.

We also support the required postponement of disconnection given a mutual understanding and awareness of a medical issue. For people with disabilities who rely on electricity and power a disconnection could be a health or safety risk (for example, individuals requiring ventilators or other equipment). For those who have a health need, compounded by poverty, the provisions of LB 933 are necessary.

Disability Rights Nebraska recommends amending the provisions of LB 933 into LB 632 and be advanced.

If there are further questions or comment, please feel free to contact me at your earliest convenience: brad@drne.org or 402-474-3183.

Sincerely,

Bradley A. Meurrens, MPA
Public Policy Director
Disability Rights Nebraska