

Disability Rights Nebraska

Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities

March 18, 2020

Dear Senators:

Disability Rights Nebraska is the designated Protection and Advocacy organization for people with disabilities in Nebraska, writes to support the inclusion of LB 827 and LB 1215 into the state budget document.

LB 827 would bolster and support providers of developmental disability services. Supporting the financial positions of these providers is critical. First, adequate provider rates/funding is especially crucial to the provision of services to Nebraskans with developmental disabilities—services that are fundamental to individuals' health, safety, security, and for overall services to maximize their latent human potential. Second, having a strong, robust provider network is key to maintaining an effective and efficient system of home and community-based services.

Disability Rights Nebraska also strongly supports the inclusion of the LB 1215 appropriation. Nebraska has had a severely long waiting list for developmental disability services for decades, forcing individuals and families to wait years for services. While almost 5,000 Nebraskans received developmental disability services in 2018, another 2,300 sat on the state waiting list not receiving services. Typically, a person on the waiting list in 2017 or 2018 was on the waiting list for **six to seven years**, with some having waited **almost eight years**. LB 1215 funding would allow Nebraska to make some inroads on the waiting list, an effort that is long overdue.

Disability Rights Nebraska recommends retaining these appropriation requests in the budget as they would directly impact and improve the lives of vulnerable Nebraskans with developmental disabilities.

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