

Disability Rights Nebraska

Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities

March 25, 2019

Senators:

Disability Rights Nebraska is the designated Protection and Advocacy organization for people with disabilities in Nebraska. In addition to our focus on preventing, investigating, and addressing the abuse, neglect, and exploitation of individuals with disabilities in Nebraska, we are also committed to community access and inclusion of people with disabilities. We support LB 15.

Given the high cost of hearing aids and frequent replacement—the Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing estimates up to \$6,000 per pair replaced every 3-5 years—LB 15 would greatly benefit those children who need hearing aids (and their families). The high price tag and frequent replacement can be cost-prohibitive for families.

This technology has significant impact on the ability of children to learn and to develop language skills. For example, it is extremely difficult to read the lips of a teacher who is turned to face the blackboard or other students. This technology also affects a child's ability to interact with and included in their community, for example to communicate with their friends and family who are not deaf or have a hearing impairment.

We encourage the legislature to advance LB 15.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact me at your convenience:
brad@drne.org or 402-474-3183.

Sincerely,

Brad Meurrens
Public Policy Director