

Disability Rights Nebraska

Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities

**Testimony on LB 1029
Before the Business and Labor Committee
Nebraska Legislature**

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Good afternoon Senator Hansen and members of the committee. 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 Director for Disability Rights Nebraska, the designated Protection and Advocacy organization for people with disabilities in Nebraska. I am here today in strong support of LB 1029.

Even in 2022, people with disabilities still face stigma and negative social attitudes; misperceptions about people with disabilities still persist. There is no reason to believe that these misguided assumptions about people with disabilities do not seep into the workplace and translate into the type of harassment and discrimination addressed by this legislation. This legislature has worked to preserve the dignity of people with disabilities and strengthen anti-discrimination laws for them (LB 540 from 2021) as well as to enact reform to provide incentive to increase their participation in the workforce (LB 323 from 2019/2020). This legislation is right in line with these efforts. It is incongruent to incentivize employment for this community (which has substantially lower employment rates than peers without disabilities) yet not create a safe employment environment (or for only those who work in larger companies). Ultimately, people with disabilities as well as other marginalized communities, should be protected by the law from harassment and discrimination regardless of their employer's size.

We recommend LB 1029 be advanced.