

ONE HUNDRED FIRST LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION - 2009
COMMITTEE STATEMENT
LB346

Hearing Date: Thursday February 05, 2009

Committee On: Health and Human Services

Introducer: Gay

One Liner: Require the Department of Health and Human Services to provide services relating to children's behavioral health and adoption and guardianship families

Roll Call Vote - Final Committee Action:

Advanced to General File with amendment(s)

Vote Results:

Aye: 7 Senators Campbell, Gay, Gloor, Pankonin, Howard, Stuthman, Wallman

Nay:

Absent:

Present Not Voting:

Proponents:

Senator Gay
Scot Adams
Todd Landry
James Blue
Candy Kennedy

Morgan Kelly
Judith Brennan
Sharon Dalrymple
Scott Dugan
Topher Hansen
Pamela Allen
Karen Authier
Rebecca Stevens
Dustina Barnholtz
Eve Bleyhl
Patricia Blakely
Anne Rohan
Rachel Rohan
Sherri Marchman-Day
Jessica Marchman
Lola Hoover
Kathy Lewis

Opponents:

Sarah Helvey
Joe Miller
Melanie Williams-Smotherman

Representing:

Introducer
Department of Health and Human Services
Department of Health and Human Services
CAFCON
Nebraska Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health
Nebraska Families Collaborative
Self
Families Inspiring Families
Mid-Plains Center for Behavioral Healthcare
NABHO
Nebraska Foster and Adoptive Parent Association
Nebraska Children's Home Society
Families Care
Speakout
Nebraska Family Support Network
Healthy Families Project
Self, Families Care
Self, Families Care
Self, Families Care
Unity House, Families Care
Families Care
Families Care

Representing:

Nebraska Appleseed
Self
Families for Change

Neutral:

Georgie Scurfield
Ruth Few

Kathy Bigsby Moore
C.J. Johnson

Representing:

Self
National Association of Social Workers, Nebraska
Chapter
Voices for Children in Nebraska
Region V Systems

Summary of purpose and/or changes:

LB 346 is introduced at the request of the Governor and relates to the provision of behavioral health and other services on behalf of children and families. The bill requires the Department of Health and Human Services (department) to "establish a Children and Family Support hotline which shall: (1) Be a single point of access for children's behavioral health triage through the operation of a twenty-four-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week telephone line; (2) Be staffed by licensed mental health practitioners or other licensed practitioners engaged in activities of mental health treatment; (3) Provide screening and assessment; and (4) Provide referral to existing community-based resources."

The bill requires the department to "establish a Family Navigator Program to respond to children's behavioral health needs. The program shall consist of individuals trained and compensated by the department who, at a minimum, will provide: (1) Peer support; and (2) Connection to existing services, including the identification of community-based services."

The bill requires the department to provide, upon the completion of an adoption or guardianship, on a voluntary basis, "post-adoption and post-guardianship case management services for the families."

The bill requires the department to provide an annual report evaluating the operation of the hotline, Family Navigator Program, and voluntary post-adoption and post-guardianship case management services mandated in the bill.

Explanation of amendments:

The committee amendment (AM 546) replaces the bill as introduced and makes the following changes:

1. Adds provisions of the bill to the Nebraska Behavioral Health Services Act.
2. Creates the Children and Family Behavioral Health Support Act.
3. Clarifies administration of programs created in the new act.
4. Changes provisions relating to staffing of the hotline under the new act.

The committee amendment requires the hotline to be staffed by "trained personnel under the direct supervision of a qualified mental health, behavioral health, or social work professional engaged in activities of mental health treatment."

5. Clarifies and adds provisions relating to evaluation of programs created under the new act.

6. Requires the department to notify adoptive parents and guardians in writing of the availability of post-adoption and post-guardianship case management services under the new act, and requires that such notification be provided at the time of finalization of the adoption or completion of the guardianship and each six months thereafter until termination of the adoption or guardianship.

7. Clarifies and expands reporting provisions of the new act.

Tim Gay, Chairperson