

# One Hundred Second Legislature - Second Session - 2012

## Introducer's Statement of Intent

### LB985

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**Chairperson: Senator Brad Ashford**

**Committee: Judiciary**

**Date of Hearing: January 26, 2012**

The following constitutes the reasons for this bill and the purposes which are sought to be accomplished thereby:

Legislative Bill 985 would codify the establishment and evaluation of the Nebraska Juvenile Services Delivery Project as a pilot program. The Project has been operating as a pilot in Douglas County since 2009. The Project was developed in collaboration between the Office of Probation Administration and the Department of Health and Human Services to provide community-based services for youth under Probation who would otherwise have been made wards of the state to access services. Currently, the Project makes funds from the Department of Health and Human Services available to Probation through an inter-agency contract for case management and service delivery. The Project provides the juvenile court with additional dispositional options for juveniles who are eligible for probation without committing them to the care and custody of the Department of Health and Human Services or the Office of Juvenile Services. Since implementation, the Project has served approximately 635 youth who would have otherwise become wards of the state and received a higher, more restrictive level of care. Of those juvenile served under the Project, 83% have accessed services while remaining in their homes and schools. By providing services to youth in their communities, the cost of care is significantly reduced and outcomes are improved by preventing unnecessary penetration further into the juvenile justice system.

The intent of this bill is to seek funding for the continuation of the Douglas County pilot and allow for expansion of the Project to a rural area through a direct appropriation to Probation. The funding for such appropriation should come from dollars that would otherwise go to the Department of Health and Human Services and the Office of Juvenile Services to provide for juveniles who will now be served by Probation. The apparent success of the Douglas County pilot has led to inquiries about expanding the Project statewide. Thus, this bill would require a comprehensive evaluation of the pilot to be conducted by the University of Nebraska Medical Center's College of Public Health. The analysis and results of the evaluation would be used to determine if a statewide expansion of the Project is advisable.

**Principal Introducer:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Senator Bob Krist**