

# One Hundred Fourth Legislature - Second Session - 2016

## Introducer's Statement of Intent

### LB746

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**Chairperson: Senator Kathy Campbell**

**Committee: Health and Human Services**

**Date of Hearing: January 21, 2016**

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

LB746 implements provisions of the federal Preventing Sex Trafficking and Strengthening Families Act regarding the promotion of "normalcy" among children and youth in foster care. Normalcy is intended to mean age and developmentally appropriate activities and experiences essential to the healthy development of children and youth.

The bill creates the Nebraska Strengthening Families Act for the following reasons:

To ensure foster children can participate in extracurricular and social activities such as field trips, sports, school clubs, religious groups, family vacations and photos, sleepovers, and obtaining a driver's license.

To ensure foster parents are able to make decisions about such activities using a reasonable and prudent parent standard.

To involve birth parents in such decisions.

To require the Department of Health and Human Services to ensure children are made aware of their rights and responsibilities and have access to certain documents before aging out, to ensure foster parents are trained and supported in making determinations as to reasonableness, and report on progress.

To require juvenile courts to ensure children's rights are protected and that children are able to engage in such activities, and to make certain findings part of the child's record.

To eliminate the use of Another Planned Permanent Living Arrangement as a permanency goal for youth under age 16.

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

Senator Kathy Campbell