

One Hundred Fourth Legislature - Second Session - 2016

Introducer's Statement of Intent

LB905

Chairperson: Senator Kathy Campbell

Committee: Health and Human Services

Date of Hearing: March 02, 2016

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

LB905 would create the Commission on Fathers, Men and Boys. The bill is modeled on a statute that was enacted last year by the District of Columbia. See D.C. Code § 3-731 (2016). Other states have similar commissions.

Florida Commission on Responsible Fatherhood
Hawaii State Commission on Fatherhood
Illinois Council on Responsible Fatherhood
Maryland Commission on Responsible Fatherhood
New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) Fatherhood Initiative
Ohio Fatherhood Commission

Today, too many Nebraska children—both inside and outside the child welfare system—are growing up without fathers in their lives. At least 65% of children placed into the child welfare system were not living with their fathers at the time of placement, and even after placement their fathers and paternal relatives are often not involved in planning their cases. Studies show that children whose fathers are actively involved in their lives are more likely to do better in school, less likely to engage in high risk activities and less likely to be involved in the criminal justice system. The Commission on Fathers, Men, and Boys would make recommendations regarding fatherhood-related policies, including changes that would remove state-created obstacles that prevent fathers from being actively involved in their children's lives.

The Commission would also review the public health crisis that currently afflicts Nebraska's men and boys. Over the last twenty years, educational outcomes, employment prospects and public health outcomes for many men and boys have declined. The Commission would research the causes of these negative trends and make recommendations on how to address these problems.

Principal Introducer: _____

Senator Laura Ebke