

One Hundred Fourth Legislature - First Session - 2015

Introducer's Statement of Intent

LB482

Chairman: Senator Les Seiler

Committee: Judiciary

Date of Hearing: February 25, 2015

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

The intent of Legislative Bill 482 is to ensure that juveniles charged with status offenses, things that would not be crimes but for the age of the actor, are not treated like criminals. LB 482 would prevent kids charged with running away, being “uncontrollable”, or truancy from being placed in a juvenile detention facility, fingerprinted, or placed in out of home care unless certain factors are present. Research has shown that status offenses are more effectively dealt with using community based services and court involvement can actually put a youth in a worse situation than they were originally facing. Nebraska has already begun treating these kids differently, as status offenders cannot be sent to a YRTC or placed in secure detention. LB 482 would further these same important protections.

Legislative Bill 482 would also limit indiscriminate shackling of juvenile offenders in the court room. Due to the harmful and traumatic effects shackling causes to adolescent brain development, shackling should only be utilized if there is evidence that the youth poses a risk to himself or others.

Principal Introducer: _____

Senator Bob Krist, District 10