

One Hundred Eighth Legislature - First Session - 2023

Introducer's Statement of Intent

LB271

Chairperson: Senator Justin Wayne

Committee: Judiciary

Date of Hearing: February 22, 2023

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

LB 271 amends Nebraska's child abuse and neglect reporting requirements. Current Nebraska law requires all individuals to report suspected child abuse or neglect, regardless of profession, or risk criminal charges. LB 271 reduces this to only require certain professionals with whom children regularly interact to report suspected child abuse or neglect, as to reduce overreporting. Such professions include medical and mental health professionals, school and child care employees, law enforcement, and others. All other individuals may still report suspected child abuse and neglect, they are just not subject to criminal charges if they do not. LB 271 also clarifies how these reporting obligations apply to employees and employers.

LB 271 then requires all mandatory reporters and child abuse and neglect investigation teams to undergo relevant training, including in abuse and neglect identification and reporting, implicit bias and cultural competency, and community resources, to ensure more accurate reporting. It also requires the Department of Health and Human Services to provide a free, online version of this training for mandatory reporters to access.

Principal Introducer: _____

Senator Terrell McKinney