

## ONE HUNDRED THIRD LEGISLATURE

## SECOND SESSION

**LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION 400**

Introduced by Dubas, 34; Bolz, 29; Campbell, 25; Conrad, 46; Cook, 13;  
Crawford, 45; Gloor, 35; Harms, 48; Howard, 9; Krist, 10;  
McGill, 26; Mello, 5; Watermeier, 1.

WHEREAS, in 2008, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) began to develop the ACCESSNebraska system. ACCESSNebraska is a system that is intended to efficiently determine public assistance eligibility and provide service delivery. Since the implementation of this system, the Legislature has conducted several hearings on bills and resolutions related to ACCESSNebraska. In these hearings, the realities and problems faced by clients navigating the ACCESSNebraska system were revealed including long call wait times, lost documentation, erroneous public assistance decisions, and a general difficulty for clients to get the assistance they needed in a timely manner.

WHEREAS, on December 18, 2013, the Legislative Performance Audit Committee issued a report and recommendations related to the ACCESSNebraska system. The report contained findings including, but not limited to, lack of implementation of the provisions of LB 825 (Laws 2012), lack of standards relating to internal processes and performance, and failure to meet internal goals related to call wait times and call abandonment rates. The report also made certain recommendations including evaluation of key program aspects, such as the adequacy of existing staffing, call center software, and call center staff training.

WHEREAS, the Legislature recognizes the need to have a system of public assistance service delivery that is modern and streamlined and that is also effective and efficient for clients. In recognition of the continued problems with the ACCESSNebraska system as described in the report of the Legislative Performance Audit Committee, a point has been reached where additional legislative oversight and monitoring is necessary to ensure accountability and system effectiveness.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MEMBERS OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA, SECOND SESSION:

1. That the Legislature hereby calls for the Executive Board of the Legislative Council to meet forthwith and appoint a special committee of the Legislature to be known as the ACCESSNebraska Special Investigative Committee of the Legislature. The committee shall consist of seven members of the Legislature appointed by the Executive Board. The committee shall elect a chairperson and vice-chairperson from the membership of the committee. The Executive Board is hereby authorized to provide the committee with a legal counsel, committee clerk, and other staff as required by the committee from existing legislative staff. The Executive Board is also authorized to hire outside legal counsel, consultants, and investigators as required by the committee. The committee shall be an investigative committee and is hereby authorized to hold hearings and issue subpoenas as is deemed necessary by the committee.

2. The ACCESSNebraska Special Investigative Committee of the Legislature is hereby authorized to study the adequacy of staffing and training of DHHS employees working within the ACCESSNebraska system,

including the number of employees for local offices, the number of employees for call centers and document imaging centers, the type and amount of training received, the education levels and years of experience of employees, client access to employees, and the need for and availability of dedicated caseworkers for clients. The scope of the committee's investigation shall include, but not be limited to, the adequacy of technology used within the ACCESSNebraska system, including telephone systems, computer software, case management, information technology, and use of and access to databases to allow for data matching. The committee shall also investigate the effectiveness of processes and structures used by the ACCESSNebraska system, including system design, management structure, and system goals. The committee shall also investigate the need for new or additional data collection to determine system effectiveness. The committee shall analyze the experiences of clients and their family members and examine customer service experience, access to benefits, and responses to changing family needs. The committee shall utilize existing studies and reports and legislation developed to address the current conditions. The committee shall not be limited to such studies, reports, or legislation. The committee shall issue a report with its findings and recommendations to the Legislature no later than December 15, 2014. The report to the Legislature shall be submitted electronically.