

COMMITTEE STATEMENT

LB 1101

HEARING DATE: February 17, 2000

COMMITTEE ON: Health and Human Services

TITLE: (Aguilar, Baker, Bromm, Bruning, Coordsen, Dickey, Jensen, Jones, Dw. Pedersen, Price, Robak, Schmitt, Smith, Tyson, Vrtiska, Landis) Adopt the Nebraska Senior Companion Volunteer Program Act

ROLL CALL VOTE – FINAL COMMITTEE ACTION

Advanced to General File

X Advanced to General File with Amendments

Indefinitely Postponed

Vote Results:

7 Yes Senators Jensen, Byars, Suttle, Thompson, Tyson, Price,
and Dickey

No

Present, not voting

Absent

PROPOSERS

Senator Ray Aguilar

Senator Robert Dickey

Bonda Ehlers

Susan Campbell

Arnold Lei

Viola Boesiger

Wayne Miles

Janelle Breed

Mary Parker

Marie Payne

Charles Udstuen

REPRESENTING

Introducer

Senator

Senior Companion Program

OPPOSERS

REPRESENTING

NEUTRAL

REPRESENTING

COMMITTEE STATEMENT

SUMMARY OF PURPOSE AND/OR CHANGES:

LB 1101 adopts the Nebraska Senior Companion Volunteer Program Act (the act). The bill states legislative purpose and intent. The purpose of the act is to "provide personally meaningful volunteer community service opportunities to low-income older individuals for the benefit of adults who need assistance in their daily living." The legislative intent of the act is to "enable older individuals to volunteer their time and effort in order to provide care and support on a person-to-person basis to the frail elderly with special needs in substantial accordance with the National and Community Service Trust Act of 1993, 42 U.S.C. 12651 et seq." §§ 1-2.

The bill defines "department" (the Department of Health and Human Services), "direct service contractor" (a city, county, state agency or private nonprofit organization able to provide senior companion services under the act and 45 C.F.R. part 2551 in a variety of settings), and "senior companion volunteer" (an individual age 60 or over, with an annual income not exceeding limits established in 45 C.F.R. part 2551 or by the department, who provides senior companion services at least 4 hours per day, 4 days per week). §3.

The bill requires the department to establish the Nebraska Senior Companion Volunteer Program, "using senior companion volunteers assigned by one or more direct service contractors." Such contractors are required to (1) apply with the department for grant funding; (2) recruit, select, train and assign staff and volunteers; (3) provide certain benefits to volunteer participants; (4) supervise volunteers; (5) arrange for volunteer meals and transportation; (6) provide service to the frail elderly with special needs; and (7) maintain required program data. §4.

The bill requires that services under the act be provided to populations including, but not limited to, older individuals who are (1) bedfast, too frail or ill to be transported to special programs; (2) physically impaired and cannot leave their homes; (3) physically or mentally impaired and are confined and have withdrawn from social interaction because of psychological problems; and (4) physically impaired and on waiting lists to be enrolled in adult day care programs. §6. Services provided under the act may not be provided to individuals already receiving in-home supportive services through the department or other state or local government entity. §7.

The bill requires the department to make grants to direct service contractors who provide services under the act. Preference is given for grants to provide in-home services, and to applicants not receiving federal funds to provide services under any federal senior companion volunteer program. Funding must also be obtained from a local governmental or community source in order to receive a grant. Local funding may not exceed 10% of state funding received. More than 10% may be contributed by local or community sources. §8.

The bill requires the department to adopt and promulgate rules and regulations under the act. §9.

The bill appropriates \$200,000 for FY 2000-01 to the Department of Health and Human Services Finance and Support to carry out the act. §10.

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EXPLANATION OF AMENDMENTS, IF ANY:

The committee amendment (1) removes appropriations language from the bill; (2) requires the provision of liability insurance for senior volunteers; and (3) requires the department to set the volunteer stipend amount.

Senator Jim Jensen, Chairperson