



Ninety-Ninth Legislature - Second Session - 2006
Introducer's Statement of Intent
LB 1070

Chairperson: Patrick J. Bourne
Committee: Judiciary
Date of Hearing: February 22, 2006

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

Child Advocacy Centers are a place where a child who has been a victim of abuse, neglect or assault of a serious nature can be interviewed, get a medical examination and have initial assessments done by a multi-disciplinary team of trained professionals.

The CACs were given duties by contract with HHSS two years ago to coordinate and encourage communication between HHSS and law enforcement, as well as other agencies, in an effort to provide the best care for the children involved in abuse cases. They have greatly improved the number of county "1184" teams that are meeting statutory meeting requirements (from 40 to 95%), improved training for team members and are getting many more abuse cases reviewed by the teams. To assure continued success of this response to child victims and for the efficiency of the 1184 teams CACs need statutory recognition. Therefore, LB 1070 will:

- Recognize Child Avocacy Centers in statute
- Assign each county to one of the current 7 centers (already done by contract)
- Officially list their duty to assist county attorneys in convening meetings, coordinating training for 1184 team members, setting protocols and coordinating case investigation and treatment for children who are victims of abuse
- Mandate that interviews of children up to 16 years old be forensic (based on scientific interviewing methods to be non-threatening, thorough and accurate) and conducted at the assigned CAC in their child-friendly atmosphere (telehealth networks can be used to facilitate participation in interviews)
- Add procedures for responding to drug endangered children to the team protocol duties
- Name the case coordinator as a member of the 1184 team
- Add a representative from the Nebraska Attorney General's office as an alternative to the county attorney (for cases that get turned over to the AG).

In addition, this bill includes some clarifying language to specify that the team includes a member of HHSS, *Child Protective Services Division*.

This bill requires no appropriation.

Principal Introducer:

**_____
Senator Ray Aguilar**