

AMENDMENTS TO LR29

Introduced by Executive Board.

1 1. Strike the original provisions and insert the following new
2 provisions:

3 WHEREAS, Saint Francis Ministries was awarded a five-year, 197-
4 million-dollar child welfare contract to serve abused and neglected
5 children in the eastern service area of Douglas and Sarpy counties as
6 designated pursuant to section 81-3116 by the Department of Health and
7 Human Services; and

8 WHEREAS, under that contract Saint Francis Ministries has
9 responsibility for approximately 2,500 children who are wards of the
10 State of Nebraska or are in Nebraska families who are in need of services
11 to keep their children safe and healthy; and

12 WHEREAS, Saint Francis Ministries has been accused in the State of
13 Kansas of gross mismanagement of funds; and

14 WHEREAS, Saint Francis Ministries has estimated a 27-million-dollar
15 operating loss for the first year of the contract with the Department of
16 Health and Human Services and may be at risk of bankruptcy.

17 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MEMBERS OF THE ONE HUNDRED
18 SEVENTH LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA, FIRST SESSION:

19 1. That the Legislature hereby calls for the Executive Board of the
20 Legislative Council to appoint a special committee of the Legislature to
21 be known as the Eastern Service Area Child Welfare Contract Special
22 Investigative and Oversight Committee of the Legislature. The committee
23 shall consist of nine members of the Legislature. Members shall include
24 two members of the Health and Human Services Committee of the
25 Legislature, two members of the Appropriations Committee of the
26 Legislature, two members of the Judiciary Committee of the Legislature,
27 two members of the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee of

1 the Legislature, and one at-large member of the Legislature. The at-large
2 member shall be a resident of the eastern service area. The Eastern
3 Service Area Child Welfare Contract Special Investigative and Oversight
4 Committee shall elect a chairperson and vice-chairperson from the
5 membership of the committee. The executive board may provide the
6 committee with a legal counsel, committee clerk, and other staff as
7 required by the committee from existing legislative staff. The executive
8 board may authorize the committee to hire outside legal counsel,
9 consultants, and investigators as required by the committee. The
10 committee may hold hearings and issue subpoenas to compel the attendance
11 of witnesses and the production of any papers, books, accounts,
12 documents, and testimony.

13 2. The Eastern Service Area Child Welfare Contract Special
14 Investigative and Oversight Committee of the Legislature is hereby
15 authorized to study the Department of Administrative Services and
16 Department of Health and Human Services with respect to the award,
17 implementation, and oversight of the child welfare contract. The
18 committee is also hereby authorized to study the circumstances
19 surrounding the creation and submission of the bid by Saint Francis
20 Ministries including, but not limited to, the actions of Saint Francis
21 Ministries and the communications of its employees and agents. The scope
22 of this authorization expressly includes the communications of former
23 employees or agents of Saint Francis Ministries. The committee shall
24 utilize existing studies, reports, and legislation developed to address
25 the current conditions. The committee shall not be limited to such
26 studies, reports, or legislation. The committee shall investigate
27 placement and quality of care received by the children served by the
28 eastern service area through the contract services agreement with Saint
29 Francis Ministries.

30 3. The committee shall issue a report with its findings and
31 recommendations to the Legislature no later than December 15, 2021.