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January 30, 2014

To: Members of the Executive Board

From: Aubrey Mancuso, Policy Coordinator

Re: LB 871

We want to express our support for LB 871. As a group that often works with the Legislature on bills impacting children, it has become clear that the current fiscal note process is in need of reform.

We know that the fiscal analysts work very hard and aim to provide the most accurate information possible, but the short timeline under which fiscal notes are constructed and made public leaves very little room to try to address problems with the fiscal note when they arise. This short timeline contributes to challenges with the fiscal note process. If you compare fiscal notes on very similar bills from different sessions, you will see different methodologies used to determine costs. This highlights the fact that there are limited quality controls on information provided to the fiscal office by state agencies. Once those numbers are put into an official fiscal note, it becomes very challenging to make any changes.

LB 871 takes a step in the right direction by allowing Senators to request fiscal notes on draft bills. This will allow for more time to address issues with a fiscal note and better plan for the budgetary impact of bills. This is an important step toward making improvements in the fiscal note process.

We urge the committee to advance this bill to the full legislature for consideration.

Thank you.