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February 12, 2014

To: Members of the Revenue Committee

From: Aubrey Mancuso, Policy Coordinator

Re: Support for LB 691

Access to affordable child care helps keeps children safe so parents can work. Voices for Children supports LB 691 because of the high cost of child care and the importance of access to safe affordable child care for children.

Attached to my testimony are charts based on a report that we recently released called the *Family Bottom Line*. The report data show the minimum average amount a family with two children would spend on child care in different regions of Nebraska and the portion of the family budget devoted to child care.

The regions are based on the USDA rurality codes. Metropolitan counties are the larger counties and counties adjacent to large counties (like Lancaster County). Non-Metropolitan Urban counties have a population of at least 2,500 (like Adams County) and the Rural counties are less than 2,500 in population (like Banner County). The first chart shows child care costs in a single parent family and the second shows a family with two working parents.

In every case, child care is the most significant expense in the budget for families with young children. Child care costs represent from 26-33% of the family budget and the monthly cost ranges from about \$960 per month in rural counties to about \$1350 per month in more urban areas of the state.

LB 691 helps make child care more affordable for more Nebraska families and we urge the committee to advance this bill.

Thank you.

