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February 19, 2016

Senator Kathy Campbell, Chair – Health and Human Services Committee
Room 1510, State Capitol Lincoln, NE 68509

Re: Support for LB 939 – Adopt the Nebraska Early Childhood Advantage Act

Strong families are the foundation of Nebraska. Voices for Children in Nebraska supports LB 939, which would establish reporting requirements for home visiting programs. Research has shown that intensive home visiting programs are one of the most effective interventions in preventing child abuse and neglect.

Our future success as a state depends heavily on the investments that we make today in our youngest Nebraskans. Home visits are conducted by trained professionals that promote positive parenting, improve child health, and promote responsive parent-child interaction. **By targeting at-risk families, home visiting programs have demonstrated significant improvements in the physical, cognitive, and social-emotional development of a child, while also improving overall family self-sufficiency.**ⁱ

Investing in stronger families is also good fiscal policy. **The positive impact that home visiting programs have had in reducing child maltreatment, poverty, and crime, has been estimated to produce a return of \$5.70 for every taxpayer dollar invested.**ⁱⁱ The first years of a child's life are crucial and interventions during this time can have lifelong impacts that shape our next generation of Nebraskans.

LB 939 establishes a framework for ensuring accountability and quality in this important program. We thank Senator Mello for bringing this important issue forward and respectfully urge the committee to advance this bill forward. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Julia Tse, Policy Associate

ⁱ Sarah Avellar, et al., "Home Visiting Evidence of Effectiveness Review: Executive Summary," U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Policy, Research and Evaluation, September 2013.

ⁱⁱ Lynn A. Karoly, et al., "Early Childhood Interventions: Proven Results, Future Promise," RAND Corporation, 2005.