



January 28, 2026

To: Chairperson Hardin, and members of the Health and Human Services Committee
From: Anahí Salazar, Voices for Children in Nebraska

RE: Support for 959- Require the Department of Health and Human Services to create a youth afterschool credential and an adult eligibility passport under the Child Care Licensing Act

Gaining experience by working in a field of interest gives young people fresh and new perspective on how things work. Providing sixteen and seventeen year olds with the opportunity to learn and grow in their caregiving can be a rewarding experience for all, both the teenagers and the school aged children. Voices for Children supports LB 959 because it will allow young people to receive a youth afterschool credential.

The teen years provide for a time of career exploration and development. Teens are learning more about what they want to dedicate their time to. Programs like youth afterschool credential are tools to support adolescent career development. Young people can gain real-world experience, learn valuable skills like time management, communication and professionalism.

Providing young people with experiences in spaces like afterschool care, can help create positive relationships with younger students. The mentoring can be threefold as the sixteen and seventeen year olds can also learn from their supervisors, and the younger students can learn from the teens. Having more caring individuals in the a younger students life can have a positive impact.

We want to thank Senator Riepe for his work in making child care more accessible and the Committee for your consideration.