



February 20, 2026

To: Chairperson Bosn and members of the Judiciary Committee

From: Katie Nungesser, Voices for Children in Nebraska

Re: Support of LB 1225, Change provisions of the Nebraska Juvenile Code relating to expedited appeals of motions to transfer to county or district court

Our justice system should respond to youth in ways that support accountability, growth, and healing. When a young person enters the justice system, the goal should always be to help them stabilize, access support, and move forward with their lives as quickly and safely as possible. Time matters. For kids, time is not neutral. Time shapes who they become. Voices for Children is in support of LB 1225 as shores up the statute to make sure that time is respected.

For context, according to data from Administrative Office of the Courts and Probation, in 2023 there were 54 motions to transfer from juvenile court to criminal court of which 2 were granted, and 104 motions to transfer from criminal court to juvenile court of which 72 were granted¹. Not all of these would have been appealed, so we are not talking about a massive glut of cases. But right now, when a transfer decision is appealed, young people can wait many months for a hearing and then wait even longer for that decision to make its way back to the lower court.

Their lives are on hold. Their access to services can be delayed. If detained, their education is disrupted. Their stability is interrupted. They are left waiting, often without clarity about what comes next. They cost young people critical time they cannot get back. The delays can also increase population numbers in our detention centers as youth wait for final decisions.

Youth do not get younger. Juvenile court services have a clear end point, at age 19. Once a young person ages out, the opportunity for youth focused rehabilitation and developmentally appropriate support disappears. Every month of delay shrinks the window for real intervention. Every delay makes it harder for the system to do what it is meant to do: help young people heal, stabilize, and move forward in healthy ways.

Placing a 90 day timeline in statute for returning appellate orders creates clarity and accountability. It brings structure to a process that currently leaves young people waiting without answers. Most importantly, it protects children from being trapped in delays that serve no purpose in their growth or healing.

We urge you to support this change because young people deserve timely decisions, timely services, and timely opportunities to move forward. Thank you to Senator Raybould for bringing LB 1225 ,and to this committee for your thoughtful consideration.

¹ Nebraska Administrative Office of the Courts & Probation. (2025). *Annual report: Fiscal year 2024–2025* [PDF]. Nebraska Judicial Branch. <https://nebraskajudicial.gov/sites/default/files/publication-report-files/AnnualReport2025.pdf>