



February 2, 2026

To: Chairperson Kauth, and members of the Business and Labor Committee

From: Anahí Salazar, Voices for Children in Nebraska

RE: Support for LR 303CA- Constitutional amendment to provide for paid family medical leave

At Voices for Children in Nebraska, we work alongside families who are doing everything right and still struggling to stay afloat when life happens. Nebraskans are hardworking and committed to building better futures for themselves and their children. Yet moments that should be met with care and stability too often become financial crises under our current laws because of this Voices supports LR 303CA.

A new baby. A family member returning from military service with a critical injury. A serious car accident. A parent beginning to show signs of Alzheimer's. A child diagnosed with leukemia. These are not rare or irresponsible circumstances. They are common, human moments in the life of a family. Without paid family and medical leave, these moments can force parents to choose between being there for their children and keeping their job or paycheck. **Under our current law, these moments can also be a financial crisis.**

It is important to consider the relationship between caregiving and workforce participation in order to ensure that grown-ups can be there for children during life's most treasured, stressful, or critical moments. Voices for Children in Nebraska supports LR 303CA because Paid Family and Medical Leave means Nebraskans don't have to choose between family and secure employment.

Investing in families works for everyone. Investing in families is an investment in Nebraska's workforce and economy. High employee turnover, the loss of institutional knowledge, absenteeism and presenteeism, and temporary hiring are all already affecting businesses' bottom line. A survey found that 1 in 3 workers have left at least one job due to caregiving responsibilities, and the most experienced and highest-paid workers were most likely to be affected. Paid family leave policies do not adversely impact business productivity or profitability. Recent studies have shown that paid leave saves employers

from needing to hire replacements and reduces turnover costs – in fact, improving job continuity.¹

Research shows that paid family and medical leave programs reduce poverty across communities and diminish the poverty gap among workers.² Paid family and medical leave is also a proven tool to reduce poverty and economic instability across communities. When families can maintain income during medical or caregiving events, they are less likely to fall behind on rent, utilities, or food costs. These protections narrow poverty gaps and provide children with greater household stability during periods of change or crisis.

For children, the benefits are profound. Paid leave allows parents and caregivers to build secure attachments with infants that are foundational to long term learning, health, and emotional development. States with paid leave policies have seen reductions in infant mortality and post-neonatal mortality. Paid leave supports parental recovery after birth, improves mental health outcomes, and is associated with longer durations of breastfeeding, benefiting both parent and child. These benefits also extend to families formed through foster care or adoption, ensuring children have time to safely and securely transition into their new homes without jeopardizing family economic security.

Family values are at the heart of Nebraska values. LB 189 would ensure that all Nebraskans can be there for the most important moments in our families' lives, and that our children will have the best start to life. Thank you, Senator Machaela Cavanaugh, for your leadership in this important issue and thank you Committee for your time and attention. We respectfully urge the committee to advance LR 303CA.

¹ Joseph B. Fuller and Manjari Raman. The Caring Company. Managing the Future of Work Project, Harvard Business School, 2019. Available at: <https://www.hbs.edu/managing-the-future-of-work/Documents/The%20Caring%20Company%20-%2001.17.19.pdf>

² [US Department of Labor announces new research that underscores benefits of paid family and medical leave | U.S. Department of Labor](#)