



# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

101ST LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

Dear Child Advocates,

**Attention:** If you read nothing else in this legislative update, please read below under the “**Babies Born Healthy**” heading. Voices for Children in Nebraska is engaged in an exciting social media project around prenatal care that we want you to know about. Join us!

As of yesterday, March 1<sup>st</sup>, over 1,500 unborn children will lose access to medical care and supervision that will allow them to be born as healthy as possible. Voices for Children in Nebraska urges all child advocates to take immediate action. We need you to do a couple of simple things:

- **Contact your legislator early and often.**
  - [Senator Contact List](#)  
[http://www.voicesforchildren.com/pdf/Legislative/2010/2010\\_roster.pdf](http://www.voicesforchildren.com/pdf/Legislative/2010/2010_roster.pdf)
  - We’ve put together a few talking points to use in your communication with your legislator. It is really as simple as: “Protect prenatal care to ensure that Nebraska babies are born healthy. Support LB 1110.”  
[Prenatal Care Talking Points](#)  
[http://www.voicesforchildren.com/pdf/Legislative/2010/Protect\\_Prenatal\\_Care\\_Talking\\_Points\\_3.1.10.pdf](http://www.voicesforchildren.com/pdf/Legislative/2010/Protect_Prenatal_Care_Talking_Points_3.1.10.pdf)
- **Barrage the press.** Use your voice in your local paper to let our legislators know that Nebraskans value the lives and health of babies born in our state. If you are interested in writing an op-ed to your local paper but don’t have the time or don’t know how, we would be happy to help. **Contact me immediately.**
- Check out “**Babies Born Healthy**” below.

## **Babies Born Healthy** (<http://www.babiesbornhealthy.com>)

We’ve established this site to generate discussion about the importance of prenatal care and the effect prenatal care can have on the health and development of Nebraska’s children. We invite you to share your thoughts and engage in lively discussion on this topic and share the site with your friends and families. There are three ways to connect:

Visit our blog and subscribe to our RSS feed for regular updates.

<http://www.babiesbornhealthy.com>

Become a fan of our Facebook page.

<http://www.facebook.com/babiesbornhealthy>

Follow us on Twitter.

<http://www.twitter.com/prenatalcare>

Be sure to check out our first video, Prenatal Care: A Child's Foundation (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uksuFOJnhnU>), with comments from experts and advocates from around the state on the importance of prenatal care. More videos will be coming soon, so keep watching <http://www.babiesbornhealthy.com>.

### **Protecting Prenatal Care**

Voices for Children testified in support of protecting prenatal care at the hearing for LB 1110 last Thursday in front of the Health and Human Services Committee. We were joined by an impressive array of proponents, all supporting access to prenatal care for soon-to-be Nebraska babies. Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services CEO Kerry Winterer and Governor Heineman opposed protecting prenatal care for unborn children in Nebraska, which would overturn a long-standing tradition of protecting prenatal care for all low-income children that has been in place in Nebraska for 20 to 30 years. See Voices for Children in Nebraska's Testimony here: [LB 1110 Testimony](http://www.voicesforchildren.com/pdf/Legislative/2010/LB_1110_Testimony.pdf)  
[http://www.voicesforchildren.com/pdf/Legislative/2010/LB\\_1110\\_Testimony.pdf](http://www.voicesforchildren.com/pdf/Legislative/2010/LB_1110_Testimony.pdf)

As the Omaha World-Herald coverage indicated, "The opposition by the governor, who is seeking re-election this year, puts him at odds with **every major health care and pro-life group in the state, as well as former U.S. Rep. John Cavanaugh, State Auditor Mike Foley and Heineman's former chief medical officer, Dr. Richard Raymond.**" See the OWH's coverage here: [Governor Opposes Prenatal Bill](http://www.omaha.com/article/20100225/NEWS01/100229736), February 25, 2010  
<http://www.omaha.com/article/20100225/NEWS01/100229736>

### **Proponents at the LB 1110 hearing included:**

Nebraska Medical Association (NMA)  
Dr. Richard Raymond, former NMA President and former Chief Medical Officer in Nebraska  
An expectant mother who received an initial letter from DHHS  
Nebraska Right to Life Board Member  
One World Community Health Center and the Nebraska Federally Qualified Health Centers  
March of Dimes  
State Auditor Mike Foley  
Building Bright Futures and the Nebraska Child Healthcare Alliance  
Building Bright Futures Early Childhood Services  
Alegent Health  
Bryan LGH  
Nebraska Children's Home  
Public Health Association of Nebraska  
Nebraska Hospital Association, Creighton University and Creighton University Medical Center  
Nebraska Appleseed Center for Law in the Public Interest  
Nebraska Catholic Conference  
Mexican American Commission  
Former Senator Lowen Kruse  
University of Nebraska Medical Center  
Nebraska Dietetic Association  
Voices for Children in Nebraska

Notable opponents at the hearing:

Kerry Winterer, CEO Nebraska DHHS

See the letter submitted to the HHS Committee and all senators, signed by Mr. Winterer and Governor Dave Heineman:

[http://www.voicesforchildren.com/pdf/Legislative/2010/Governor\\_Heineman\\_Letter\\_to\\_HHS\\_2.25.10.pdf](http://www.voicesforchildren.com/pdf/Legislative/2010/Governor_Heineman_Letter_to_HHS_2.25.10.pdf)

## **Other Legislative News**

### **Priority Bills**

Last week was the last week of Committee hearings. At this point, all introduced legislation has been heard before its respective committee. If there is a bill that you are particularly interested in that remains in committee, it is appropriate to contact members of the committee and urge them to advance. If a bill has not been prioritized by a senator, by Speaker Flood, or by a committee, the bill has a reduced likelihood of moving forward this legislative session. (You can check to see if a bill has been prioritized here: [2010 Priority Bills](http://www.nebraskalegislature.gov/session/priority.php) <http://www.nebraskalegislature.gov/session/priority.php>). Several of Voices for Children's priority bills have been prioritized, and so the work continues as we promote the best interests of children and families throughout the remainder of this legislative session.

### **Expanding Access to Health Care for Kids through School-Based Health Services**

**LB 1106** – Introduced and prioritized by Senator Jeremy Nordquist (District 7 – Omaha) with co-sponsors: Ashford, Cook, Council, Gloor, Howard, Mello.

LB 1106 will allow health services provided in a school-based setting to be covered under Kids Connection. We believe this bill will expand access to health care for children in schools where health services are available. It may also reduce barriers for schools to begin providing health services in the future. **This bill has been advanced out of Committee (with an amendment pending) and will be up soon for first round of debate in the full legislative body. We will keep you posted on the progress of this bill, but in the meantime, go ahead and contact your legislator with the following message:**

- **“Support access to health care for kids, allowing them to be healthy and ready to learn. Please support LB 1106.”**