



TO: Education Committee  
FROM: Marion Miner, Associate Director of Pro-Life & Family Policy  
Nebraska Catholic Conference  
DATE: February 24, 2025  
RE: LB213 (Science Standards for Human Embryology) (Support)

The Nebraska Catholic Conference advocates for the public policy interests of the Catholic Church and advances the Gospel of Life by engaging, educating, and empowering public officials, Catholic laity, and the general public. I am here today to express the Conference's support of LB213.

LB213 is a very simple and, we think, commonsense bill that would ensure Nebraska students learn basic information about early human development.

Polling consistently shows that American students, like Americans in general, are woefully undereducated about the basic science of their own early development. Students appropriately learn about life cycles of various organisms, but according to the evidence they are without even elementary knowledge about their own material origin and growth. Human development in its early stages is basic educational content that deserves to be studied in the objective, calm, and non-ideological atmosphere of the science classroom. It deserves much better than the offhand treatment of the consequences of sex that are a standard part of sexual education presentations.

And LB213 is entirely non-ideological in content. Its text requires the State Board of Education, which is responsible for developing academic content standards in all subjects, to "adopt measurable academic standards for human embryology under the science education standards." LB213 goes on to say that part of the basis for these standards for human embryology must be the Carnegie Stages of Human Embryonic Development. The Carnegie Stages are well-established—having been in continuous use since 1942—and are referred to as the "periodic table" of early human development and the "gold standard" in that field. It is perhaps the best, most-accepted, and longest-established objective resource we have today for teaching basic human embryology.

LB213 is different in several ways from so-called "Baby Olivia" bills that have been passed in other states:

- (1) The source is purely scientific, objective, longstanding, and is not affiliated with any political movement or ideological organization. This stands in marked contrast not only to other states' embryonic development bills, but also to the many sex education presentations often given by organizations that are nakedly ideological, including in Nebraska.
- (2) It does not include requirements that any specific material be used other than the Carnegie Stages, the strengths and objectivity of which have already been mentioned.

(3) It puts this material where it belongs, in the objective domain of the science classroom.

It is easy to see why a person might be wary of a bill that simply tries to “balance” ideological content of one flavor in sex ed curricula with opposing ideological content. LB213 is not that.

When the real content of this bill is understood, it is difficult to understand opposition to it. This basic scientific knowledge is universally accepted and recognized, but for some reason we do not currently require that it be taught. If there is a reason other than political ideology that keeps this science out of the science classroom, it would be good to know what it is. As things stand, political ideology should not be a reason for preventing students from learning about the material processes that comprise early human development.

Thank you for your time and consideration. The Conference respectfully proposes that you advance LB213 from committee.