



TO: Judiciary Committee  
FROM: Tom Venzor, Executive Director  
Nebraska Catholic Conference  
DATE: February 25, 2026  
RE: LB1060 (Child Placement Services Preservation Act) (Support)

The Nebraska Catholic Conference advocates for the public policy interests of the Catholic Church through engaging, educating, and empowering public officials, Catholic laity, and the general public.

The NCC supports LB1060 which would ensure the government does not engage in unjust discrimination against faith-based foster care and adoption agencies which, like other agencies, serve the children in our state who need a loving, caring home.

Catholic social teaching—and basic human reason—teach us about the fundamental goods of marriage and the family, and that kids have a right to be raised by their mother and father. Unfortunately, for various reasons, this is not always possible, and some children are placed in the foster care system or are placed for adoption. Well before the state of Nebraska got involved in child placement, the Catholic Church cared for children in need of a loving and care home. When Nebraska was a mere four-years old, St. James Orphanage—run by the Sisters of Mercy— was the first home established in our state to care for orphaned children. Eventually, Catholic Charities of Omaha assumed responsibility for St. James. For over 100 years, St. James provided care for thousands of vulnerable children in and around Nebraska.

This story is similar for Catholic social service agencies around the country, including states where agencies have been forced out of child placement services.<sup>1</sup>

LB1060 would ensure that these types of outcomes do not occur for child placement agencies. As the legislative findings indicate, at a time when “the number of children needing foster care and adoption placement outnumber the homes

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Catholic Culture, “Illinois Catholic Charities forced out of adoption, foster care services” (May 26, 2011), accessible at <https://www.catholicculture.org/news/headlines/index.cfm?storyid=10460> (last accessed on February 25, 2026). See also *Fulton v. City of Philadelphia*, 593 U.S. 522 (2021) (holding that the City of Philadelphia violated the 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment rights of Catholic Social Services when it refused to continue contracting with CSS for foster care services because of CSS’s faith-based views on marriage).

available for placement” it is important that the state values and honors the mission and charity of faith-based foster care and adoption placement agencies.

Rather than require agencies to avail themselves of extensive, rigorous, and costly litigation in an instance where the state might unjustly discriminate against them because of their faith-based beliefs and practices, LB1060 provides important, up-front statutory protection. In doing so, Nebraska can continue to rely on a diverse array of service providers to meet the demanding need of serving Nebraska’s children.

Thank you for your time and consideration.