



To: Appropriations Committee
From: Marion Miner, Associate Director for Pro-Life & Family
Nebraska Catholic Conference
Subject: LB 481 (as amended by AM 614) (Impose No State Requirements for Title X Subgrantee
Eligibility Beyond that Required by the Federal Government) (Oppose)
Date: March 12, 2019

Chairman Stinner and Members of the Appropriations Committee,

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 opposition to LB 481.

LB 481, as amended last Tuesday, states simply that "[t]he Department of Health and Human Services shall administer the Title X Program in accordance with applicable federal regulations in existence as of the effective date of this act."

The reason the Conference opposes its adoption is two-fold:

First, Nebraska DHHS has to follow applicable federal regulations anyway, so the bill does not accomplish anything.

Second, although Senator Bolz' intent may be to incorporate the new, pro-life federal rules announced by the Trump administration, those rules will not go into effect anytime in the foreseeable future. We do believe these new federal rules are good – they are very similar to the compromise language the Legislature agreed to last year that became part of the state budget.

However, the new rules will not go into effect anytime soon because opponents, who have already sued the Trump administration, will almost certainly find a judge willing to enjoin the new rules – i.e., make them unenforceable – until the lawsuit is resolved. That could take several years. During the years the lawsuit is ongoing, the new rules will have no force.

If the Legislature passes this bill rather than the budget language the whole body agreed to last year, the state will recommence funding the abortion industry through the Title X program. This puts us in a pre-2018 position, with no requirement that abortion providers physically, legally, and financially separate their abortion activity from their Title X-related services. And without those separation requirements, taxpayer dollars will directly fund abortions, as has been made clear by state audits in two consecutive years.

The Conference opposes LB 481 and urges the Appropriations Committee to recommit to the pro-life budget language the Legislature worked so hard to forge a consensus on last year.

ARCHDIOCESE OF OMAHA * DIOCESE OF LINCOLN * DIOCESE OF GRAND ISLAND

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