

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

SECOND SESSION

**LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION 404**

Introduced by McKinney, 11.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this resolution is to examine the racial and ethnic disproportionality within Nebraska's child welfare system. Research overwhelmingly demonstrates that children and families of color make up a greater percentage of individuals in the child welfare system as compared to their percentage in the national and state general population, and this is especially true for Black and Native American children and families. Research also overwhelmingly demonstrates that individuals and families of color make up a greater percentage of individuals that law enforcement officials interact with as compared to their percentage in the national and state general population. In thinking about the various pathways for entry into the child welfare system, law enforcement officers have a role through reporting, referring, or assisting child welfare system workers in investigating families who come into contact with the system.

This study shall examine this disproportionality in Nebraska's child welfare system, and if and how the role of law enforcement on the front-end of the child welfare system contributes to it. This study shall include, but not be limited to:

- (1) Collecting race and ethnicity data regarding:
  - (a) Nebraska's child welfare system population as a whole as well as specific parts within such system compared to the state's general population;
  - (b) Sources of reports or referrals to the child welfare system, including, but not limited to, law enforcement officials; and
  - (c) Length of time in the child welfare system including both alternative response or traditional response child welfare cases;
- (2) An examination of the pathways leading to entry into Nebraska's child

welfare system, including the role of law enforcement officials, the scope of law enforcement authority, and relevant statutes and rules and regulations controlling such entry and such role;

(3) Gathering of community input regarding the racial and ethnic disproportionality in Nebraska's child welfare system and law enforcement's role within it; and

(4) A determination of potential solutions to reduce the racial and ethnic disproportionality in Nebraska's child welfare system, focusing on the pathways of entry into the child welfare system and law enforcement's role in such entry.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MEMBERS OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH LEGISLATURE OF NEBRASKA, SECOND SESSION:

1. That the Health and Human Services Committee of the Legislature shall be designated to conduct an interim study to carry out the purposes of this resolution.

2. That the committee shall upon the conclusion of its study make a report of its findings, together with its recommendations, to the Legislative Council or Legislature.