

Nebraska State Legislature

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Sen. Nordquist Applauds School-Based Health Centers

Helping Thousands of Omaha-Area Children Attend School Healthy and Ready to Learn

Omaha, Neb. – State Senator Jeremy Nordquist issued the following statement commending the work of Building Bright Futures and community partners for protecting and improving the health of thousands of Nebraska children:

“Because of the unwavering commitment to children’s health demonstrated by Building Bright Futures, partners and providers in the community, and Omaha Public Schools, nearly 2,000 children in the Omaha-area have been able to attend school healthier and ready to learn,” said Senator Jeremy Nordquist. “At a time when we should be doing more to ensure that unmet health needs of children do not serve as barriers to educational achievement, the U.S. House of Representatives, with the support of the entire Nebraska delegation, has passed legislation (H.R. 1214) which would hinder further progress to expand primary care services for children in schools. Eliminating funding for school-based health centers ignores the needs in our educational community and denies access to cost-effective care for our students.”

“By bringing health care to students, school-based health centers help avoid trips to the E.R., decrease student absenteeism and increase academic engagement, and provide easy access and effective management for chronic illnesses such as diabetes or asthma. Every child deserves an opportunity to be healthy, and the school-based health centers have given children and families in our community that opportunity,” said Nordquist. “Despite the great success of the six school-based health centers in Omaha, children and families across our state still struggle to obtain affordable health care and could benefit greatly from further public-private investments in school-based health centers. The passage of H.R. 1214 creates more barriers to creating these opportunities for other children in our state.”

Senator Nordquist represents downtown and South Omaha in the Nebraska Unicameral and serves as the Chair of the Health Committee of the National Conference of State Legislatures. Senator Nordquist introduced LB 1106 in 2009, which allowed public health insurance (Medicaid and State Children’s Health Insurance Program, or SCHIP) to cover health care services provided to eligible children at school-based health centers. Two school-based health centers (Liberty Elementary and Spring Lake Magnet Elementary) are located in Senator Nordquist’s Legislative District.

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