



Senator Meeting Talking Points

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What is Palliative Care?

Palliative care improves quality of life, controls cost, and enhances patient and family satisfaction for the rapidly expanding population of individuals with serious or life-threatening illness. The goal is to improve quality of life for both the patient and the family. Palliative care is provided by a team of doctors, nurses, social workers, physician assistants, and other specialists who work with the patient's other doctors to provide an extra layer of support. Palliative care is appropriate at any age and at any stage in a serious illness and can be provided along with curative treatment to help patients get well faster.

Palliative Care in Nebraska

While Nebraska offers some palliative care, there are significant gaps in access. There also continues to be significant misconceptions among both patients and providers about what palliative care is and who can access it.

Summary of LB 345

This legislation would insert a new definition of palliative care into state statute. This definition makes palliative care legally or practically distinguishable from hospice care by clarifying that palliative care does not require patients to: 1) have a prognosis of 6 months or less; 2) waive curative treatment; or 3) be enrolled in hospice services in order to receive interdisciplinary services that support better quality of life.

Passing LB 345 in Nebraska would create a clear, accurate definition of palliative care, including:

- What palliative care is.
- Who is eligible for palliative care.
- Where it can be provided.

The legislation has no fiscal note and is supported by a broad coalition of 25 organizations.

ASK #1: Will you support LB 345 to improve quality of life for Nebraskans living with serious illness.

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Senator Meeting Talking Points Continued

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What is the Tobacco Free Nebraska Program?

- Tobacco Free Nebraska is the state's comprehensive tobacco prevention and cessation program.
- The goals of the program are to help Nebraskans quit tobacco, eliminate exposure to secondhand smoke, and protect our youth by keeping them from using tobacco
- Current appropriations from the state are \$2.57 million, which is 12% of the CDC's recommended levels for the program

Importance of Tobacco Free Nebraska Program

- 3,876 Nebraskans called the Quitline in 2022 to receive the support they needed to quit tobacco use. The Nebraska Tobacco Quitline provides free access to counseling and support services.
- The program runs advertisements through TV, radio, social media and other platforms to raise awareness about the dangers of tobacco use.
- Additional benefits of the program include allocation of Community grants (almost \$1.4 million), data collection (Adult Tobacco Survey, Youth Tobacco Survey and Behavior Risk Factor Survey, and tobacco retail store assessments.

Summary of LB 539

The bill appropriates the initial JUUL NE settlement payment to the Tobacco Control Program. The first payments of \$1,082,146 will be deposited into the health cash fund. LB 539 will re-direct these payments to the Tobacco Free Nebraska program for Fiscal Years 23-24 and 24-25. Nebraska will receive a total of more than \$8 million between 2022 and 2027, 2029, or 2031 as part of this settlement agreement. ACS CAN asks that all JUUL settlement funds be redirected and used for tobacco cessation and prevention programs.

ASK #2: Will you support legislation (LB 539) that increases funding for the Tobacco Free Nebraska program through utilization of JUUL settlement funds?

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ACS CAN Supports Increased Funding for Cancer Research and Prevention Programs

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) supports laws and policies that increase funding for cancer research, prevention, and patient support programs to improve the quality of life for children and adults diagnosed with cancer throughout the state of Nebraska. Our mission is to end cancer as we know it, for everyone, through advocacy. ACS CAN will continue to prioritize policies that help Nebraskans prevent, find, treat and survive cancer; robust funding for cancer research, education and prevention programs are imperative to meeting that mission.

Summary of LB 802 (Pediatric Cancer Research)

This bill will increase funding from \$1.8 million to \$5 million for expanded pediatric cancer research. LB 802 was introduced by Senators Vargas and Conrad and will have a hearing in front of the Appropriations Committee on March 3.

Summary of LB 657 (Cancer Prevention and Patient Support)

This bill appropriates \$500,000 from the Nebraska Health Care Cash Fund for FY23-24 to the Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska for the University of Nebraska Medical Center to contract with an organization located in Nebraska (Nebraska Cancer Coalition) to provide comprehensive cancer support and education to providers and patients across the state.

ASK #3: Will you support legislation (LB 802 and LB 657) that increases funding for cancer research, prevention, and patient support programs in Nebraska?

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