

One Hundred Ninth Legislature - Second Session - 2026

Introducer's Statement of Intent

LB1221

Chairperson: Senator Brian Hardin

Committee: Health and Human Services

The following constitutes the reasons for this bill and the purposes which are sought to be accomplished thereby:

LB 1221 supports Nebraska's early implementation of the Medicaid community engagement requirements established under the federal law, HR 1, by providing clear definitions for key "temporary hardship" exceptions outlined in federal law. HR 1 allows states to exempt individuals from community engagement requirements during periods of inpatient care, serious or complex medical treatment, or extended travel outside their community for medically necessary services, but leaves important terms undefined pending future federal guidance.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) is not expected to issue implementing guidance until June 1, 2026, and Nebraska has indicated its intent to implement these requirements prior to that date. This bill establishes reasonable, clinically-based parameters to guide consistent administration. LB 1221 provides clarity to hospitals and providers and reduces administrative uncertainty for patients whose medical circumstances temporarily interfere with their ability to meet community engagement requirements.

LB 1221 defines inpatient services, extended absences, travel outside an individual's community, and serious or complex medical conditions for this narrow set of purposes.

Principal Introducer: _____

Senator Beau Ballard