



Dear Health and Human Services Committee,

Nebraska Cures has been a leading advocate for health science research for over 20 years. We support policies rooted in science and strive to advance the quality of life and economy for Nebraskans. In alliance with our mission, we strive to educate policymakers on medical research and health related public policy.

I am writing to support LB 381, which would change requirements relating to program integrity audits under the Medical Assistance Act. In October, Nebraska Cures partnered with NAMI Nebraska to hold the Nebraska Mental Health Policy Convening, a first of its kind event designed to bring together stakeholders and individuals with lived experience to develop a comprehensive policy agenda to improve the mental health of Nebraskans.

One of the biggest concerns we heard at the convening was that auditing was so aggressive and inflexible, that it is driving providers to stop accepting Medicaid. Auditing is an important safeguard to prevent fraud and waste, but it also shouldn't be driving providers out of the system. This is especially important when Nebraska already has a shortage of providers as well as a shortage of providers willing to take Medicaid. 58% of the individuals receiving community mental health services in Nebraska are on Medicaid.¹ These audits continue to grow the gap between people needing care and the providers available to them. With the changes proposed in the bill, like allowing for adjustments and explanations of errors, we can continue the audits while also supporting mental healthcare providers into accepting Medicaid.

We urge you to support LB 381. This bill would not only create better auditing practices but it would also allow providers to provide better mental health support to Nebraskans without fear of harsh audits. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amanda McGill Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Amanda McGill Johnson
Nebraska Cures Executive Director

¹ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2018). *Nebraska 2018 Uniform Reporting System*. Retrieved from <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/cbhsq-reports/Nebraska-2018.pdf>