

Nebraska State Legislature

SENATOR DANIELLE CONRAD

District 46

Legislative Address:
State Capitol
PO Box 94604
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4604
(402) 471-2720
dconrad@leg.ne.gov



COMMITTEES

Appropriations
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Vice Chair - Legislative Performance Audit

February 25, 2010

The Honorable E. Benjamin Nelson
United States Senate
720 Hart Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Nelson,

I am writing this support letter on behalf of Southeast Nebraska Behavioral Health Information Exchange (SNBHIN) a 501(c) (3) private non-profit corporation that serves as a Regional Health Information Organization (RIO) for behavioral health service providers in Southeast Nebraska. I wholeheartedly support their mission to promote quality care through efficient, secure, and confidential handling of data and patient information in order to provide seamless integrated patient care and access from multiple locations. The development and implementation of a behavioral health integrated information and data management system will greatly benefit consumers of behavioral health services in Southeast Nebraska.

I urge you to seriously consider this organization's request for \$267,500 to further assist substance abuse treatment agencies in their implementation and maintenance funding needs associated with their participation in the health information exchange being developed by SNBHIN. These treatment agencies are not eligible for the federal funding being awarded to agencies that employ physicians delivering Medicaid-funded services because substance abuse treatment centers are not required to employ physicians to deliver substance abuse treatment services. This puts these agencies at an unfair advantage in joining in the behavioral health information exchange being developed throughout Southeast Nebraska. The award of this request would help level the playing field and ensure that all those working on these important issues can succeed and ensure their clients do as well.

Thank you for your support. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,


Senator Danielle M. Conrad
46th Legislative District