

Senator Slama reports on aid for Nebraska hospitals

(KLZA)-- A Win-Win for Nebraska Healthcare We are nearing the end of the legislative session with only 12 session days left and the Legislature is starting to make a move on some pretty big bills. For example, at the end of this past week, we passed Senator Jacobson- LB 1087 will establish a partnership between Nebraska hospitals and the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services to preserve healthcare services across Nebraska. Nebraska is one of six states that do not participate in this federal program that reimburses a percentage of costs that come from treating Medicare and Medicaid patients. Joining this program represents a win-win proposition for the state, Nebraska hospitals, and Nebraskans needing health care services. Furthermore, this bill will also improve the quality of care for those citizens. Inadequate Medicaid rates along with high medical inflation and below-cost Medicare rates have forced Nebraska hospitals (especially in rural areas) to eliminate and/or reduce essential services. Nebraskan hospitals have experienced closures of maternal care, behavioral health, home health, hospice, hospital-owned nursing homes, and others. This bill seeks to help mitigate these problems. LB 1087 is particularly important for rural Nebraska, where hospitals are often under financial strain. This bill secures federal matching funds for Medicaid payment which will support the economic health of many hospitals. In doing so, rural residents will continue to have access to essential healthcare services. The passage of this bill will tap into federal resources which will bring in an estimated \$950 million to the state- hospitals. To be clear, this will also not raise Nebraska taxes whatsoever. I look forward to continuing to discuss these issues in the coming weeks on the legislative floor. As always, I welcome your input on issues important to you. Follow along on my Facebook and Twitter pages, both entitled "Senator Julie Slama" for more updates, or contact me directly at Senator Julie Slama, District 1 State Capitol, PO Box 94604, Lincoln NE 68509-4604; telephone: 402-471-2733; email: jslama@leg.ne.gov

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