



February 26, 2021

Letter in Support of LB 526
Bio Nebraska
PO Box 24802
Omaha, Nebraska 68124

To the Honorable Members of the Appropriations Committee:

Please accept this letter as Bio Nebraska's position on LB 526, which was introduced by Senator Wishart earlier this year, and we request this letter of support be included as part of the public hearing record.

For background, founded in 2005, Bio Nebraska is a non-profit trade association dedicated to supporting, promoting and growing Nebraska's bio-ecosystem, and connecting the bio-ecosystem to the world. Bio Nebraska has over 85 members across the state representing the human health, medical device, animal health, agriculture and industrial biotech sectors, along with many of Nebraska's research institutions.

Bio Nebraska strongly supports LB 526, which would increase state appropriations allocated to the Business Innovation Act (BIA) to \$40 million annually. Over the years, the state's funding of the BIA has shown considerable success and increased BIA funding would only bring a larger return on investment to the state.

In a recent report prepared by the Bureau of Business Research at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln titled, "*2020 Update -- The Annual Economic Impact of Business Supported by Nebraska Business Innovation Act Programs*," companies responding to the UNL research request, which represent roughly \$30 million in BIA funding over the years, reported 1,108 direct jobs created with an average annual wage of \$67,064. Additionally, the total annual economic impact on the state, directly attributable to the \$30 million investment, is \$517.1 million with a state and local tax impact of \$11.7 million.

The BIA is not only growing Nebraska's economy, but it is focused on the industries that we want and need to expand if we hope to grow Nebraska and keep talented Nebraskans from leaving. The 1,108 direct jobs created are spread across the following sectors: software as a service, manufacturing, bioscience and agriculture. In fact, 133 direct jobs, with an annual salary of \$70,000, were created in the bioscience sector.

Not only is the BIA a good tool to keep Nebraskans home, but it is also an integral component of recruiting efforts by many of the economic development organizations throughout the state trying to recruit companies and individuals to Nebraska, as many of the states surrounding Nebraska do not currently have a BIA-like program. In the extremely competitive world of recruiting, every little thing counts, and the BIA certainly sets Nebraska apart.



Since its inception, the BIA has been a good investment for the State of Nebraska and its residents. From creating high wage jobs in innovative and growing business sectors to the substantial positive economic impact to the state, the BIA is an important tool in the state's economic development toolbox. Senator Wishart's efforts to increase BIA funding through LB 526 is an important step forward and in a time of limited resources, the BIA is a solid investment.

Thank you for your consideration. If I can answer any questions about Bio Nebraska and/or LB 526, please do not hesitate to contact me at the email address listed below.

Sincerely,



Rob Owen, Executive Director
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