

February 5, 2024

The Honorable Ben Hansen
Chair, Health and Human Services Committee
Nebraska Legislature
Room 1402
PO Box 94604
Lincoln, NE 68509

Re: American Medical Association **support** for Legislative Bill 1325

Dear Chairman Hansen:

On behalf of the physician and medical student members of the American Medical Association (AMA), I write in support of Legislative Bill (LB) 1325, a bill allowing pharmacists and local public health departments to distribute fentanyl test strips as prescribed. Broadly, the AMA recognizes the great burden that substance use disorders and drug-related overdoses and death places on patients and society. The nation's drug-related overdose and death epidemic has claimed far too many lives in Nebraska and every other state in the nation. The AMA's support for LB 1325 is based on the fact that this strategy creates another tool in Nebraska's "toolbox" of overarching efforts to help save lives from unintentional overdose.

The [evidence](#) in support of increased access to fentanyl test strips shows multiple benefits. This includes reduced overdose risk, changes in drug use behavior, and increased connections to life-saving services. The AMA strongly supports all efforts to achieve these positive outcomes. Ensuring increased access to fentanyl test strips is supported in states across the country by bipartisan coalitions, public health officials, law enforcement, and medical professionals. The AMA strongly supports increasing access to fentanyl test strips and naloxone from pharmacies and other retailers. In addition, the AMA strongly supports the provisions in LB 1325 providing authority to local public health department facilities to provide fentanyl test strips without a fee. These are common sense strategies to help prevent more people from dying.

Finally, as Nebraska continues to discuss positive, public health strategies to save lives from overdose, the AMA further encourages the Nebraska Legislature to add language to LB 1325 to allow for the sale and distribution of drug checking supplies to test for more than just illicitly manufactured fentanyl. For example, xylazine—a non-opioid tranquilizer used on animals and not approved for human use—is increasingly found in illicit pills. This fact prompted the [DEA](#) and many public health agencies, including the [Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services](#), to issue warnings to the public and health care professionals on multiple occasions. Expanding the bill to ensure that other types of testing supplies can be legally sold, used, and distributed would allow LB 1325 to have an even greater public health effect.

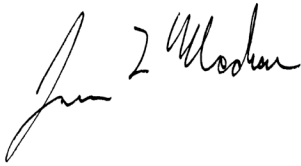
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For these reasons, the AMA urges a “Yes” vote on LB 1325. We appreciate your consideration of ways to make this piece of legislation even stronger and if you have any questions, please contact Daniel Blaney-Koen, JD, Senior Attorney, Advocacy Resource Center at daniel.blaney-koen@ama-assn.org. We are more than happy to collaborate with you, along with the Nebraska Medical Association, in your efforts to save lives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James L. Madara". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "M".

James L. Madara, MD

cc: Nebraska Medical Association