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(Neb.) - Nebraska lawmakers override prenatal care veto

By: John Thayer Posted at: 04/18/2012 04:06 PM

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) - Nebraska lawmakers have voted to restore taxpayer-funded prenatal care benefits for illegal immigrants, despite the objections of Gov. Dave Heineman.

Lawmakers overrode the Republican governor's veto Wednesday on the final day of this year's session. Heineman argued the state should not spend tax dollars to provide care to women who are in the country illegally.

Bill supporters and medical experts say a lack of prenatal care can lead to birth complications and developmental problems that cost the state far more than the expense of providing care to women.

About 870 illegal immigrants and 750 legal residents lost coverage in 2010, when the federal government ordered Nebraska to stop offering benefits through Medicaid. The bill would allow coverage through the Children's Health Insurance Program.

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The bill is LB599

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