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(Neb.)-Nebraska Clinics See Changes In Wake Of Prenatal Law

By: Dennis and Kathi Brown Posted at: 01/27/2013 07:35 AM

By GRANT SCHULTE

Associated Press

LINCOLN, Nebraska (AP) - Nebraska health clinics serving low-income residents say more women are seeking prenatal care in the first trimester of their pregnancies, when problems are the easiest to treat.

Clinic doctors attribute the increase to a Nebraska law restoring state-funded services for low-income women, mostly illegal immigrants.

Lawmakers approved the measure last year over the veto of Gov. Dave Heineman. The law pitted lawmakers who viewed it as a children's health issue against those who argued it rewarded illegal immigrants.

The percentage of pregnant women seeking first-trimester care at Omaha's OneWorld Community Health Center increased from 78 percent before coverage was available to 85 percent in the last four months of 2012.

Fremont Sen. Charlie Janssen has introduced a bill to repeal the law. Heineman wants to end funding for the effort.