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January 23, 2021

RE: LR249 Prohibit employers from inquiring about wage rate history under the Nebraska Fair Employment Practice Act

(Please include in the hearing record)

To: Senator Lathrop, Chair, and members of the Judiciary Committee

The League of Women Voters advocates for gender pay equity. In 2017, 41 percent of all women in the U.S were either sole or co-breadwinners for their families. In Nebraska, in 2017, 46 percent were sole breadwinners. Pay equity policies like LB 249 can help address poverty for families, especially children.

While the wage history question has been banned in various cities and states, the jury is still out on whether the ban really makes a positive difference for women in hiring or pay equity. What it does do is alert employers to make changes to the process of salary compensation discussions.

To be more transparent, some employers are starting to provide a "true budget range" and not the salary range of compensation for the position when opening a discussion for salary. This allows the applicant to get an early awareness of the salary range. If the range is not acceptable to the applicant, the applicant can end the interview process, saving time for both applicant and employer.

The bill wisely recognizes protection of the applicant's free speech right to disclose their salary history voluntarily and addresses the issue of retaliation against the applicant.

LWVNE supports this bill and thanks the committee for its review.

Sincerely,
Carol Dennison Director, Social Policy
League of Women Voters of Nebraska