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February 23, 2021

Senator Tom Brewer, Chair
and Members of the Government, Military and Veterans Committee
State Capitol, Lincoln NE

RE: LB 158 Provide for restoration of voting rights upon completion of a felony sentence or probation for a felony

SUPPORT

Please include this position statement from the League of Women Voters of Nebraska as part of the public hearing record for LB 158

Dear Senator Brewer and Members of the Committee:

Current Nebraska state requires a two-year waiting period after completion of probation for felons to regain their voting rights. Voting rights laws for felons are determined in each state and range from allowing felons to vote even while in prison to some applying additional restriction, as in the case of Nebraska.

In 2018 the League of Women Voters of the United States signed on to a document which detailed systemic reforms needed to protect and better democracy. One barrier to the ballot box that disproportionately affects people of color has been felony disenfranchisement. This reform was targeted in "Vision for Democracy" a set of detailed reforms developed in the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights.

Voting rights restoration allows those who have served their sentence and are transitioning to the community another investment in their community and a full life after prison.

Please advance this bill to General File for full floor debate. Thank you for considering our position and for all you do for Nebraska.

Sincerely,

Carol Dennison, Social Policy Director LWVNE
Dianne Bystrom and Linda Duckworth, Co-Presidents LWVNE