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February 25, 2021

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

Re: LB 8 (Blood) Change independent expenditure reporting requirements and require electioneering reporting

Please include this written testimony from the League of Women Voters of Nebraska as part of the public hearing record for LB 8.

SUPPORT

Dear Senator Brewer and Members of the Committee:

For the record, the League of Women Voters of Nebraska supports LB 8, which would change reporting requirements for independent expenditures, require reporting regarding electioneering communications and clearly defines "electioneering."

The League has identified several factors in the financing of political campaigns that impact political equality for all citizens. Representative democracy should not be distorted by big spending in election campaigns. Voters should be provided with sufficient information about candidates and campaign issues to make informed choices, including transparency in the use of money to influence elections. Candidates should be able to compete equitably for public office.

Oftentimes Nebraskans don't know if a conflict of interest exists because they don't know the source of campaign donations. The identity of those who donate and direct funds to political ads that identify candidates by name close to an election date should be disclosed promptly, which LB 8 stipulates. The proliferation of negative advertising and false claims as the election date nears is a disservice to voters.

Increased transparency in expenditure and electioneering reporting will provide voters more information so that they are able to make informed choices.

Please advance LB 8 to General File for full floor debate.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sheri St. Clair".

Sheri St. Clair, Government Director, LWVNE

Linda Duckworth, Co-President, LWVNE

Dianne Bystrom, Co-President, LWVNE