



PO. Box 29816  
Lincoln NE, 68529  
(402) 982-1572  
lwwnebraska.org

February 6, 2023

Senator Murman, Chair, and Members of the Education Committee  
State Capitol, Lincoln, NE

RE: LB153 (DeBoer) - Adopt the Extraordinary Increase in Special Education Expenditures Act

**SUPPORT** – *Please include this testimony as part of the public hearing record for LB153.*

Dear Senator Murman and Members of the Education Committee:

The League of Women Voters of Nebraska supports passage of LB153, which creates a new funding mechanism to support special education. Since the 1960s, the League has been a strong advocate for policies that promote equality in education, arguing that “the federal government shares with other levels of government [this] responsibility for all persons in the United States regardless of their race, color, gender, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation, or disability.”

Also, in 1981, the League of Women Voters of Nebraska affirmed that school quality should not be tied to a district’s financial means. It argued “since state government has created the public schools by law it has a responsibility to aid local school districts in providing adequate and equitable school financing.”

The LWWNE supports LB153 because it fortifies state financial support for special education services, allowing all Nebraska schools to better serve the students who rely on those services to access an equal education.

LB153 creates an Extraordinary Increase in Special Education Expenditures Fund for schools to draw from if they anticipate an increased demand for special education services. Allowing eligible schools to access financial resources upfront, rather than having costs reimbursed later, would provide a critical buffer for unexpected expenditures such as specialists, equipment and transportation. Schools would no longer have to worry whether the previous year’s budget would satisfy next year’s costs and, consequently, would reduce the need to cut programs that benefit all students.

LB153 would be particularly beneficial to rural schools, whose smaller student bodies mean special education budgets are more in flux year to year. Passing this bill would send a powerful message to Nebraska families that the Legislature values the educational interests of all children and would send a message to Nebraska schools that it supports their mission to provide an equal education. This is particularly important at a time when special education teachers are in high demand across the state.

The League of Women Voters supports LB153 because it invests in special education, upholding our mission to promote educational equality. Please vote LB153 out of committee to General File for debate.

Sincerely,

Emily Block, Education Policy Action Team, LWWNE  
Taylor Sterba, Director of Education Policy, LWWNE  
MaryLee Moulton, President, LWWNE