



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

February 28, 2023

Senator Ben Hansen, Chair, and Members of the Health and Human Services Committee  
State Capitol, Lincoln, NE

RE: LB179 (Fredrickson) Prohibit conversion therapy

**SUPPORT** – *Please include this position statement from the League of Women Voters of Nebraska as part of the public hearing record for LB179.*

Dear Senator Hansen and Members of the Health and Human Services Committee:

The League of Women Voters of Nebraska believes that all U.S. residents, regardless of gender or sexual orientation, should be able to receive a basic level of quality healthcare that includes mental health care.

Conversion therapies include unethical techniques such as electric shock, deprivation of food or liquid, chemically induced nausea and masturbation reconditioning. Professionals in both the medical and psychiatric fields agree that conversion therapy is not a valid treatment for any disorder and can, in fact, be harmful. The American Psychiatric Association, American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, and the American Medical Association – to name a few – all oppose the use of these types of procedures stating that conversion therapies operate under the assumptions that a person's orientation/gender identity can be changed and that a preferable outcome exists for both a heterosexual orientation and a cisgender identity.

These assumptions are not backed by science and have serious negative impacts including increased suicidal behaviors, psychological distress, anxiety, lowered self-esteem, internalized homophobia, self-blame, intrusive imagery and sexual dysfunction. According to a 2022 report, 10% of Nebraska's LGBTQ young people are threatened with these destructive therapies each year, and 7% are subjected to them.<sup>1</sup>

The League of Women Voters of Nebraska believes everyone has a right to receive a basic quality of healthcare. Conversion therapy is not healthcare. This bill protects Nebraskans from exposure to these harmful and unethical practices.

Please advance LB179 to General File. Thank you for considering our position and for all you do for our state.

Sincerely,

Sara Lee, Social Policy Action Team, LWWNE  
Jill McDermott, Social Policy Director, LWWNE  
Carol Dennison, Social Policy Action Team, LWWNE  
Rachel Gibson, Vice President-Action, LWWNE  
MaryLee Moulton, President, LWWNE

<sup>1</sup>The Trevor Project. (2022). *2022 national survey on LGBTQ youth mental health Nebraska.*

<https://www.thetrevorproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/The-Trevor-Project-2022-National-Survey-on-LGBTQ-Youth-Mental-Health-by-State-Nebraska.pdf>