



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

February 22, 2022

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

RE: LB20 (Wayne) To provide for restoration of voting rights upon completion of a felony sentence

**SUPPORT** – *Please include this position statement from the League of Women Voters of Nebraska as part of the public hearing record for LB20*

Dear Senator Brewer and Members of the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee:

The League of Women Voters of Nebraska's position on corrections focuses on reintegrating the offender into the community and upholding the basic human rights of sentenced offenders.

Nebraska is among a small handful of states that withholds voting rights beyond the completion of felony sentences. This is almost like a second punishment. We learned that in 2005 lawmakers established the two-year waiting period due to concerns that offenders were being discharged early or "jamming out" without services. Currently, "jamming out" has been reduced significantly and more offenders are discharged to parole and re-entry programs when leaving corrections.

It is imperative that the state engages citizens as they re-enter their communities, which benefits civic participation and recidivism. Formerly convicted individuals get counted in the U.S. Census, hold jobs, raise families and contribute to their communities -- why shouldn't they have a voice in their representative government?

We learn and adopt voting practices from the people in our lives, so banning these parents, friends and community members from the voting booth serves to discourage voting at large and keep democracy out of reach for generations.

Additionally, the current waiting period of two years is a form of taxation without representation. Furthermore, this law disproportionately impacts citizens from communities of color and low income communities.

The LWWNE has previously supported this bill. It is time for the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee to vote yes on this bill and move LB20 to General File.

Respectfully,

Joanna Lindberg, Government Co-Director, LWWNE  
MaryLee Moulton, President, LWWNE