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March 1, 2023

Senator Justin Wayne, Chair, and Members of the Judiciary Committee
State Capitol, Lincoln, NE

RE: LB316 (Fredrickson) Change and eliminate provisions related to marriage

SUPPORT – *Please include this testimony from the League of Women Voters of Nebraska as part of the public hearing record for LB316.*

Dear Senator Wayne and Members of the Judiciary Committee:

The League of Women Voters of Nebraska supports equal rights for all under state and federal law. We support legislation to create parity between the legal rights, obligations and benefits available to same-gender couples with those available to heterosexual couples to marry under civil law. It is our position that the civil status of marriage is already clearly distinguished from the religious institution of marriage and that religious rights will be preserved.

Updates in terminology for marriage statutes ensuring that applications, licenses and certificates of marriages do not conflict with the gender of the spouses clarifies civil documents. Replacing terms such as "bride" and "groom" with "spouse 1" and spouse 2" is inclusive and conforms to federal law codified under Public Law No. 117-228 in December 2022.

These changes make the process of marriage in Nebraska inclusive and a positive experience for all Nebraskans. We urge you to advance LB316.

Sincerely,

MaryLee Moulton, President, LWWNE
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