



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

February 28, 2023

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

RE: LB35 (DeBoer) Change provisions relating to childcare assistance

SUPPORT – *Please include this position statement from the League of Women Voters of Nebraska as part of the public hearing record for LB35.*

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

The League of Women Voters of the United States and Nebraska support programs, services and policies at all levels of government to expand the supply of affordable, quality childcare for all who need it to increase access to employment and to prevent and reduce poverty. We endorse LB35 and its goal of supporting working parents and caregivers in need of stable childcare so they can work and provide for their families.

Childcare is expensive. In the 1970s, childcare cost \$100 a month. Today it costs approximately \$1,000 a month for one child. Is it any wonder that parents forgo the workplace when they must pay a sizable portion of their income on childcare? Parents – when asked what most kept them from working – cited the high cost of childcare (1).

In today's world, imagine a single parent with one child who was able to earn up to \$32,232 at the current childcare assistance eligibility rate. If existing eligibility levels would revert to the previous cap of \$22,649 (130% of the Federal Poverty Level) this single parent would need to earn \$9,583 less or lose their childcare support. For years, lower income levels for eligibility have caused parents to turn down promotions, pay increases or overtime hours for childcare related reasons. This "cliff effect" can keep parents from advancing and building more financial security while, at the same time, reducing the supply of necessary workforce participants (1).

LB35 recognizes that allowing the recent increase in eligibility to 185% FPL to continue until October 2026 is a sensible solution for our workforce crisis, meets the needs of families to cover rising childcare costs, and builds stability for low-income working families. To protect families from a roller coaster of assistance funding in a time of increasing inflation makes sense and builds a more stable workforce in Nebraska. Please advance LB35 to General File.

Thank you for your consideration of our position and all you do for our state.

Sincerely,

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

1. Women's Fund of Omaha. (2023, January). *LB35: Investing in the workforce by supporting affordable child care.* [LB-35 Affordable-Child-Care.pdf \(omahawomensfund.org\)](#)