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January 31, 2023

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

RE: LB374 (Murman) – Adopt the Parents’ Bill of Rights and Academic Transparency Act

**OPPOSE** – *Please include this position statement as part of the public hearing record for LB374.*

Dear Senator Murman and Members of the Education Committee:

The League of Women Voters of Nebraska strongly opposes passage of LB374, which provides an explicit outline for parental oversight of their child’s education. Since the 1960s, the League has championed the cause of equal access to quality education and, in 1985, the LWVNE enumerated the attributes of an effective school. These include, “public school curriculum standards that will prepare students for citizenship” and “incorporation of critical thinking skills into all teaching . . . to develop patterns of active analysis of information rather than passive acceptance of information.”

The League agrees that parents play an important role in guiding their child’s intellectual and moral development and supporting their education. However, the personal preferences of a single parent should not jeopardize the ability of schools to fulfill their mission.

LB374 grants individual parents the authority to override the choices of professional educators, which prevents Nebraska schools from offering an equal education to all students. Empowering parents to review and remove library materials that are meant for all students deprives those in the community who have no objections to books they may find instructive or valuable.

Furthermore, allowing parents to opt their child out of curricular activities and assessments compromises that child’s ability to master the content and skills that are outlined in the Nebraska Board of Education’s state standards and, ultimately, future economic success. For example, Nebraska social studies teachers are responsible for ensuring that students understand past events from multiple perspectives and also gain the skills necessary for civic participation. It is difficult for students to achieve these learning goals if they are denied exposure to ideas that are different from those they encounter at home.

Finally, not holding all students to the same standards and requirements to participate fully in a course creates additional challenges for teachers to manage classrooms and an unequal learning environment that disadvantages all members of the class.

The League of Women Voters opposes LB374 because it would undermine the efforts of Nebraska public schools to offer a high quality and equal education to all students.

Sincerely,

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