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February 6, 2023

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

RE: LB70 (Cavanaugh, M.) Eliminate the fee for certain state identification cards and certified copies of birth certificates for voting purposes

SUPPORT – *Please include this testimony from the League of Women Voters of Nebraska as part of the public hearing record for LB70.*

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

The League of Women Voters of Nebraska supports LB70 because the cost of voting should be free. The cost of obtaining a State of Nebraska identification document (ID) will affect voter participation and can disproportionately drive down turnout. Driver's licenses and state-issued IDs are the two most common forms of identification, and they are not cheap. Even if the state ID card is free, there are other obstacles – which are not free -- to obtaining a State of Nebraska ID card.

For example, when applying for a State of Nebraska ID card, you must bring the following documentation to the Department of Motor Vehicles:

1. Proof of U.S. citizenship or lawful status containing name, date of birth and identity. According to the Department of Health and Human Services, the cost of a certified birth certificate in Nebraska is \$17.00. The cost is unknown for those residents born outside of Nebraska.
2. Proof of principal address in Nebraska (at least two documents are required).
3. Valid Social Security Number that can be verified through the Social Security Administration or proof of exemption from the requirement by presenting a valid, unexpired Record of Arrival and Departure in a valid foreign passport (I-94 or I-94A).

There are six types of the State of Nebraska ID card, which include a fee and security surcharge – five years, \$29.00; four years for persons under 21 years old, \$29.00; three years, \$24.00; two years, \$19.00; one year, \$15.00; one year or less, \$10.00; and replacement, \$16.00.

Although these costs may not seem high, they will influence voter turnout. Which card will the state pay for? Will lifetime State of Nebraska ID cards be developed at no cost? Or will cards have to be updated periodically, and who will pay for updating the cards?

The League of Women Voters of Nebraska asks that the elimination of fees detailed in LB70 be incorporated into the final Voter ID bill to be advanced to the Legislature for debate.

Sincerely,

Walta Sue Dodd, Voter Services Co-Director, LWWNE
MaryLee Moulton, President, LWWNE