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February 22, 2022

Senator John Arch, Chair
and Members of the Health and Human Services Committee
State Capitol, Lincoln NE

RE: LB710 (McCollister) - Change provisions relating to federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program eligibility

SUPPORT

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

The League of Women Voters' position on "Meeting Basic Human Needs" promotes self-sufficiency for individuals and families through programs that prevent or reduce poverty. Persons who are unable to work, whose earnings are inadequate, or for whom jobs are not available have the right to an income and/or services sufficient to meet their basic needs for food, shelter and healthcare. The League of Women Voters of Nebraska supports LB710 in its efforts to eliminate the liquid asset limit used to determine an applicant's eligibility for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.

As of 2018, 34 states and the District of Columbia have eliminated asset testing for SNAP. Only 48% of SNAP households have any liquid assets, and the median value among those who do have assets is just \$450. Just over half of SNAP households have a bank account, with the median amount a mere \$150.¹

If the liquid asset requirement is eliminated, families could avoid falling into a deeper state of poverty, depleted personal savings and lost material assets to qualify for assistance. When resources are allowed, a family spends less time on assistance. They better survive other emergencies presented by job loss and transition. According to an Urban Institute Study, eliminating asset tests leads to 5% more households with bank accounts. Of those accounts, ones with a minimum of \$500 increased by 8%.²

The goal of our SNAP funding should be to meet minimum basic needs without driving families further into poverty. By dropping asset testing for SNAP, application and administration can be streamlined, saving costs and reducing the time in processing applications. Please advance LB710 to the floor and offer a hand-up to our frontline workers in minimum wage jobs.

Respectfully,

Carol Dennison
LWVNE Co-Director of Social Policy

¹ [SNAP's "Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility" Supports Working Families and Those Saving for the Future, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities \(cbpp.org\)](#)

² https://www.clasp.org/sites/default/files/publications/2018/04/2018_eliminatingassetlimits.pdf