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March 6, 2023

Senator Robert Clements, Chair, and Members of the Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Lincoln, NE

RE: LB801 (Vargas) – State intent to transfer money to the Middle Income Workforce Housing Investment Fund and the Affordable Housing Trust Fund

SUPPORT - *Please include this position statement from the League of Women Voters of Nebraska as part of the public hearing record for LB801.*

Dear Senator Clements and Members of the Appropriations Committee:

Since the 1960s, the League of Women Voters of the United States has supported increasing low- and moderate-income housing and endorsed recommendations that advance the goal that every person and family should have decent, safe and affordable housing.

The League of Women Voters of Nebraska supports LB801, which will invest \$200 million from the general fund and cash reserve for the Middle Income Workforce Housing Investment Fund and the Affordable Housing Trust Fund through 2025 to build workforce housing in Nebraska.

More than 58% of Nebraska households earn \$75,000 or less, and more than 176,000 of Nebraskans who rent or own homes spend more than 30% of their income on housing. A statewide shortage of 32,230 rental units exists for extremely low-income households as well as middle-income workforce housing.¹

Governor Jim Pillen and previous Governor Pete Ricketts both included letters supporting Nebraska's 2022 Strategic Housing Framework in the report's introduction. Funding the Middle Income Workforce Housing Investment Fund will kickstart its implementation, fulfilling the promises of the governors to address housing needs and housing development throughout the state.

We appreciate our state senators' efforts to address the needs for affordable housing in Nebraska. Comprehensive planning, consistent funding mechanisms, and legislative focus and cooperation is on its way to addressing Nebraska's gap in workforce housing, ensuring that everyone has decent, safe and affordable housing.

Please advance LB801 to General File.

Sincerely,

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

¹Strategic Housing Council of Nebraska. (December, 2022). *Nebraska's 2022 Strategic Housing Framework*. Nebraska Investment Finance Authority. <https://www.nifa.org/housing-framework>