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The League of Women Voters of Nebraska is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, grassroots organization comprised of four local Leagues – Greater Omaha, Lincoln, Hastings and Seward – in addition to members at large across the state. Our mission is to empower voters and defend democracy through education and advocacy. With more than 500 members from across Nebraska, the state League educates, coordinates and advocates on behalf of our members and for the betterment of Nebraska as a whole.

While we do not support political parties or candidates, we do advocate on issues. Recognizing the diversity, knowledge, experience and insight of our members, we advocate through six action teams, each focused on specific areas: education, health care, government, mental and behavioral health, natural resources and energy, and social policy. This year the teams have each identified focus areas and are taking action on the legislation they have identified as most important in that area. We are pleased to share this summary with you and look forward to being part of any efforts to help build and support a successful state.

On behalf of the LWWNE members,

Rachel M. Gibson, Vice President Action, LWWNE
MaryLee Mouton, President, LWWNE

Education Policy

Since 1974, the League of Women Voters US has advocated for “equal access to quality education,” noting that “equality” and “quality” are inseparable. When assessing this goal in the context of the current climate around education in Nebraska, we identified three main focus areas:

- 1) Continuing and expanding student support programs and services that are responsive to current challenges in education;
- 2) Protecting the funding, access and support for Nebraska public schools; and
- 3) Maintaining a structure that recognizes the expertise of Nebraska teachers with guidance from elected boards.

Based on these goals, we are following these bills this session:

Support

- LB99 (M. Cavanaugh) Adopt the Hunger-Free Schools Act
- LB153 (DeBoer) Adopt the Extraordinary Increase in Special Education Expenditures Act
- LB487 (Hunt) Prohibit any school receiving public funds from discriminating as prescribed
- LB527 (Fredrickson) Provide reimbursement to districts for mental health expenditures

Oppose

- LB71 (Sanders) Change provisions relating to parental involvement
- LB753 (Linehan) Adopt the Opportunity Scholarship Act

- LR24CA (Albrecht) Constitutional amendment to eliminate the State Board of Education and provide for the Governor to appoint the Commissioner of Education
- LR28CA (Linehan) Change membership of the State Board of Education
- LB374 (Murman) Adopt the Parents' Bill of Rights

Government

Our organization was founded in an effort to expand the right to vote to women. We have continued to advocate for policy that “protects and enhances voting rights for all Americans, assures opportunities for citizen participating, and works for open, accountable, representative and responsible government at every level.” Much of our advocacy work is done in this area and this session, our primary focuses will be:

- 1) Protecting the ability for all eligible voters to exercise their right within the context of the voter ID ballot measure that was approved in the November 2022 election;
- 2) Balancing jurisdiction among different levels of government, all with structures, rules and guidelines that are inclusive, representative and accessible to the public; and
- 3) Defending the unique nonpartisan Unicameral system in Nebraska that has allowed for efficient and effective government for the past 90 years.

Based on these goals, we are following these bills this session:

Support

- LB9 (Blood) Change independent expenditure reporting requirements and electioneering reporting
- LB20 (Wayne) Provide restoration of voting rights upon completion of a felony sentence or probation
- LB70 (M. Cavanaugh) Eliminate the fee for certain state identification cards and certified copies of birth certificates for voting purposes
- LB254 (Brewer) Require Legislative Council to maintain a publicly accessible digital archive of video
- LB304 (Linehan) Require political subdivisions to disclose membership dues and lobbying fees
- LB313 (Lowe) Change provisions relating to special elections and filling vacancies in the United States Senate and House of Representatives
- LB364 (Hunt) Provide for election of election commissioners and eliminate certain deputy positions
- LB365 (Hunt) Permit counties to conduct elections by mail
- LB408 (M. Cavanaugh) Change provisions relating to conflicts of interest under the Nebraska Political Accountability and Disclosure Act
- LB409 (M. Cavanaugh) Change provisions relating to individuals required to file a statement of financial interests under the Nebraska Political Accountability and Disclosure Act
- LB410 (M. Cavanaugh) Change provisions relating to conflicts of interest under the Nebraska Political Accountability and Disclosure Act
- LB513 (Brewer) Change proof of publication requirements for legal notices and published notice and virtual conferencing requirements under the Open Meetings Act
- LB604 (Raybould) Change provisions relating to voting early under the Election Act
- LB675 (Day) Change provisions relating to elections and identification documents
- LB737 (Raybould) Provide a contribution limit for candidate committees under the Nebraska Political Accountability and Disclosure Act.
- LR3CA (J. Cavanaugh) Provide for nonpartisan nomination and election of Governor, Lt. Governor, Attorney General, Secretary of State, Auditor of Public Accounts and State Treasurer
- LR22CA (Dover) Constitutional amendment to change legislative term limits to three consecutive terms

Oppose

- LB195 (Halloran) Adopt the Faithful Delegates to the Federal Article V Convention Act
- LB228 (Erdman) Create state holidays for statewide primary and general election days, require in-person voting, photographic identification to vote, counting of ballots on election day, and counting of ballots at the precinct level, and allow voting by mail for registered military personnel and residents of nursing homes and assisted-living facilities
- LB230 (Erdman) Require qualifying identification for voter registration and voting, require in-person voting, provide penalties, eliminate certain fees for state identification cards and certified copies of birth certificates, and change provisions relating to operators' licenses and state identification cards
- LB457 (Holdcroft) Require video surveillance of voting and provide requirements for paper ballots, vote scanning devices, and vote tabulating equipment
- LB764 (Lippincott) Change provisions relating to selection of and ballots cast by presidential electors
- LB808 (Halloran) Provide for counting and recounting ballots under the Election Act by hand count
- LB535 (Slama) Require valid photo ID under the Election Act
- LR2CA (Erdman) Constitutional amendments to change from a unicameral legislature to a bicameral legislature, provide for election of members of the Legislature on a partisan ballot, require election of legislative officers and committee chairpersons by a public vote, and require all meetings of the Legislature to be open to the public
- LR31 (Halloran) Resolution to rescind a prior resolution and apply to Congress for a convention of the states to propose amendments to the United States Constitution

Health Care

With the guiding philosophy that “a basic level of quality health care at an affordable cost should be available to all U.S. residents,” the LWVNE’s primary focus this session is to protect the right to privacy and access, particularly as it pertains to reproductive health, but also other areas involving the patient-provider relationship. Based on this focus, we will be following these bills this session:

Support

- LB75 (Vargas) Provide for review of incidents of severe maternal morbidity
- LB200 (Briese) Adopt the Canadian Prescription Drug Importation Act
- LB306 (Hunt) Create the Nebraska Youth in Care Bill of Rights
- LB333 (Conrad) Require a state plan amendment for coverage of family planning services under the Medical Assistance Act
- LB488 (Hunt) Adopt the Sexual Assault Emergency Care Act

Oppose

- LB626 (Albrecht) Adopt the Heartbeat Act

Mental and Behavioral Health

With the drastically increasing need for mental and behavioral health for all Americans, the LWVNE is optimistic about the ability to advocate for “access for all people to affordable, quality in-patient and out-patient behavioral (and mental) health care” this session. Thus, we support the following efforts:

- 1) Expanding access to not only providers but also training opportunities for those who may encounter mental and behavioral health needs; and

- 2) Providing the funding and support need by individuals with disabilities, particularly related to reimbursement rates for care providers.

Based on these goals, we are following these bills this session:

Support:

- LB123 (Fredrickson) Adopt the Behavior Analyst Practice Act
- LB381 (M. Cavanaugh) Adopt the Mental Health Wellness Act
- LB526 (Fredrickson) State intent to appropriate funds to the Department of Health and Human Services for Developmental Disability Aid
- LB585 (Hughes) Behavioral and mental health training for certain school personnel
- LB601 (Dungan) State intent regarding increases to provider rates of developmental disability services
- LB748 (M. Cavanaugh) Adopt Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Assistance Act

Natural Resources and Energy

In considering natural resources and energy policy this session, we utilized the lens of the League’s stance to support “protection and wise management of natural resources in the public interest.” From this vantage point, we identified two areas of attention:

- 1) Protecting the public’s ability to participate and shape energy policy, particularly in the area of renewable energy; and
- 2) Addressing the alarming increase in threats to our water supply, especially related to nitrate levels.

Based on these goals, we are following these bills this session:

Support

- LB49 (Dungan) Change provisions relating to solar energy and wind energy, declare certain instruments void and unenforceable, and provide for a civil cause of action
- LB506 (Bostar) Appropriate funds for water systems
- LB534 (Slama) Appropriate funds for community water systems
- LB766 (DeKay) Appropriate funds for reverse osmosis systems

Oppose

- LB120 (Bostelman) Eliminate obsolete provisions relating to a Nebraska Power Review Board study

Social Policy

The action area that encompasses the most public policy issues, the LWWNE Social Policy Action Team focuses heavily on the current needs and challenges specific to our state. As we considered policy that would “secure equal rights and equal opportunity for all,” we honed in on these five areas as most pressing for our state:

- 1) Expanding access to safe, affordable housing by increasing funding and strengthening tenant protection laws;
- 2) Defending all Nebraskans from discrimination in work, school, housing and other aspects of everyday life, particularly as it relates to sexual orientation and gender identity;
- 3) Supporting families in relation to accessing affordable quality childcare;

- 4) Protecting system-involved youth at all levels including judicial, institutional and personal; and
- 5) Reducing gun violence through reasonable legislation.

Based on these goals, we are following these bills this session:

Support

- LB8 (Blood) Change provisions of the Mobile Home Landlord and Tenant Act and provide for certificates of title and liens for abandoned mobile homes
- LB14 (Dungan) Young Adult Bridge to Independence Act
- LB35 (DeBoer) Change provisions relating to childcare assistance
- LB42 (Hansen) Change provisions relating to child abuse and neglect under the Child Protection and Family Safety Act and the Nebraska Juvenile Code
- LB60 (J. Cavanaugh) Change provisions relating to room confinement of juveniles
- LB169 (Hunt) Prohibit discrimination based upon sexual orientation and gender identity
- LB175 (Dungan) Residential Tenant Clean State Act
- LB179 (Fredrickson) Prohibit conversion therapy
- LB187 (J. Cavanaugh) Require appointment of counsel for tenants in eviction proceedings
- LB248 (Vargas) Prohibit discrimination based on lawful source of income
- LB249 (Briese) Change provisions of Rural Workforce Housing Investment Act
- LB270 (McKinney) Change provisions in Uniform Residential Landlord and Tenant Act
- LB294 (Conrad) Adopt the Child Tax Credit Act
- LB338 (McKinney) Change provisions relating to pretrial release, sentencing, failure to appear, revocation and sanctions under probation and parole, and suspension of licenses under the License Suspension Act
- LB424 (DeBoer) Create the Department of Housing and Urban Development
- LB629 (McKinney) Change provisions of the Middle Income Workforce Housing Investment Act and the Economic Recovery Act
- LB670 (Hunt) Prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of gender identity or sexual orientation regardless of employer size
- LB801 (Vargas) State intent to transfer money to the Middle Income Workforce Housing Investment Fund and the Affordable Housing Trust Fund

Oppose

- LB77 (Brewer) Provide for carrying of concealed handguns without a permit, change provisions relating to concealed weapons, and prohibit certain regulation of weapons by cities, villages, and counties
- LB 194 (Halloran) Adopt the Second Amendment Preservation Act
- LB371 (Murman) Prohibit an individual under nineteen years of age or under twenty-one years of age from being present at a drag show as prescribed
- LB574 (Kauth) Adopt the Let Them Grow Act
- LB575 - Adopt the Sports and Spaces Act