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February 7, 2022

Dear Senators:

Throughout the United States, the League of Women Voters consistently supports legislation to preserve our nation's natural resources and protect public health. This letter is to address the ongoing environmental disaster caused by AltEn Ethanol in Mead, NE. We are greatly concerned for our fellow Nebraskans and the surrounding ecosystems that have been poisoned. The League of Women Voters of Nebraska asks you to act with a sense of urgency and prioritize creating a special committee, protecting the victims, initiating safe clean-up solutions, conducting long-term research, and establishing safeguards to never allow this to happen again.

To start, we **support LR159** to "Request the Executive Board to appoint an AltEn LLC, Ethanol Plant Special Investigative and Oversight Committee" to study and investigate the timelines, records, rules, products, drinking water and costs associated. AltEn is a statewide problem that requires a whole-state investigation to be sure our environmental laws are strong enough to stop entities like AltEn.

We **support LB1102** "to adopt the Nebraska Environmental Response Act and change provisions relating to enforcement of environmental protection requirements." Additionally, we **support LB694** with the amendment "to provide a statute of limitations for exposure to certain chemicals, prescription drugs or medical devices." What will the long-term effects of exposure be? The 84,000 tons of pesticide-laden wet cake (distillers grain) and dilapidated lagoons have proven to be noxious. Mead residents did not ask for an environmental disaster in their community and now need legislation to help protect them.

AltEn is a complex problem that requires multidisciplinary research not limited to plant, animal and human life. Researchers at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln believe it would take 10 years and \$10 million dollars to do a complete analysis. Obviously, this is an urgent request that must be fulfilled. We also **support LR277** for an interim study to protect and manage vulnerable pollinators that are in decline as a result of this harmful situation.

Finally, we have two additional requests. We ask the Nebraska Attorney General to move forward with the AltEn lawsuit, filed March 1, 2021. And we request that the Nebraska Department of Energy and Environment schedule a public hearing to receive public comment on the AltEn Facility Response Group Remedial Action Plan filed with the agency on November 1, 2021.

Quality of the land, air and water have all been compromised. Our neighbors deserve human dignity and healthy lives. Environmental stewardship and hazardous waste remediation are key components for long-term solutions, not band-aid shells and leaky liners. Citizen-led organizations are doing everything in their power to advocate for the best outcome. We need our elected representatives to use every option in their toolkits to make this better.

We are asking every Nebraska senator to consider the gravity of this environmental crisis and to provide powerful, lasting solutions in response. Please be diligent about your decisions on the enclosed list of bills. Thank you for staying committed to your constituents and to all Nebraskans. We are counting on you.

Sincerely,

Janelle Stevenson & Megan Lyons
Co-Directors, Natural Resources and Energy, LWVNE

Toni Monette and MaryLee Moulton
Co-Presidents, LWVNE

Enclosure: List of Legislation Impacting the AltEn Situation

Legislation Impacting the AltEn Situation

LB634 – Provide a cause of action for unsafe disposal of treated seed

Introduced by Cavanaugh, J., 9. (Carryover Bill)

Committee: Judiciary <https://nebraskalegislature.gov/FloorDocs/107/PDF/Intro/LB634.pdf>

LB694 – Provide a statute of limitations for exposure to certain chemicals, prescription drugs, or medical devices

Introduced by Blood, 3.

Committee: Judiciary <https://nebraskalegislature.gov/FloorDocs/107/PDF/Intro/LB694.pdf>

Hearing January 21, 2022

Amendment 1591

Introduced by Blood, 3.

<https://nebraskalegislature.gov/FloorDocs/107/PDF/AM/AM1591.pdf>

LB695 – Prohibit conditional use permits and zoning exceptions for delinquent property taxpayers

Introduced by Blood, 3.

Committee: Urban Affairs <https://nebraskalegislature.gov/FloorDocs/107/PDF/Intro/LB695.pdf>

Hearing January 25, 2022

LB806 – Change provisions relating to drainage of land by the landowner

Introduced by Bostelman, 23.

<https://nebraskalegislature.gov/FloorDocs/107/PDF/Intro/LB806.pdf>

Hearing: January 28, 2022

LB1102 – Adopt the Nebraska Environmental Response Act and change provisions relating to enforcement of environmental protection requirements

Introduced by Bostelman, 23.

Committee: Natural Resources

<https://nebraskalegislature.gov/FloorDocs/107/PDF/Intro/LB1102.pdf>

LR159 – Request the Executive Board to appoint an AltEn LLC, Ethanol Plant Special Investigative and Oversight Committee

Introduced by Blood, 3. (Carryover Resolution)

<https://nebraskalegislature.gov/FloorDocs/107/PDF/Intro/LR159.pdf>

LR276 – Interim study to examine circumstances in which conditional use permits can be approved or revoked

Introduced by Blood, 3.

Referred to Executive Board

<https://nebraskalegislature.gov/FloorDocs/107/PDF/Intro/LR276.pdf>

LR277 – Interim study to determine what is needed to develop a plan to protect managed and native Nebraskan pollinators from current harmful practices

Introduced by Blood, 3.

Referred to Executive Board

<https://nebraskalegislature.gov/FloorDocs/107/PDF/Intro/LR277.pdf>