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The League of Women Voters of Nebraska is OPPOSED to proposed Rule 3 (Senator Erdman) requiring a roll call majority vote of the elected members of the legislature to select the chairperson of each standing and select committee. While we often advocate for transparency in voting, we oppose this particular issue in the context of our unique Legislature. Our nonpartisan Unicameral has structural and process elements that combat partisanship – the “secret ballot” to elect committee chairs is one of them. In Congress and most other state legislative bodies, committee assignments and leadership are determined within parties; our Legislature works as one group to elect leadership. Currently, the “secret ballot” allows legislators to vote for the most qualified candidate and protects against political retribution.

The League of Women Voters of Nebraska is OPPOSED to proposed Rule 4 (Senator Erdman) closing Executive Sessions to the general public and members of the news media. Currently, these sessions are already closed to everyone except for legislators, staff and the news media. While we understand that on rare occasions it may be necessary for a committee to meet away from the public, that need does not preclude the public from knowing what decisions are being made. Members of the news media play a vital role in bridging the gap on these rare occasions and it is necessary that they continue to have access.

The League of Women Voters of Nebraska is OPPOSED to proposed Rule 9 (Senator Erdman) eliminating consideration of party affiliations in the redistricting process. While this appears to be an effort to reduce partisanship, it actually does just the opposite. Current Rules state that no more than five members of the Redistricting Committee can be affiliated with the same political party and the chair and vice chair may not be members of the same political party. This reflects the voter makeup of the state provided by the Secretary of State’s office in its January 2024 report showing that of registered voters, 49% were Republican, 27% were Democratic, 22% were Nonpartisan, 1.5% were Libertarian and .5% were affiliated with Legal Marijuana NOW. The current guidelines related to party affiliation in the redistricting process ensures that the committee represents all Nebraskans from varying political backgrounds.