

**ACTION ALERT: LB630**  
**March 15, 2017**  
**By Liz Rea, Public Policy Chair, AAUW-NE**

LB630 was heard yesterday by the Unicameral Education Committee. The purpose of LB630 is to adopt the Independent Public Schools Act. AAUW-NE is strongly opposed to this bill mainly because it would take funding away from Nebraska's public schools in order to pay for it. The estimated cost of the bill is \$500,000 in a year when lawmakers are facing a sizable budget shortfall. More importantly, please remember that Nebraska ranks 49<sup>th</sup> among all 50 states in the amount of per-pupil funding it provides for K-12 education. Nebraska's schools have been significantly underfunded for decades, yet there seems to be no shortage of bills that would diminish our funding even further. LB630 is just such an example. We cannot allow any funding to be stripped away from our public schools.

LB630 would allow the creation of charter schools in school districts with low-performing schools. This new category of public schools would be referred to as independent public schools (IPS). They would come under the authority of a newly created commission outside of the Nebraska Department of Education. An IPS would be exempt from all state laws that otherwise apply to schools. There is nothing in the bill that would require a teacher in an IPS to hold a certificate to teach.

Even though this notice comes to you after the bill's hearing, I encourage you to contact the members of the Education Committee to urge them to strongly **OPPOSE LB630** at your earliest convenience. Members of the Education Committee are the following:

Senator Mike Groene, Chair	<a href="mailto:mgroene@leg.ne.gov">mgroene@leg.ne.gov</a>
Senator Rick Kolowski, Vice Chair	<a href="mailto:rkowlowski@leg.ne.gov">rkowlowski@leg.ne.gov</a>
Senator Laura Ebke	<a href="mailto:lebke@leg.ne.gov">lebke@leg.ne.gov</a>
Senator Steve Erdman	<a href="mailto:serdman@leg.ne.gov">serdman@leg.ne.gov</a>
Senator Lou Ann Linehan	<a href="mailto:llinehan@leg.ne.gov">llinehan@leg.ne.gov</a>
Senator Adam Morfeld	<a href="mailto:amorfeld@leg.ne.gov">amorfeld@leg.ne.gov</a>
Senator Patty Pansing Brooks	<a href="mailto:ppansingbrooks@leg.ne.gov">ppansingbrooks@leg.ne.gov</a>
Senator Lynne Walz	<a href="mailto:lwalz@leg.ne.gov">lwalz@leg.ne.gov</a>

It is important also that you contact your own state senator to urge them to **OPPOSE LB630** as well. Check the [www.Nebraskalegislature.gov](http://www.Nebraskalegislature.gov) website, go to the "Senators" link and click on "Find your Senator". Follow the prompts to identify your senator if you're not sure who he or she is.

Thank you for contacting these senators. Together we can make a difference.