

To: Senator Tom Brewer, Chair, Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee
From: Liz Rea, 12914 Pacific Street, Omaha, NE 68154-2900
Date: February 26, 2020, Noon

Senator Brewer: I request that you include this letter in the public hearing record for LR292CA, the hearing for which is scheduled tomorrow, February 27, 2020. Thank you for your kind cooperation in this matter.

Senator Brewer and Members of the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee:

I understand you will hold a hearing tomorrow on LR292CA, a proposed constitutional amendment to require verification of identity prior to voting. As President of the American Association of University Women of Nebraska (AAUW-NE), I must tell you that our organization is strongly opposed to LR292CA and urge you to vote "No" to advance this measure to the floor for first-round debate.

Nebraska's constitution states that all elections shall be free, and there shall be no hindrance or impediment to the right of a qualified voter to exercise their right to vote. Nebraskans should not have to bear the cost of presenting a current, government-issued ID at their polling places simply to receive a ballot. Doing so amounts to a poll tax which long ago was outlawed by the courts.

For the state government to make the IDs "free" would be an expensive and unnecessary solution to a supposed problem with voter impersonation fraud that does not exist anywhere in the state. The most recent failed voter ID measure to be considered in Nebraska in 2018 was estimated to cost \$2.9 million to start and about \$750,000 to maintain. How does this expense comport with the language in the state constitution that the right to vote will be without burden, and that all elections will be free without hindrance or impediment to the right of a qualified voter to exercise their elective franchise? "Free" voter IDs produced at government expense clearly violates this language guaranteeing free elections.

For these reasons and for the fact that no one can point to a problem involving voter impersonation fraud in Nebraska's electoral history, I urge you to vote "No" to advance this measure out of committee. LR292CA remains a solution in desperate need of a problem that thankfully does not exist.

Thank you for your kind attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Liz Rea, President AAUW-NE
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