

Final Report: AAUW-NE 2020 Public Policy Priorities
By: Liz Rea, Public Policy Chair, AAUW-NE

On February 2, 2020, the AAUW-NE Board of Directors took action to adopt eight pieces of proposed legislation as AAUW-NE public policy priorities. As you know, the 2020 session of the Nebraska Unicameral was forced to take a four-month break due to the coronavirus pandemic. The Unicameral reconvened July 20th and finished the final 17 days of the session in a changed physical environment that included plastic barriers and physical distancing to limit contact between senators, staff members, the media and the lobby. The second session of the 106th Legislature adjourned sine die August 13th, the 60th legislative day. Lawmakers passed 285 bills this session.

At our February 2nd state board meeting, members adopted a position of support for six of eight priorities and a position of opposition for two of the priorities. A brief description for each follows along with the final status for each at the end of the session. A more thorough description of each is posted in the Final Report of our 2020 priorities on the state website; aauw-ne.aauw.net. I encourage you to check it out for insights and a fuller understanding of each priority.

We had a position of SUPPORT for the following:

LB253 Adopt the Redistricting Act. Final Status: Indefinitely Postponed (IP), August 13, 2020;
LB305 Adopt the Healthy and Safe Families and Workplaces Act. Final Status: IP, 8-13-20;
LB311 Adopt the Paid Family and Medical Leave Insurance Act. Final Status: IP, 8-13-20;
LB43 Adopt the Sexual Assault Survivors' Bill of Rights Act. Final Status: Passed on Final Reading, 43-0-6, July 31, 2020; Approved by Governor on August 6, 2020. **VICTORY!!**
LB932 Require Expansion of the Medical Assistance Program as Prescribed. Final Status: IP, 8-13-20;
LB314 Adopt the Remote Seller Tax Collection Act and Change Revenue and Taxation Provisions. Final Status: IP, 8-13-20.

We took a position of OPPOSITION for the following:

LR292CA Constitutional Amendment to Require Verification of Identity Prior to Voting. Final Status: IP, 8-13-20. **VICTORY!!** Note: Any time you can keep a piece of legislation that you oppose from advancing, it's a win!
LB974 Change Taxation and School Funding Provisions. Final Status: IP, 8-13-20.

Conclusion: Our position prevailed on two of the eight or 25% of our public policy priorities which is a gain for Nebraska women, girls and families. Never let it be said the democratic process is speedy, but if you're not involved, you really won't see good things happen for yourself, your family, or the organization you represent. The first session of the 107th Legislature will convene on January 6, 2021. Stay tuned. Get involved.