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Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee
February 27, 2015

[LB308 LB383 LB491 LB588]

The Committee on Government, Military and Veterans Affairs met at 1:30 p.m. on Friday, February 27, 2015, in Room 1507 of the State Capitol, Lincoln, Nebraska, for the purpose of conducting a public hearing on LB588, LB491, LB383, and LB308. Senators present: John Murante, Chairperson; Tommy Garrett, Vice Chairperson; Dave Bloomfield; Joni Craighead; Mike Groene; Matt Hansen; and Tyson Larson. Senators absent: Beau McCoy.

SENATOR MURANTE: Hello, everyone. And welcome to the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee. My name is John Murante, I'm the Chairman of this committee and the state senator for District 49 which is Gretna, Chalco, and northwest Sarpy County. We are here today to hear four bills. We will hear the bills in the order on which they appear on the agenda, which is located outside of this room. If you are here to testify on any of the matters before us, we ask that you fill out one of these green sheets, turn it in letting us know your...whether you are a proponent, opponent, or a neutral on any of the matters taken up today. If you are here and wish to express an opinion on any of the matters before us but do not wish to testify, we have a sign-in sheet that is located on either side of the room. We ask that you sign in and let us know how you feel. If you are here to testify, we ask that when you come forward that you state and spell your name for the record. That's very important for our transcribers. The order of business is that the introducer of a bill will make initial opening remarks. We'll then hear from the proponents of the proposals, then the opponents, we'll hear from any neutral testifiers, and then the introducer will have an opportunity to close. We ask you to listen very carefully and to try not to be repetitive. If someone has already articulated a point which you wish to make, again we ask that you fill out the sign-in sheet and your opinions will be taken into consideration. In the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee we do use the light system. Each testifier is permitted four minutes to speak. When one minute is remaining on your testimony, the yellow light will come on. At that time, you should begin wrapping up your remarks. And when the four minutes have concluded the red light will come on, at which time please conclude your remarks and we will open up the committee for any questions that they may have of you. At this time, I'd ask for anyone to turn off or silence any electronic devices that you may have. And I would remind you that we are a committee which is equipped for electronic devices so you may see members using a computer or laptop. They're just pulling up notes on the matters before us. If you have a prepared statement, an exhibit, or anything you'd like to have distributed to the committee, we ask that when you come up to testify you submit it to the page and the page will distribute it to us and we ask that you have 12 copies. If you don't have 12 copies, that's fine. Again, give it to the page and he will make copies and distribute it to us. Our pages for the day are Seth Thompson from Ogallala, Nebraska, and we have a brand-new page today, Matthew Ruiz, from the University of Nebraska at Lincoln here in Lincoln. So welcome, Matthew. And with that, I will proceed to the introduction of members. Again, my name is John Murante, State Senator for District 49. To my immediate left, State Senator Matt Hansen from

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Lincoln, Nebraska. To his left, State Senator Beau McCoy who is out of town traveling and will not be with us today. To his left, State Senator Joni Craighead from Omaha. To her left, Sherry Shaffer is our committee clerk. To my immediate right, Charles Isom is the committee's research analyst. To his right, State Senator Tommy Garrett from Bellevue, Nebraska. He will be with us but...he will be with us shortly. He is the Vice Chairman of the committee. To his right, State Senator Dave Bloomfield from Hoskins, Nebraska. State Senator Tyson Larson will probably not be with us today, but we can eagerly hope and pray. To his right, State Senator Mike Groene from North Platte, Nebraska. So that concludes our formalities and we welcome to the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee Senator Patty Pansing Brooks from Lincoln. Welcome, Senator Pansing Brooks.

SENATOR PANSING BROOKS: Thank you very much, Senator Murante and members of the committee. For the record, my name is Patty Pansing Brooks, P-a-t-t-y P-a-n-s-i-n-g B-r-o-o-k-s, and I represent Legislative District 28, right where we are sitting today. And I'm here to introduce to you LB588. As many of you know, the Secretary of State is currently in the process of developing an on-line system for registering to vote on-line or to update voter registration information on-line. It is required to be up and running by July 1 of this year. It will be a wonderful service to further simplify our voting process. As we all know, more and more people are using the Internet for more and more services, from shopping and bill paying, and I believe that it will only continue to expand more in more areas. This bill seeks to expand the availability of voting services on-line. It would direct the Secretary of State's Office to develop a system to allow voters to request a ballot for early voting using an on-line system. It sets out the same requirements for identity verification as LB661 did in 2014 for registering to vote on-line. A request for a ballot must be submitted no later than 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday before the election. If the applicant requests that the ballot be sent to an address other than the address at which he or she is registered to vote, then the election commissioner or county clerk shall also mail a notice that the ballot has been mailed by nonforwardable, first-class mail to the address at which the applicant is registered to vote. So I would encourage and hope that you might consider continuing to explore the options for increasing voter participation in the state. And by making more steps in the voting process available on-line, we would potentially increase voter participation, especially among younger persons. With that, I will ask your favorable consideration and take any questions that you might have but we have more people to testify. Thank you. [LB588]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you very much for your opening. Are there any questions?
Senator Craighead. [LB588]

SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Hi, Senator Pansing Brooks. [LB588]

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SENATOR PANSING BROOKS: Hello. [LB588]

SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: Okay, as we know, our Legislature voted down the voter ID bill. [LB588]

SENATOR PANSING BROOKS: Yes. [LB588]

SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: Is your bill in conflict with the way the body voted on that bill? [LB588]

SENATOR PANSING BROOKS: I don't believe so, because I think that it's more in line with what is already happening under the bill when we all were not here last year on LB616 to allow people to register to vote on-line. So it's just a way to also have a request by mail. [LB588]

SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: So what happens if someone who has no ID wants to go through this process? Is there anything in place for that type of person? [LB588]

SENATOR PANSING BROOKS: Well, everybody has a Social Security number or they can use a state ID or the motor vehicle license. So among one of those areas they could register and use that information. [LB588]

SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: Thank you. [LB588]

SENATOR PANSING BROOKS: Thank you, Senator Craighead. [LB588]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you, Senator Craighead. Senator Groene. [LB588]

SENATOR GROENE: Thank you, Chairman Murante. One of my things is I like college kids to vote from where they're from and not where they're at. Would this make it easier for college kids to ask for an absentee ballot from their home district? [LB588]

SENATOR PANSING BROOKS: I would argue that it does because you can do it on-line with your district and then use your...because then they would be mailing it to that student and then sending a notice to the address. But if you were...if a kid were from your city, North Platte, Senator Groene... [LB588]

SENATOR GROENE: Right now they have to do what? [LB588]

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SENATOR PANSING BROOKS: Right now? They have to...I don't think I should speak to that, I'm sorry, because the process... [LB588]

SENATOR GROENE: I'll wait. I'll wait. All right, I'll ask Neal. All right, Thank you. [LB588]

SENATOR PANSING BROOKS: Who knows what I would make up about this. [LB588]

SENATOR BLOOMFIELD: It might be interesting. [LB588]

SENATOR PANSING BROOKS: It could be. It could be new ideas. [LB588]

SENATOR GROENE: Well, Neal knows my question. [LB588]

SENATOR PANSING BROOKS: Yeah, he knows everything about that, so that will be good. [LB588]

SENATOR MURANTE: Any additional questions? Seeing none, thank you very much for your opening. [LB588]

SENATOR PANSING BROOKS: Thank you all for your time. And I will waive my closing because I'm supposed to be in Judiciary. Thanks so much. Have a good afternoon, everybody. [LB588]

SENATOR MURANTE: Okay. All right, sounds great. Thank you. We'll now proceed to proponent testimony on LB588. Ms. McLarty, welcome back to your Committee on Government, Military and Veterans Affairs. [LB588]

BRI McLARTY: I'm happy to be back. All right. Good afternoon, members of the Government Committee. My name is Bri McLarty, that's B-r-i M-c-L-a-r-t-y, and I'm here in my capacity as the director of voting rights with Nebraskans for Civic Reform. We'd first like to thank Senator Pansing Brooks, who's no longer here, for introducing this legislation. Currently, an individual can request an early ballot by mailing in the vote-by-mail application or by sending it via fax to their county clerk or election commissioner where they're registered. The process is as follows: A voter mails in the application. Once it's received by the local election official...once they receive the application the ballot is then mailed to the voter. Voting early by mail ballot has increased over the last few elections. In 2010 about 16 percent of those voting in the general election utilized early voting. That number has increased to about 22 percent of the voters and

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that's what we saw here in 2014. With the increased use of early voting, it is time for our state to embrace technology to make it easier for voters to request early ballots. Like I said, under current law only a signed, mailed application or one transmitted by fax may be accepted by an election official for early voting. Our laws are woefully behind the advancement of technology. Faxes are antiquated and no longer a part of everyday life. There has already been a proposal to allow for a scanned copy of the application to be mailed. This is one way to use technology. LB588 is another, an alternative for those who do not own a scanner or do not have access to scanners. LB588 mirrors the language and process of LB661, a bill passed last year to provide for on-line voter registration using signatures stored by the DMV to electronically sign the application. A similar procedure would work for on-line vote-by-mail requests and the fiscal note reflects that. The fiscal note for LB661 was three times the cost estimated here for this bill mainly because the DMV needed funds to modify their computer programming, which they estimated last year to be about \$80,000. This amount is not needed here. The funds have already been invested in making these necessary changes. The fiscal note for LB588 reflects the expenses for the Secretary of State to develop a Web portal for on-line applications and to determine data storage and delivery to the local officials. Currently, the Secretary of State is working to implement LB661, making decisions regarding the data and the programming that is needed under this bill. While we understand the Secretary of State cannot piggyback on-line vote-by-mail applications with their current efforts to do on-line voter registration, we believe it is helpful to consider both tangentially. In bringing forth this concept while the Secretary of State is setting up on-line voter registration, our hope is that his office will keep an eye out for ways to build upon information and knowledge gained during this process and consider ways, like on-line vote-by-mail application requests, that technology can be integrated in our elections to increase accessibility and efficiency. From illegible handwriting to unpredictable mail delivery times allowing for on-line submission of vote-by-mail applications we can reduce some of the human error and inefficiencies that currently impact our election administration. So we respectfully request that the committee advance LB588. And I'd be happy to answer any questions. [LB588]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you very much for your testimony. Are there any questions? Seeing none, thank you for coming down today, it's much appreciated. [LB588]

BRI McLARTY: Thank you. [LB588]

SENATOR MURANTE: Additional proponent testimony on LB588. [LB588]

PEGGY ADAIR: (Exhibit 1) Good afternoon, Senator Murante and members of the committee. For the record, my name is Peggy Adair, A-d-a-i-r, and I represent the League of Women Voters of Greater Omaha. The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization that

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encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. The League of Women Voters supports LB588, a bill that provides for electronic application for ballots to vote early by mail. This bill recognizes the ability of our voting system in Nebraska to cross reference and confirm data using existing databases, while it also encourages busy, tech-savvy Nebraskans to exercise their fundamental right to vote. The League of Women Voters supports legislation that increases voter participation and LB588 serves that purpose. We thank the missing Senator Pansing Brooks for introducing LB588 and we encourage this committee to send this bill to General File for full debate. And I welcome any questions. [LB588]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you very much for your testimony. Are there any questions? Seeing none, thank you for coming down today. [LB588]

PEGGY ADAIR: You're welcome. [LB588]

SENATOR MURANTE: Additional proponent testimony on LB588. Seeing none, opposition testimony. I wanted to give you plenty of time to think about it, Mr. Erickson. And welcome back to the Government Committee. [LB588]

NEAL ERICKSON: Thank you, Chairman Murante, members of the committee. For the record, my name is Neal Erickson, N-e-a-l E-r-i-c-k-s-o-n, and I'm Deputy Secretary of State for Elections. I'm here today to testify in behalf of Secretary of State John Gale in opposition to LB588. Secretary Gale sends his regrets for not being able to testify, as he is out of town today. LB588 proposes setting up an on-line process for submitting early voting-by-mail requests. It appears to be modeled after the on-line registration process that was passed last year and we are currently developing. Our concern at this point is a timing issue. We would like to complete the on-line registration rollout by July of this year and the accompanying electronic transmission of DMV registration, which is expected by the end of the year. If there are any problems encountered or unintended consequences that become apparent after the rollout of these two projects, they could be addressed before an additional or similar project is undertaken. I would also point out the early voting request Web site would have to have some basic differences from the on-line registration project. As a final destination of the data collected on the Web site is different for on-line registrations to local election officials and the ultimate destination for on-line registration is actually the central registration database. The internal structure of the two systems would have to be different. We would also want to do some comparative research with other states that might be doing this type of on-line process and with vendors who might be offering possible software solutions. We simply don't know how to fairly price a fiscal note and we don't know all the possible complications yet. Our office asks that the committee not advance

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LB588 and allow us to complete the projects passed last year prior to adding additional obligations. And with that, I'd answer any questions you might have. [LB588]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you for your testimony. Are there any questions? Senator Bloomfield. [LB588]

SENATOR BLOOMFIELD: Thank you, Chair. Mr. Erickson, it would seem from your testimony that you're not opposed to the idea so much as you are that the Secretary's Office just isn't ready for this yet. [LB588]

NEAL ERICKSON: Well, and certainly we'd look at it in more details to, you know, if there are some unintended consequences that might come out from the development of the other similar projects. But we're constantly looking for new ways to provide higher technology services, I guess, in this area. So I can't speak for Secretary Gale in saying that it was a complete nonstarter. But just right at this point certainly, we'd like to finish what we're doing with the on-line registration because there are similarities between the two processes or as envisioned in LB588, before we kind of make that commitment. [LB588]

SENATOR BLOOMFIELD: Okay. Thank you. [LB588]

SENATOR MURANTE: Senator Garrett. [LB588]

SENATOR GARRETT: Thank you, Chairman. I had a similar concern. It seems like it's a good thing other than the timing. If we adjusted the timing...it says on or before January 1, 2016. If we were to slip that timing to six months? [LB588]

NEAL ERICKSON: Well, I'd certainly suggest I think there may be some significant changes in the actual language that we might see as a result of the on-line registration. So I'm not sure adjusting just the time line is enough. Like I said, we'd like to get through these projects, see what kind of things we encounter. And then maybe look at this proposal and there may need to be some modifications in it in order to do it. [LB588]

SENATOR GARRETT: Okay, thank you. [LB588]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you, Senator Garrett. Senator Groene. [LB588]

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SENATOR GROENE: Thank you, Chairman Murante. Wouldn't this be simpler if the request just went to each county clerk? [LB588]

NEAL ERICKSON: Well, then you...if I understand you correctly, I think we'd be looking at having each clerk have their own Web site with this? [LB588]

SENATOR GROENE: Ours has one already, I mean. [LB588]

NEAL ERICKSON: They don't have one, I don't believe, where the signature gets attached to it. And that's kind of the difficulty with the on-line stuff. We have an early voting request form on-line. But you need to print it off, sign it, and mail it. And that signature aspect is the difficult part. [LB588]

SENATOR GROENE: All right. I thought they could just give their license number, say, and send it. Yeah, you have to have a signature. [LB588]

NEAL ERICKSON: Yeah, no. We actually...the law requires a signature. [LB588]

SENATOR GROENE: All right, thank you. [LB588]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you, Senator Groene. Any final questions? Seeing none, thank you for your testimony. [LB588]

NEAL ERICKSON: Thank you. [LB588]

SENATOR MURANTE: Additional opposition testimony to LB588. Seeing none, any neutral testimony? Senator Pansing Brooks has waived closing. And that concludes the hearing on LB588 and we will proceed to the next item on the agenda, LB491. Senator Morfeld has returned to the Government Committee triumphantly. [LB588 LB491]

SENATOR MORFELD: I've got a real treat for you guys here, so. [LB491]

SENATOR MURANTE: Okay. It's better than the Treasurers Act, I'll give you that. [LB491]

SENATOR MORFELD: Hey, that's a good idea. Senator Mur-ahn-tee (phonetically), Mur-ant-ee (phonetically). Oh, got it. Ah, jeez. There we go, okay. [LB588]

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SENATOR MURANTE: Nailed it. Second time is the charm, yeah. [LB588]

SENATOR MORFELD: Well, at least people spell your name right. Okay. Senator Murante, members of the Government Committee, my name is Adam Morfeld, representing the "Fighting 46th" Legislative District, here today to introduce LB491. LB491 creates an election day voter registration pilot project beginning on October 1, 2015, and ending January 1, 2019. It is completely voluntary. A county may participate if the election commissioner or county clerk submits an application to the Secretary of State and it is approved. I have been testifying in support of election day voter registration bills in front of this committee since 2008; I've been thinking about it since 2007 when I was a page over there; and I've listened to many concerns on this topic. The pilot project concept contained within LB491 came about in part as a result of those concerns and a chance meeting that I had with a state representative from Utah who introduced an election day registration pilot program that was enacted in Utah with bipartisan support and has been quite successful. And I think somebody is going to testify to that after me. How it would work is like this: A voter wishing to register and vote on election day would provide documentation to verify address as currently required under the current Help America Vote Act for first-time voters in the state of Nebraska. The voter may register to vote and vote at the office of the election commissioner or county clerk or at a different location designated by him or her to register on election day. So the county election commissioner or clerk can designate a separate location from their office if they see fit. An Election Day Registration Pilot Project Task Force is also created and shall consist of the Secretary of State, three members of the Legislature appointed by the Speaker of the Legislature, two election commissioners from counties with a population of 100,000 or more, and two election commissioners or county clerks from counties with a population of less than 100,000 people. The Secretary of State and each approved county participating in this project shall report to the Election Day Registration Pilot Program Task Force--it's a long phrase--on or about September 30 of each year that the pilot program is in effect. The Task Force shall meet and report on: implementation of the pilot project; the number of ballots cast by voters registered on election day; any difficulties resulting from the pilot project; and whether the state would benefit from implementing statewide election day voter registration. Now that I've explained the process, I do want to address the reason for the legislation. This does address a problem. As an assistant residence director at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln during the 2008 election I saw no fewer than eight potential first-time voters in my building alone that were unable to vote because of unnecessary voter registration deadlines. And I'm more than happy to discuss why the voter registration deadlines, as they are currently, are unnecessary. Half of these eight voters were already registered in their home counties. The other half missed the registration deadline and were unable to vote because they had never registered anywhere else. Many of those unregistered thought that they were already registered either through the DMV or even a few of them thought they had been automatically registered when they registered via draft card in the case of some of the males. As a poll worker in the 2010 midterm election I worked at the City Campus Union precinct, which covers just the

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university campus, and turned away no fewer than 25 students because they were registered elsewhere in the state. Election day registration not only benefits students and young people, but also an increasingly mobile population of professionals and workers who are often already registered in a different county. And by the time they realize this it's often too late. It's also important to note that election day registration is not a foreign concept. It is currently conducted in a total of ten states--I think that includes the District of Columbia as well--including our neighbors, Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. It should be noted that North Dakota requires no registration and Minnesota and Wisconsin have actually had election day registrations since the 1970s. In all of these states, EDR has operated smoothly and enfranchised over 1 million voters who have used it in recent elections. It is true that Nebraska has an unusual amount of political subdivisions and thus different ballot faces or splits, basically different ballot types. However, with the current system a list of all physical addresses and corresponding ballot types can be printed off for each precinct, which would actually be very useful for the current issuance of provisional ballots already. Half our trouble is oftentimes people who are on the roles, them coming in and us figuring out which ballot they get based on a map. So this list would also help our current process as well. Election officials already have the ability to print off this list. Two counties, one rural and one urban, have tested it out with their current system and it's actually quite easy. One of the many benefits to the statewide voter registration system is that the street file and the ability of the system to accurately and automatically assign voters to the correct precinct. The system also identifies ballot style, which is why you can print off this list. In addition, precinct workers across Nebraska already work with a number of different ballot splits and regularly make determinations on which ballot style the voter should receive when a voter must vote provisionally. This was common at the polling place that I served at as an election judge. This physical address and corresponding ballot style will actually ease the current provisional process as I already noted. And I should note that the statistics don't lie. Election day registration will promote turnout, particularly among young Nebraskans. In states with election day registration there is on average 14 percent higher turnout among 18- to 24-year-olds. There is also correspondingly high turnout among professionals 25 to 40. This is increasingly important as Nebraskans have become more mobile in addition to the people throughout the rest of the country. One common misconception is that voters who would utilize election day registration are either lazy or uninformed. First, I believe that government has no place in determining who is informed and who is not informed enough to vote. Second, voter registration deadlines is a poor test for who is informed and who is not informed. Is a person who lives at the same place and does nothing with their registration more informed than an individual who comes prepared to the polls with their HAVA documentation? If that's the case, then I'm not quite sure why they are less informed. Finally, election day registration does not promote fraud. In fact, it requires individuals to register in front of an election official with proof of residency as required under HAVA. And states with election day registration have had no problems with voter fraud and some of these states have had EDR since the 1970s. I actually just recently visited Iowa and Minnesota and their elections run just fine and democracy seems to be humming along just fine

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as well. In conclusion, election day registration minimizes eligible voters from being disenfranchised by arbitrary, unnecessary registration deadlines in an accessible and secure manner. It provides a voluntary method to try this system out and for counties to pilot election day registration potentially bring Nebraska elections into the twenty-first century. And I urge you to advance this legislation and would be happy to answer any questions at all. [LB491]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you, Senator Morfeld. Senator Craighead. [LB491]

SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: Senator Morfeld, thanks for being here today. [LB491]

SENATOR MORFELD: Absolutely. [LB491]

SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: Okay. As our body discussed voter ID, opponents said it was discriminatory to make people have any kind of ID. So in your bill you require...what if a person doesn't have any ID and wants to vote? [LB491]

SENATOR MORFELD: Well, as I noted in my floor debate, we actually already require from first-time voters in the state of Nebraska that if they don't provide their, I believe, it's the Social Security number or a copy of their ID with their mail-in ballot--this is only for mail-in, people who are registering by mail, which is most people--if they don't provide that, they're required to show a certain list of different documents, as required by the federal government, before they vote for the first time in the state of Nebraska. So we already had that and I admitted that freely on the floor. My argument against voter ID was that we don't need anything else beyond that and that it could, in fact, be discriminatory to a wide variety of people. So for me with election day registration, they should be treated like any other first-time voters in the state of Nebraska as they are currently treated. [LB491]

SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: Thank you. [LB491]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you, Senator Craighead. Senator Garrett. [LB491]

SENATOR GARRETT: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Senator Morfeld, for bringing this bill. I actually...I'm...anything we can do to get people to vote, I'm all for it. Election day registration is a great thing I think. If memory serves me correctly, we talked about this last year in this same committee. And perhaps the Secretary of State's Office, Mr. Erickson, would address this, is that the voting offices actually having enough ballots printed up for whatever district they're in. I guess he can address that issue, but... [LB491]

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SENATOR MORFELD: Well, I can address that a little bit. I actually observed election day registration in an official capacity in Iowa and Minnesota, actually. And what they do is, it's like any other election. You know, they have certain numbers and they know, they can kind of predict. We would be able to predict based on turnout in some of these states that are adopting election day registration as far as how much turnout they had before they adopted election day registration and after. And right now, it's standard practice to have a lot more ballots than what you need at the polling location. Now, there has been some elections with high turnout where they've had that problem, even when we don't have election day registration. Omaha in 2012 was one of those places. [LB491]

SENATOR GARRETT: I don't suppose we could just hit a print button and print an additional ballot. [LB491]

SENATOR MORFELD: We probably could but that's very expensive, as I'm sure the Secretary of State would acknowledge, to put those machines in each polling place and to make sure that they're secure too. [LB491]

SENATOR GARRETT: Again, thank you for bringing this. [LB491]

SENATOR MORFELD: Thank you, Senator. [LB491]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you, Senator Garrett. Senator Groene. [LB491]

SENATOR GROENE: Thank you, Chairman Mur-ant-ee (phonetically). [LB491]

SENATOR MURANTE: Not really all that close, Senator Groene, but... [LB491]

SENATOR MORFELD: You have another whole, what, 60 days to figure it out? [LB491]

SENATOR GROENE: It's my western Nebraska dialect. It's my culture. But anyway, I'm real focused on local elections. Everybody worries about the President, but on all those ballots there's county commissioners, city council, NRDs. And when you give a college kid the ability to vote where he's going to college, how does he vote on those? He probably doesn't even recognize the names. And all we seem to worry about anymore is that President, but local government concerns me. [LB491]

SENATOR MORFELD: Well, I'll respond if that's okay, Senator. [LB491]

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SENATOR GROENE: Yeah, that's a question. How do they... [LB491]

SENATOR MORFELD: Okay. Well, number one, when people are 18 they have the right to vote. And I think that we can't just merely assume because somebody is young that they don't have any idea what's going on. I've met older people that have absolutely no clue what's going on and I've met younger people that have absolutely no clue what's going on. So I don't think it's our job--in my personal opinion, you may differ with me, Senator--I don't think it's our job or the government's job to decide who's informed and who's not informed, regardless of age. [LB491]

SENATOR GROENE: But the next question comes. So you've said you were down there at the campus. So a young person walks in and you say, show me an ID, you can register today. And his driver's license says North Platte, Nebraska. Now how do you know he has a residence here and he's living in Lincoln and he has a right to vote? [LB491]

SENATOR MORFELD: Well, in my bill and in Iowa, for instance...let me use Iowa as an example. It has to be...you can use your ID, but it has to be something with your current registered address on it. So if it's your ID that has your current address on it, you can use that. If it's a utility bill or bank statement no more than 30 days old and it has your current address on it that you are registering at--it has to be the one that you're registering at--you have to be at the right polling place... [LB491]

SENATOR GROENE: So a student comes in and you say, well, you're not registered here. And he wanted to vote so you tell him to go back to his dorm room and find a...and come back with something that proves he's (inaudible)... [LB491]

SENATOR MORFELD: Proves he's a resident of that precinct. Yep, that's how it would work and that's how it works in Iowa and all these other states. [LB491]

SENATOR GROENE: Thank you for clearing that up. [LB491]

SENATOR MORFELD: Yep, absolutely. [LB491]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you, Senator Groene. Senator Bloomfield. [LB491]

SENATOR BLOOMFIELD: I didn't want to go here but I have to now. [LB491]

SENATOR MORFELD: Oh, I always enjoy that, Senator. [LB491]

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SENATOR BLOOMFIELD: I didn't need that anyway. Motel room. If I walk in and give you a receipt from Days Inn on West O is that... [LB491]

SENATOR MORFELD: Not under the HAVA requirements, no. It wouldn't count. [LB491]

SENATOR BLOOMFIELD: Okay, thank you. [LB491]

SENATOR MORFELD: Yep. [LB491]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you, Senator Bloomfield. Any final questions? Seeing none, Senator Mor-field (phonetically), thank you very much for coming down today. [LB491]

SENATOR MORFELD: I'll remember that, Senator Murante. [LB491]

SENATOR MURANTE: You tried to mispronounce it but you got it right. [LB491]

SENATOR MORFELD: It's true. Thank you. [LB491]

SENATOR MURANTE: We'll proceed to proponent testimony on LB491. Ms. McLarty, welcome back. [LB491]

BRI McLARTY: Yes, thank you. All right. Good afternoon, members of the Government Committee. My name is Bri McLarty, that's B-r-i M-c-L-a-r-t-y, and I'm here in my capacity as the director of voting rights with Nebraskans for Civic Reform in support of LB491. Now Nebraskans for Civic Reform has been supportive of past legislation introducing election day registration and we agree with Senator Morfeld that LB491 strikes a good balance between the concerns of those who in the past have opposed EDR and those, like NCR, who would like to see Nebraska join Minnesota, Iowa, and Wisconsin in offering it. Also, as Senator Morfeld mentioned, this bill was passed as a pilot program, which is what this bill is based on, from Utah. There are four counties that participated in the program. They were: Davis, Kane, Weber, and then Salt Lake. These four counties were the ones that voluntarily participated and there's a good mix of smaller counties, like Kane, that has a smaller population--probably something similar to what we'd see in Lincoln County or Thayer--and then also Salt Lake County, which has a population of a million, so what we'd see if we combined Lancaster and Douglas County. But I was able to reach out and speak to three of the county clerks and their experiences regarding this. I talked to them about what they had to do to train poll workers; how much..if they had to spend any more money; what they saw with having a (inaudible) as well as educating voters about it, as also including additional costs just to their general budget in having elections. And all of them

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said that they saw no new costs in training poll workers nor costs in facilitating the program. In fact, the clerk from Salt Lake County, which is the largest county, estimated it was actually cheaper for her to do election day registration than to do the traditional provisional ballot just because their rules are similar to ours in that the provisional ballot process is very laborious. They have to have two people present, they have to be very careful when opening it, they go through the entire certification, verification, investigative process that we have here. But for her, election day registration was a lot easier. They could just look at the outside of the ballot envelope that the EDR ballot was put in, saw that the person complied, they provided the necessary verification documents, they were able to just rip open the envelope, put the stuff that would register them as voters to the side and then put the ballot in with the rest of the ballots that were cast by people that were already registered to vote, and be able to count the ballots just very quickly. A lot less work than the full on provisional ballot process. In talking with them, they had very positive experiences. Even those...one of the county clerks from Kane County told me explicitly that she vehemently opposed election day registration but said that she didn't have any negative experiences in implementing it in 2014. Now, one thing about Utah is that they do already have county to county portability, which allows people that are already registered in Utah that move from one county to another to vote and have that ballot count on election day. We do not have that here in Nebraska. But even with that already in place, they saw an increase in participation. In Salt Lake County, they provided me a breakdown of those that used EDR. They had about 800 individuals and over half were under the age of 25. In fact, I think the ages broken down were 409 people that were 18 to 24; 199 ages 25 to 40; 127 ages 41 to 65; and there were actually 53 individuals over the age of 65 that utilized election day registration. So this is something that will help voters of all ages in Nebraska if implemented. Election day registration has the potential to increase civic participation of our elections, especially by those who because of their high mobility are burdened by registration deadlines. So far the debate on election day registration has been two sides debating back and forth whether or not it's feasible or can be implemented. This provides us a great opportunity to collect the data on implementation, the problems we could possibly see, as well as any costs that we may incur in Nebraska. And then the Legislature and this committee can make an informed decision about election day registration and implementation here in Nebraska. So with that, thank you for your time. We ask that you advance LB491. And I'd be happy to answer any additional questions if you have any about Utah. [LB491]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you very much. Senator Craighead. [LB491]

SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Hi, Ms. McLarty. [LB491]

BRI McLARTY: Hi. [LB491]

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SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: Does Utah have voter ID? [LB491]

BRI McLARTY: They do have voter ID, but their list is incredibly extensive. There are over 27 documents that can be done. Some of them include: student ID, any sort of bill, lease agreements--I'm trying to think of some of the weirder ones I saw--employee ID. I can get you the list, but it is incredibly extensive and much more extensive than what we saw in LB111. [LB491]

SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: But they do have voter ID? [LB491]

BRI McLARTY: They do have voter ID, yes. [LB491]

SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: Thank you. [LB491]

BRI McLARTY: Yes. [LB491]

SENATOR MURANTE: So if Nebraska had a proposal that had all of those provisions in it, took the Utah bill, would your organization support it? [LB491]

BRI McLARTY: I'd have to see what the language was. Utah doesn't have an address and photo requirement, it's just the name and the address. So the photo is the issue that we had with LB111. So it would depend on the bill, but I will say that Utah is very generous in what they do, as well as what they allow for election day registration. If you don't mind, I can read it right now. You can either provide one of: Utah driver's license; a Utah nondriver ID; an ID card issued by the federal government; concealed weapon permit; tribal ID; Bureau of Indian Affairs card or a tribal treaty card, which is different in that the tribal treaty card is certification of tribal membership and not natural tribal ID card; or they can provide two of: a utility bill within 90 days, not the 30 days; bank statement; Medicare and Medicaid EBT card, which is like a debit card; employee ID; college student ID; a check from the state of Utah or the federal government; a paycheck from any employer; vehicle registration; or, very broadly, other document with name and address. So very, very generous in what they provide. [LB491]

SENATOR MURANTE: And in the provisions that they have, do you consider that to be voter suppression? [LB491]

BRI McLARTY: I think from the fact that they allow one of or two of and they're incredibly generous in the list--like I said, other document with name and address--for what they allow for election day registration. And I would actually note that the Nebraska one that was introduced

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here is limited to HAVA, which is utility, bank statement, and the ones that are done under the Help America Vote Act. This one is incredibly more generous, a huge list that I think with the...to have an election day registration where you have to do a verification of your identity and your address to make sure you're at the right polling location, I think Utah has a much better list, so. [LB491]

SENATOR MURANTE: So, no, it's not voter suppression? [LB491]

BRI McLARTY: I would say, no, based on the incredibly long list, that it would be easy for a voter to provide the necessary documents. But we also have an in-person voter registration earlier that wouldn't require any of that, so. [LB491]

SENATOR MURANTE: So the Utah standards are generous, they're not voter suppression, so if they were introduced in Nebraska they would not be characterized as such? [LB491]

BRI McLARTY: I would say the election day registration voter identity and verification process would not be considered voter suppression in that they can register to vote earlier. I think voter ID at the polls, saying that you can't get a ballot at all, on a very limited list, would be voter suppression. [LB491]

SENATOR MURANTE: But that's not what I asked. I asked you, you have characterized aptly...you were very nice to the state of Utah and how it was, you didn't question their character or integrity in how they went about passing their identification requirements. But you do not consider their identification requirements to be overly onerous or some super secret attempt at voter suppression? [LB491]

BRI McLARTY: I think what I said was that it was more generous than what LB111 introduced. I would not support voter ID at all, regardless of how generous you are with the list. [LB491]

SENATOR MURANTE: At least you're honest. All right. Senator Groene. [LB491]

SENATOR GROENE: Thank you, Chairman. Was that a list for voter registration or voter ID...voter... [LB491]

BRI McLARTY: The list I read was what Utah will allow someone who's registering to vote on election day to provide to verify their address and their identification. [LB491]

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SENATOR GROENE: But what about when they go in and register to vote at any time? [LB491]

BRI McLARTY: I have not looked specifically at Utah's legislation on what they provide for a voter registration in person at an election commission prior to election day. But I'd be happy to look that up and let your office know. [LB491]

SENATOR GROENE: I don't want that generous to register to vote. I mean, we're talking two issues here. We're talking voter ID to vote that day and then we're talking another one, registering to vote, so. You might think that's nice but that's way too generous to register to vote, in my opinion. [LB491]

BRI McLARTY: And I'll also look up the Utah one for you just so I can clarify. [LB491]

SENATOR GROENE: All right, thank you. But you were giving us the registration requirements, not the voter ID requirements. [LB491]

BRI McLARTY: Yes. And I could also give you the voter ID requirements if it's something you're curious about. [LB491]

SENATOR BLOOMFIELD: All right. Yeah, I'd like to see the voter ID requirements. [LB491]

BRI McLARTY: Sure. It is a list of about 25 or 27, so I'm guessing you might not be very happy with it. [LB491]

SENATOR GROENE: All right. Thank you. [LB491]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you, Senator Groene. Senator Bloomfield. [LB491]

SENATOR BLOOMFIELD: I would like a copy of both those lists also. Thank you. [LB491]

BRI McLARTY: Yes, I'd be happy to provide it to your office. [LB491]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you, Senator Bloomfield. Okay, thank you very much for coming down. [LB491]

BRI McLARTY: Thank you. [LB491]

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SENATOR GROENE: Thank you. [LB491]

SENATOR MURANTE: Additional proponent testimony to LB491. [LB491]

PEGGY ADAIR: (Exhibit 1) Good afternoon, Senator Murante and members of the committee. For the record, my name is Peggy Adair, A-d-a-i-r, and I represent the League of Women Voters of Greater Omaha in support of LB491, a bill that provides for a pilot project for election day voter registration. In our state Legislature, new senators come on board eager to participate and to make a positive difference. But they also make many mistakes, both procedurally and in bill selection and drafting because they're not familiar with all the laws, rules, and processes involved in the function of our Unicameral Legislature. It's the same with new voters. They're eager to participate and make a positive difference, but sometimes they make the mistake of not registering to vote well in advance of election day because they're not familiar with the voting laws, rules, and processes. Election day voter registration gives those of us who are politically experienced and politically involved the opportunity to welcome new, enthusiastic voters, to give them a positive experience when they participate in the political process for the very first time, and to encourage them to become lifelong, informed, and educated voters. This voluntary pilot project allows a task force to objectively examine the benefits and drawbacks of election day voter registration to determine if expansion of the project is advisable. The League of Women Voters supports legislation that increases voter participation and LB491 serves that purpose. We thank Senator Morfeld for introducing LB491 and we encourage the committee to move this bill forward to General File for full debate. And I welcome any questions. [LB491]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you very much. Are there any questions? Senator Craighead. [LB491]

SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: Thank you. Hi, Ms. Adair. Thanks for being here today. [LB491]

PEGGY ADAIR: You're very welcome. [LB491]

SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: I agree with you, I think that the earlier we can get young people involved in the political process the better. But my question is, do you think that most of these people have...most of these kids that we want to get involved have some form of ID? [LB491]

PEGGY ADAIR: I would have to say working with young people in some of the more disadvantaged areas of Omaha, often they do not. They don't drive, they don't own a car, their parents don't own a car, so it can be difficult for these young people to have that form of ID that would be required in a voter ID law. [LB491]

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SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: Thank you. [LB491]

PEGGY ADAIR: You're very welcome. [LB491]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you, Senator Craighead. Any final questions? Seeing none, thank you very much for coming down today. [LB491]

PEGGY ADAIR: Thank you. [LB491]

SENATOR MURANTE: Additional proponents wishing to speak on LB491. Seeing none, opposition testimony to LB491. Welcome back, Mr. Erickson. [LB491]

NEAL ERICKSON: And thank you. Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, once again for the record, my name is Neal Erickson, N-e-a-l E-r-i-c-k-s-o-n, and I'm Deputy Secretary of State for Elections, here to testify in opposition to LB491 on behalf of Secretary of State Gale. We have a variety of administrative problems that make election day registration more difficult in Nebraska than some other states. One essential item at the time of election is to make sure the voter receives a proper ballot for his residential address. In the past we've testified and provided information why we do not believe election day registration is a good choice for Nebraska. One very basic problem with election day registration here is that our ballots are more complicated than most other states. We have substantially more ballot faces than other jurisdictions our size or even larger. This is due to the number of offices that are elected in Nebraska as well as having, with a few exceptions, all of our cities and schools on the November ballot on even numbered years. Nebraska is one of only three states that includes either or both of this class of political subdivisions on the ballot in even numbered years. This creates difficulty ensuring that a voter at a new address seeking to register on election day is receiving the correct ballot. LB491 envisions a pilot project for election day registration with Nebraska counties volunteering to take part in the project. I understand this proposal was modeled after a program in Utah. I am somewhat familiar with that program and I believe there are some details that would make such an effort difficult for Nebraska's current election system and the ballots for split precincts due to the many elections being conducted on our election days. I am not aware of any counties in Nebraska that have agreed to participate in this pilot project. And I would note that in the Utah project, they had five...the counties already lined up prior to passage. They'd already volunteered. Another issue to be faced, even within a pilot project, is how to ensure the voter receives the correct ballot. Once again, it is my understanding in Salt Lake County a system requiring a phone call to the election central office was used with an estimated 1,200 or so election day registrants. Twelve hundred phone calls going into that local election office. Depending on the size of the Nebraska county and the volume of calls, such a process could result in substantial wait times on the part of the voter to determine the proper ballot for his or her residence. I would also mention

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the project could possibly create some constitutional issues. If you have an individual who is not registered to vote by current deadlines but is allowed to vote through the pilot project and a nonregistered individual in an adjoining county who is not allowed to vote, certainly they are not being treated the same. In a particular election, if a race crosses that county line, there is also potential to impact the outcome of a race with different rules from one county to the next. For these various reasons the Secretary of State's Office opposes LB491 and would urge you not to advance the bill. With that, I'd answer any questions you might have. [LB491]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you very much. Are there any questions? Seeing none, thank you for coming down today. Much appreciate it. [LB491]

NEAL ERICKSON: Thank you. [LB491]

SENATOR MURANTE: Additional opponent testimony to LB491. Seeing none, neutral testimony. Welcome back to the Government Committee. [LB491]

BETH BAZYN FERRELL: Thank you. Chairman Murante, members of the committee, for the record, my name is Beth Bazyn, B-a-z-y-n, Ferrell, F-e-r-r-e-l-l, I'm with the Nebraska Association of County Officials. I'm appearing here neutral in the bill but historically NACO has opposed election day registration bills that are mandated. Our position is neutral this year because it would be voluntary, it would just be the counties that chose to apply for the pilot project. However, if the bill would come out of committee in a mandatory fashion, we would oppose the bill basically for all the same reasons that Mr. Erickson indicated. I'd be happy to answer questions. [LB491]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you very much. Are there any questions? Seeing none, thank you for coming down. Any final neutral testimony? Senator Morfeld, you are recognized to close. [LB491]

SENATOR MORFELD: I guess I'll just respond to some of the Secretary of State's Office's issues. First, the proper ballot issue I've already addressed and I've worked with several different counties to address those issues. There's a solution to that. I understand that we have more different ballot faces and different ballot types because of political subdivisions. But as I said, I've worked with both a large county and a small county. They've said that it's pretty easy to be able to create this list to match the different ballots and that's not a problem. I've also been an election judge in a precinct that probably has the highest amount of provisional ballots being issues--the city campus--because the students are so mobile. And you have a map up there and you look at which ballot they get based on the map. In this case, this list would actually provide a bit more accurate and easier way of finding out which ballot they need. Also, while counties

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may have not talked to the Secretary of State's Office, and quite frankly I wouldn't either if I knew that they were opposed to it, saying that they'd love to do this. I've talked to several counties and I'm not willing to say which ones today because they have to go through processes if this gets passed in the law. But there are several counties that are actually interested in doing this. In regard to the constitutional argument that Mr. Erickson brought up, first, he's talking about equal protection argument. And I would just ask the Secretary of State's Office be consistent in their application and their principle in using that argument. For instance, they've supported legislation in the past that I believe you could have an equal protection argument for vote by mail. Some counties, basically the entire county gets to vote by mail and the next county next to it doesn't. They've testified in support of bills that would provide that same type of equal protection argument, however, they don't make that argument there but they make it here on this bill. So I'd just ask that they be consistent in that argument. In addition, I think that the fact of the matter is, is that this is not a foreign concept. A fifth of our states now have election day registration. Several are either looking into pilot programs or are already doing it. This is not reinventing the wheel and these are not barriers that are insurmountable. In fact, the only barrier that I've seen is the argument that we have a lot of different ballot faces. But there's a really very simple solution to that. So in any case, I'd be more than happy to answer any questions. And I'd be more than willing to work with this committee or the Secretary of State's Office to make this bill more amenable if we need to. [LB491]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you very much, Senator Morfeld. Senator Craighead. [LB491]

SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: Senator Morfeld, what percentage of the states have voter ID? [LB491]

SENATOR MORFELD: I don't know. To be honest with you, I could say something but I just don't know. I think it's a majority of the states though. [LB491]

SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: Thank you. [LB491]

SENATOR MORFELD: I'm just happy we're not in one of them, so. [LB491]

SENATOR BLOOMFIELD: Yet. [LB491]

SENATOR MURANTE: All things in time, Senator. [LB491]

SENATOR MORFELD: That's what they've said for the last six years. [LB491]

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SENATOR MURANTE: We'll leave that one where it is. Thank you very much. [LB491]

SENATOR MORFELD: Okay. Thank you. This is not voter ID, by the way. Okay? So let's work together. Thank you. [LB491]

SENATOR MURANTE: (Exhibit 2) Thank you. And before I close the hearing on LB491, I have a letter of opposition to be read into the record from Dave Phipps, Douglas County Election Commissioner. And that will close the hearing on LB491 and proceed to the next item on the agenda, LB383. Senator Hansen, welcome I guess to the other side of the Government Committee. [LB491 LB383]

SENATOR HANSEN: Thank you, Chairman Murante. And let me say this side of the table is already providing an interesting perspective of the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee. My name is Matt Hansen, M-a-t-t H-a-n-s-e-n, and I am the senator from Legislative District 26, representing northeast Lincoln and I'm here today to introduce LB383. This bill would allow for registered voters who have continuously lived in the state of Nebraska who have moved within the state but did not reregister by the deadline to vote provisionally, reregister at their new polling location, and have the provisional ballot accepted and counted. Under current law this practice is already available for those who move within their county but not across county lines. For example, in your home county of Sarpy, a voter moving from Gretna to Bellevue would be able to vote provisionally and reregister at their new polling location under current law. But that same voter, had they moved a few blocks north of Harrison Street and end up in Douglas County, would be barred from doing so. This bill would change that so that all registered voters in Nebraska would have the same benefit regardless of where they move. Again, LB383 would provide a way for those who have been continuously registered with the state of Nebraska that have moved to another county but have not updated their voter registration to register and vote provisionally. It is my intent that the process be put into place where the election commissioners will check the voter rolls to make sure that a person has not voted elsewhere within the state or country before counting the provisional ballot. I feel that this is a fair and simple way of treating all voters within the state of Nebraska equally. I understand that there's some questions on how to check that voters are only voting in their correct location. I feel that this is addressed in my bill by allowing the Secretary of State to create the rules and regulations that would govern this process. That being said, I remain committed to the intent of this bill and would be happy to hear concerns, if any, and work with interested groups to make sure this bill is an effective process. With that, I would ask the committee to advance LB383. And I would yield to any questions. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you, Senator Hansen. Are there any questions? Senator Craighead. [LB383]

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SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Senator Hansen, thank you for introducing this. I've been looking through here and obviously you know your bill better than I. But when people move from county to county and ask for a provisional ballot, do they have to show ID to get that ballot, that provisional ballot? [LB383]

SENATOR HANSEN: In which...for a provisional ballot? They do not necessarily have to show ID to cast a provisional ballot, no. [LB383]

SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: Thank you. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: Senator Groene. [LB383]

SENATOR GROENE: I've probably moved five or six times following my career in my life...and my family. I've had no problem with it being the responsibility of a citizen to reregister to vote. At what point do we think our citizens should have some personal responsibility and just do the right thing and take the time to register to vote under the existing laws? How irresponsible are we going to let them get? [LB383]

SENATOR HANSEN: I would say showing up at your correct polling location where you currently live with the intent of voting is a very responsible action. And I would hate for truly eligible voters to be turned away simply because of a deadline that they didn't happen to meet. You know, I can't necessarily speak for the intent of every individual, but it could range from a situation where, frankly, there's a short-term change of address and this wasn't planned well in advance. Or maybe in the process of moving this is, of the many pieces of documents you're allowed to do, it is forgotten or what have you. I could see many reasons where a voter would be interested in an election, having already been a registered voter, having already done their duty once and, for example, just not having the most recent... [LB383]

SENATOR GROENE: I understand. Yours makes more sense than most. It just happened to be you sitting there when I finally formulated that question after hearing all these "let's make it easier" bills. So thank you, Senator Hansen. Yours makes sense. Somebody moves the last week and they might want to vote and they didn't have a chance, but some of the other ones...thank you. [LB383]

SENATOR HANSEN: Thank you, Senator. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you, Senator Groene. Any final questions? Seeing none, thank you, Senator Hansen, for your opening. [LB383]

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SENATOR HANSEN: Thank you. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: And we'll proceed to proponent testimony to LB383. And welcome back. [LB383]

BRI McLARTY: I'd like to thank you for scheduling all these bills on the same day. I only had to miss class once. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: It's a theme. We'll have to try and figure out what the theme is. [LB383]

BRI McLARTY: "NCR bug the Government Committee day." All right. Good afternoon, members of the Government Committee. My name is Bri McLarty, that's B-r-i M-c-L-a-r-t-y, and again, here in my capacity as the director of voting rights with Nebraskans for Civic Reform. First, I would like to state explicitly that LB383 is not election day registration. So just be very clear. Very different than the proposal that Senator Morfeld just introduced. This bill simply changes how we treat provisional ballots. By law right now, all provisional ballots go through a process of an investigation, a verification, and a certification. LB383 addresses only that last phase, the certification phase. Election commissioners and county clerks will still be required to do their due diligence in checking to make sure that the individual has been registered continuously through the state of Nebraska and looking at all the voter registration information. LB383 addresses the certification phase, giving county clerks and election commissioners the opportunity to accept provisional ballots instead of their current practice of rejecting them. LB383 would allow those individuals who are registered in Nebraska, who have continuously lived and been registered in Nebraska, that voted at a new residence and polling place in a different county from the one that their previous voter registration had been at, to have the provisional ballot counted instead of the current practice of having it rejected. Based on data provided of provisional ballots that were accepted and rejected that we got from the Secretary of State from 2012 to 2014, about one out of every five provisional ballots is rejected. So it's not that many, but the majority are the ones that could be counted under LB383. A majority of them are individuals that were where the ballots were rejected on the basis of not being registered in that county or the individual voting in the wrong jurisdiction or precinct. So they had moved, but they hadn't updated and they voted at the wrong place. In the past two primary elections the average was about 50 percent of the provisional ballots rejected were these individuals. And in general elections that number jumps to about 80 percent. It is estimated to cost a county around \$33 to process a provisional ballot. So the staff, regardless, when they get a provisional ballot they have to go through the entire process: investigate, verify, and then certify. Thirty-three dollars reflects the time spent and the staff time spent, so the efforts associated with the investigation, checking to make sure they didn't vote elsewhere in the county, checking registration records to make sure it wasn't a clerical error that the person was left off. Maybe if

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they'd been married, if they changed their name, or if they just simply had a small issue on their voter registration and it was the election commissioner...just one of those registrations kind of falling through the cracks. So the \$33 is what reflects that. And that's regardless of whether LB383 passes, that's going to be a cost that the counties will still have to incur because they still have to go through the process with a provisional ballot. We're just changing what they do at the very end. At the very end the canvassing board makes a recommendation to either accept or reject. That's the only part that LB383 is dealing with. It's giving the counties the opportunity to accept the ballot instead of just outright rejecting it. In obtaining a provisional ballot, an individual must affirm that they are a registered voter in Nebraska, that they are legally allowed to vote, and they must fill out a registration application. Regardless of whether the provisional ballot is counted, the county election commissioner updates the individual's voter registration, which is crucial to keeping the voter rolls clean and updated. Right now our election laws accomplish only the exclusion of ballots cast by registered Nebraska voters that move across county lines. Those that move within the county line, like Senator Hansen said, have their provisional ballots counted. And by providing the Secretary of State the authority to promulgate rules and regulations on a procedure for the county election officials to cross-check voting history and provisional ballots cast across the entire state, we can allow those who are registered in Nebraska that show up on election day to have the provisional ballot that they cast counted. We can assure that the time and energy spent by election officials in processing those provisional ballots result in more ballots being counted. And then finally, we can safeguard our elections by establishing procedures to monitor provisional ballots across the entire state. As the fiscal note indicates, there is no cost to the state. And furthermore, there's minimal, if any, cost to the counties. By statute, the counties must process all provisional ballots. So LB383, like I said, just changes how some of the provisional ballots are certified. It doesn't add any additional cost or duties upon the county. So thank you. We would like to request that you advance LB383 to General File. And I'll answer any questions. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you very much for your testimony. Are there any questions?
Senator Groene. [LB383]

SENATOR GROENE: Thank you, Chairman. Tell me a little bit about your organization. How long have you been in existence and what's your mission statement? [LB383]

BRI McLARTY: Nebraskans for Civic Reform has been, I believe, it was founded in 2008 by now Senator Adam Morfeld. I have been working since November as the director of voting rights. So we've been in existence for about seven years. And our goal is to create a more modern and robust democracy. And part of that includes looking at ways we can streamline elections, make it more efficient, but then also make it so that when people show up on election day that their voice is heard and their ballot is counted. [LB383]

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SENATOR GROENE: That's just part of the organization's mission? [LB383]

BRI McLARTY: That's actually only about 20 percent of what we do. Seventy percent is actually civic engagement where we work with youth to encourage them to be involved, be civically minded, not just in participating in elections but being leaders in their community. And so a lot of our programming is after school or with high school teachers to help them craft civic engagement projects that really get students involved in their community and kind of what you like. Getting them involved with their local elections so they can be educated on the issues that matter to them. [LB383]

SENATOR GROENE: Thank you. [LB383]

BRI McLARTY: No problem. Oh, I guess, a small part is also veterans, so. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you, Senator Groene. Any final questions? Seeing none, thank you very much for coming down. [LB383]

BRI McLARTY: Thank you. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: Additional proponents wishing to speak on LB383. Welcome back. [LB383]

PEGGY ADAIR: (Exhibit 1) Good afternoon, Senator Murante and members of the committee. For the record, my name is Peggy Adair, A-d-a-i-r, I represent the League of Women Voters of Greater Omaha in support of LB383, a bill that permits registered voters in Nebraska to vote by provisional ballot if they have moved within the state but have not reregistered. This bill recognizes the reality of our modern mobile society and proposes a reasonable solution to protecting the voting rights of our Nebraska citizens who may relocate within our state several times between election seasons. The League of Women Voters supports legislation that increases voter participation and LB383 serves that purpose. We thank Senator Hansen for introducing LB383 and we encourage this committee to move this bill forward to General File for full debate. And I welcome any questions. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you very much. Are there any questions? Seeing none, thank you very much. [LB383]

PEGGY ADAIR: You're welcome. [LB383]

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SENATOR MURANTE: Continuing with proponent testimony on LB383. Welcome. [LB383]

NANCY JOSOFF: (Exhibit 2) Senator Murante, committee members, my name is Nancy Josoff, that's N-a-n-c-y J-o-s-o-f-f, and I'm here today in support of LB383. For some of the reasons, you know, most of our provisional ballots are voters that are actually properly registered in the state of Nebraska. And I'd like to make sure that you understand that these are folks that have gone through all the steps. They are properly registered in the state, but because they've moved across the county line--and this is really common--between Sarpy, Cass, Lancaster we have folks that actually work across county lines, come clear from Otoe County. So they move freely across these counties. And registering to vote is not always the first thing that they think about when they move. But Cass County is a pretty large size area of a county. If we have someone who maybe lives in our village of Eagle, if they move to Plattsmouth that's a 60-mile move. And if they vote on a provisional ballot on election day, their ballot can be counted. But if we have someone who is in the Iron Horse development or maybe Buccaneer Bay and they move...actually, Iron Horse is so bad that the county line has gone through a house so they can move across the street and be in a different county. But that person's ballot would not be counted because they moved across a county line. And I don't see how that's fair and equitable for any of our voters. There really is no additional burden because we are actually processing all of our provisional ballots. We have seven days, by law, to get those all processed. The only difference is, is that we are accepting them from people who are properly registered to vote continuously in the state of Nebraska. This has nothing to do with any new people coming in or anything else. LB383, the voter goes to the correct polling place--and this is what I think is important--they go to the correct polling place and because they're not in the book they have to complete the provisional process, which means they do have to complete a new voter registration form. They do sign an oath that says that they have not voted anywhere else. And then their ballot is going to be secured in that envelope until it's had a chance to be checked out from the election office. So once it goes through the process, when it gets back to the election office if everything is good, we can go ahead and count that ballot, which is good. And the main thing is, is they're voting on the correct ballot. You had a concern that people voting on the wrong ballots for local issues. This will make sure that they're voting on the correct issues for that. Just some numbers from Cass County here from our last general election. The average age of our provisional voter was actually 40.68 years. And the provisional ballots that were rejected for the reason that they had moved across county lines by party, it's broken down there: 30 percent of the Republican ballots were rejected; 17 percent of the Democratic ballots; zero of the Libertarian; and 30 percent of the nonpartisan ballots were rejected for the reason of crossing county lines. And we have a statewide database now, where we can look at voter registrations across the state. And I really think that it's time to move forward with the process here now that our technology allows us to do this. And I would ask that you would support LB383. And I'd take any questions you might have. [LB383]

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SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you very much for your testimony. Senator Groene. [LB383]

SENATOR GROENE: Thank you, Chairman. That's easier to pronounce than your name. How many people actually move across the street and go back to the same precinct they were voting before and vote and nobody really realizes that they've got a different address? [LB383]

NANCY JOSOFF: Well, actually, I had a...not many. Not many, but it does happen. I had a couple that moved across the street in one of our little communities and they ended up there for a number of years before they realized they had moved across precinct lines here. It wasn't a county line though, so. But, no. I mean, obviously, that doesn't happen a lot that they're moving right across the street. It's just that we have the unique situation in Cass County where it goes right through a house. [LB383]

SENATOR GROENE: But if that person did go to their old precinct thinking...they just moved five blocks. [LB383]

NANCY JOSOFF: In a different county, right? You're talking a different county. [LB383]

SENATOR GROENE: Those folks would say, you can't vote here anymore but if you go over here you could probably get a provisional. Right? [LB383]

NANCY JOSOFF: Well, if they go to the correct precinct. The thing is, you want them to go to the correct voting location. You don't want them going back to their old voting location and voting on the wrong ballot. [LB383]

SENATOR GROENE: My question is...I've met a lot of folks who moved just within North Platte and don't realize they needed to reregister. So they go to their old precinct where they voted for years. [LB383]

NANCY JOSOFF: Right, which is not what you want to happen. [LB383]

SENATOR GROENE: I know, but that's what happens. But if this bill passes then those folks could say, if you went to this correct precinct you could still vote. [LB383]

NANCY JOSOFF: Exactly. [LB383]

SENATOR GROENE: Right now they cannot. [LB383]

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NANCY JOSOFF: Exactly. [LB383]

SENATOR GROENE: All right. Thank you. [LB383]

NANCY JOSOFF: And I would think that comment that you just made is one reason why you'd want to see something like this happen. [LB383]

SENATOR GROENE: Thank you. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you, Senator Groene. Any additional questions? Seeing none, thank you very much for your testimony. [LB383]

NANCY JOSOFF: Thank you. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: Our prayers have been answered. Senator Larson has arrived. And we'll continue with proponent testimony to LB383. Any additional proponents? Opponent testimony. You're kind of a "negative Nelly" today, Neal. Welcome back, Mr. Erickson. [LB383]

NEAL ERICKSON: Oh, thank you and members of the committee. And once again for the record, my name is Neal Erickson, N-e-a-l E-r-i-c-k-s-o-n, Deputy Secretary of State for Elections, here to testify on behalf of Secretary of State John Gale in opposition to LB383. The Secretary of State's Office opposes this legislation for two basic reasons that impact election administration. Briefly, this legislation is what I call mini election day registration. We've opposed election day registration every time such a bill has been proposed and even with the previous bill today. In its full form, EDR allows those that have never registered in Nebraska to register to vote on election day, but also those that have moved outside of their jurisdiction. This bill only addresses the second portion of that. And we've talked about some of the reasons we've opposed EDR in the previous bills so I won't bore you with that again. But the second issue we have involves the timing of verifying the provisional ballots that this proposal would create. Currently, a provisional ballot generated by a voter moving within the county is checked against other locations that the voter cast a ballot. These would include his or her new precinct via provisional vote, any other precinct in the jurisdiction via provisional ballot, or at their old precinct. To ensure that someone doesn't vote twice the current process checks each of these possibilities. A county election can make certain that person has not voted more than one provisional ballot in the county and can check the original or old precinct to make certain they have not voted there. All this information is available immediately after the election and each official can perform that check within their own schedule. LB383 opens up another possibility. Under LB383 someone could vote via provisional in other counties on election day as well. As

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an example, someone who was registered in Scotts Bluff County could move to Sarpy County and vote in Sarpy County under the provisions via provisional ballot but could also vote in Douglas, Cass, and Saunders as well via provisional ballot. In order to maintain the same level of protection against double voting, Sarpy County would have to check to make sure the voter did not vote in the 91 counties where they could have voted provisional. This check could be done if all counties would have their provisional ballots and voter histories recording who voted as well as a listing of provisional ballots done very shortly after election day. However, with the varying number of provisional ballots in each county and the variation in the volume of voter histories to enter, any plan to close this gap would require additional time and potentially checking provisional ballots twice. Under the current election calendaring statute the timing issue becomes problematic. Our current policy is to have the provisional ballots verified and counted--counted or not--within eight days after the election. With many of the smaller counties with smaller numbers of provisional ballots, they can easily do this within that time frame. And at least one county struggles to make that deadline after most elections. This deadline could be extended to provide more time, but if that is done it could run into the next deadline which is certification to our office on the third Monday after the election. And if that deadline were extended, then we run into the state canvass board meeting on the fourth Monday after the election. And if you extend that, then you run into some of the federal certifications we have to do for members of Congress and eventually electoral college. The Secretary of State's Office cannot support a change that opens up increased risk to the election system through potential double voting without additional safeguards. As LB383 does not address these safeguards and possible safeguards have other consequences, we would encourage the committee not to advance LB383. And with that, I'd answer questions. [LB383]

SENATOR LARSON: Thank you, Mr. Erickson. Are there any questions from the committee? I do have a question for you. [LB383]

NEAL ERICKSON: Sure. [LB383]

SENATOR LARSON: You know you talked about the concept of provisional being able to vote in Lancaster, Cass, Douglas, and whatnot. Within LB383, does Senator Hansen require the HAVA documents to show at the polls to verify you live where you're...how do I want to say this? [LB383]

NEAL ERICKSON: I'm not sure whether the bill requires a...I assume you're talking about the identification requirements regarding... [LB383]

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SENATOR LARSON: Yeah, because I...in order to...and maybe he can answer that in closing. But I guess my argument is if he does, doesn't that take...if you're supplying an electric bill or a bank statement it would be hard to get that at each address. [LB383]

NEAL ERICKSON: Well, actually... [LB383]

SENATOR LARSON: And I support voter ID, obviously,... [LB383]

NEAL ERICKSON: I understand. [LB383]

SENATOR LARSON: ...and whatnot. I'm just...and if LB383 doesn't have that currently would you guys be more amenable to it if... [LB383]

NEAL ERICKSON: Well, no, I don't think so because I think in the past we have testified on various bills that dealt with some of those ID issues and, in particular, things like utility bills, bank statements, credit card statements, etcetera. Secretary Gale has not been in favor of using those kinds of IDs because they are easily altered or forged because all it is, is a document that's got a name and address on it and you can put something over that and photocopy it and you can make it look almost like the original. [LB383]

SENATOR LARSON: Okay. And you talk about current policy being eight days that they have to count provisional ballots. Is that in statute or is that... [LB383]

NEAL ERICKSON: I believe that is in statute, yes. [LB383]

SENATOR LARSON: The eight days is in statute? [LB383]

NEAL ERICKSON: Yes. [LB383]

SENATOR LARSON: Okay. Senator Groene. [LB383]

SENATOR GROENE: I couldn't do it because I'm a senator, but I've got three addresses. I've got one down here now. I get mail here and I've got a place in (inaudible) County, I got a place...what's stopping me from same day "registrating" and doing this? How would you catch that? I mean, I can't do it because if they found out I was voting down here I wouldn't be a senator in Lincoln County very long. [LB383]

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NEAL ERICKSON: Well, and...right. And actually, technically under the law you don't have three residences. Under the definition of residence you only have one and the other two are other places that you might live. [LB383]

SENATOR GROENE: But if I show you a electrical bill or I show you a utility bill and I go in and register same day what they're talking...or even this. [LB383]

NEAL ERICKSON: Well, as I mentioned, Secretary Gale does not really support those. He does not like those types of ID to begin with because they can be altered or forged or even, in your case, legitimate at a second location. But... [LB383]

SENATOR GROENE: But eventually you would catch that I was registered in two places. [LB383]

NEAL ERICKSON: Eventually you could, but... [LB383]

SENATOR GROENE: I mean you could, but... [LB383]

NEAL ERICKSON: ...you could register. Even in terms of provisionals, completely after the election we could find out that, yeah, somebody has voted in three different counties. But within the time frame, I don't think we could...well, at least the current time frames we have... [LB383]

SENATOR GROENE: How do you catch that, Neal? [LB383]

NEAL ERICKSON: Well, if you start comparing, you will have a listing of the people that voted provisional, eventually. You can put that together after the election. And if you would start seeing people that showed up on there more than once, then obviously they've violated the law. And that's what we do actually within the current process within a county. [LB383]

SENATOR GROENE: You do check? [LB383]

NEAL ERICKSON: Yeah, they check to make sure. Like I said, they check three different locations or three different sets. They check to make sure that somebody has not voted...if somebody votes provisionally at their new address, they check to make sure that they haven't voted anywhere else in the county via provisional, because they'd be able to do that. They'd be able to go into that precinct and say, yeah, I've been registered in Douglas County forever and this is my new address and I'm allowed to vote here via provisional and do that. They could do

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that at multiple. So what they do is, they check to make sure that they haven't voted in any other precinct in the county via provisional ballot. [LB383]

SENATOR GROENE: At their old address. [LB383]

NEAL ERICKSON: Right. The other place they have to check is, they have to check at their old address, on that polling book because there they're actually on the poll book and we make sure they are not signed in there. So we have a closed system. We're able to check all the different possibilities that person could vote now. If you expand this to multiple counties and allowed cross-county portability into this thing, you know, we could still do the checklist in the county fairly easily. But now we have to start checking the other counties as well to make sure they didn't vote provisional there. [LB383]

SENATOR GROENE: That's what I'm saying. I've got three addresses I could prove on that. [LB383]

NEAL ERICKSON: Right. Exactly. And that's what we see as one significant weakness in this bill. [LB383]

SENATOR GROENE: Thank you. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you, Senator Groene. Any final questions? Seeing none, thank you very much for coming down. [LB383]

NEAL ERICKSON: Thank you. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: Additional opposition testimony. Mr. Shively, welcome back to your Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee. [LB383]

DAVID SHIVELY: (Exhibit 3) Thank you. Chairman Murante and members of the Government Committee, my name is David Shively, D-a-v-i-d S-h-i-v-e-l-y, I am the Lancaster County Election Commissioner. And I'm here today in opposition to LB383, which would allow registered voters in the state of Nebraska who have moved within the state but did not reregister by the deadline to vote provisionally and reregister at their new polling location. In my opinion, LB383 is simply a watered down version of election day registration and I have consistently opposed EDR in the past. I feel that this bill defeats the purpose of a proper voter registration system in our state and it could impede the public's confidence in our elections. Providing reasonable time lines for voter registration and leaving enough time for election officials to

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adequately process registrations are necessary to ensure a fair voting process. Eighty-three percent of voting age Nebraskans are registered to vote. Registration numbers are high because registering to vote in Nebraska is a very easy and convenient process. Citizens may register to vote or update their registrations when obtaining or renewing their driver's license. Mail-in registration forms are available on-line, in telephone books, and at many other locations such as village and city offices, banks, post offices, and libraries. Here in Lancaster County we organize voter registration drives prior to each election at grocery stores, shopping centers, and libraries. We also provide voter registration drives at our high schools and on all four of our college campuses. Soon, and most importantly, Nebraska will have an on-line voter registration system which will make it even easier to register to vote or to update a voter registration. Citizens are reminded frequently through media outlets about deadlines prior to each election. Election commissioner and county clerks' offices are opened late, until 6:00 p.m., on the final day of registration for those who wait until the last minute to register to vote. With the exception of statewide general elections my office rarely registers many voters on that final day. Nebraska law allows voters to register up to ten days prior to an election. This is one of the latest deadlines in the country. In many states, deadlines may be anywhere from three to four weeks prior to an election. It is my belief that LB383 removes any incentive for voters to register to vote prior to an election. Election day can be hectic enough for poll workers processing voters who have taken the time to register to vote in a timely manner without also requiring them to process additional provisional ballots. Is it really fair to make those conscientious voters wait in line while poll workers process other voters who are waiting until election day to register to vote? State law currently allows voters who have moved to a new address within the county and did not reregister to vote to cast a provisional ballot on election day. We currently have a method in place to process those voters. It works well. However, we have seen those numbers continue to grow over the years simply because the voters know they're able to do that. I realize that there are those that believe that we need changes in law to make it easier to vote. However, the importance of increasing voter turnout shouldn't outweigh the importance of ensuring that elections are conducted honestly, fairly, and orderly. I urge you not to advance LB383 to General File. And I'd be happy to answer any questions. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you, Mr. Shively. I have a technical question for you. So if, let's say, a high school student is registered to vote in Omaha, moves to Lincoln to attend the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, shows up early to your election office to vote early, can they do that now? [LB383]

DAVID SHIVELY: As long as they would do that prior to the ten days...they have ten days prior to the election because that would be the voter registration deadline. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: So they wouldn't have to vote provisionally. You'd just hand them a voter registration form and a ballot? [LB383]

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DAVID SHIVELY: That's correct. The current law is now that we would hold that ballot until we guarantee that the confirmation card would come back. I think there's a bill that... [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: Unless Senator Craighead's bill passes. [LB383]

DAVID SHIVELY: Right, right. But that's the current law and I think that would even be better if they came in person. I think Senator Craighead's bill takes away the mail requirement if they register to vote by mail and we mail the ballot to them. And there were some changes in that, but I think the changes would only be for those that do that in person. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: Okay, thank you. Senator Larson. [LB383]

SENATOR LARSON: What's your average primary turnout in Lancaster County? [LB383]

DAVID SHIVELY: In Lancaster County it's going to be anywhere from about 35 percent to 40 percent, I believe, depending on the type of election and what might be on the ballot. [LB383]

SENATOR LARSON: A little higher than Sarpy County. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: Yeah, I caught that dig, Senator Larson. [LB383]

SENATOR LARSON: You talk about...how many polling places do you have? [LB383]

DAVID SHIVELY: We have 199 polling places in Lancaster County. [LB383]

SENATOR LARSON: A hundred and ninety-nine polling places in... [LB383]

DAVID SHIVELY: Well, that's precincts. It would be about 175, I think, polling locations because some precincts vote... [LB383]

SENATOR LARSON: A hundred seventy-five polling locations. And roughly how many people in each precinct...registered voters, we'll say, roughly. [LB383]

DAVID SHIVELY: It's going to vary probably between 600 and 1,500 registered voters. [LB383]

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SENATOR LARSON: So you're talking usually your max would be 600 voters in a primary and maybe 1,200 of those voting in a general election. Do you really think that there would be so many of these at each precinct that you're going to have significant lines? [LB383]

DAVID SHIVELY: I have seen the number of provisional ballots grow just in the number of years that I've been here and that's just moving from precinct to precinct within the county. It grows every cycle as does absentee voting grows. And so I would anticipate if people...if voters knew that they didn't have to reregister...it would be just like election day registration. If they knew they didn't have to reregister that number is going to start growing as well. Who knows how far it would grow, but... [LB383]

SENATOR LARSON: How many provisional ballots did you have in 2014? [LB383]

DAVID SHIVELY: In 2014 we had about 1,500. [LB383]

SENATOR LARSON: Fifteen hundred. And what about 2012? [LB383]

DAVID SHIVELY: We had about 4,000. [LB383]

SENATOR LARSON: Well, 2010 then? [LB383]

DAVID SHIVELY: Now you're stretching my memory here. That would have been a gubernatorial year. It was probably in that 1,300 to 1,500 range again. I didn't look those numbers... [LB383]

SENATOR LARSON: Okay. So the presidential years they go up significantly. [LB383]

DAVID SHIVELY: Presidential years goes up significantly, yes. [LB383]

SENATOR LARSON: And when did we...and when did the Legislature pass the ability to do within the county you could vote provisionally? [LB383]

DAVID SHIVELY: I've been election commissioner since '99, been doing that since then. We originally called it...at one point it was called fail-safe voting and then it was called conditional voting, now it's called provisional voting. I don't know how many years prior to that that it was done, but I know it's been done since... [LB383]

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SENATOR LARSON: So as long as you've been election commissioner you could vote provisionally within the county anywhere. [LB383]

DAVID SHIVELY: Right. Right. And I think we've done a lot of work in our county, as well as other counties, to try to get the number of ballots that we accept up and get as many of those counted. And we count about 81 percent to 85 percent of the ballots that are provisional so we do get quite a few of them counted. And that's through training with our poll workers to make sure they're getting everything filled out completely and make sure that voter is voting in the right precinct and that type of thing. [LB383]

SENATOR LARSON: Do you usually have long lines in your precincts? [LB383]

DAVID SHIVELY: In a presidential year, we will. Not long lines, but we will have lines. [LB383]

SENATOR GROENE: Certain times of the day. [LB383]

DAVID SHIVELY: Yeah, and depending on the time of the day, as Senator Groene said, early morning, lunchtime, right after work, that's when lines start growing. [LB383]

SENATOR LARSON: And I know many of the members haven't been too far out west on election day. We have 50 percent to 60 percent turnout in primaries where I'm at and better than that for general elections, regardless if it's a presidential year or not. And I never really experienced lines where I am so it's just hard for...I mean, I know what our turnout is. [LB383]

DAVID SHIVELY: It all depends on the type of election, the time of the year, and the time of the day. [LB383]

SENATOR LARSON: Okay. Thank you. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: Nancy Josoff testified before you regarding her experiences with some of the percentages in Cass County. Would you say that...I believe I understood her to say that of the provisional ballots which were rejected, somewhere between 50 percent and 80 percent of them were rejected because of the county to county portability issue. Is that...am I basically understanding? [LB383]

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NANCY JOSOFF: That's not quite right. If I separated it out by party so of the Republican ballots that were rejected, 30 percent of those were rejected for that reason. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: Okay. Let's try and get this on the record. Sorry to do this, but okay, let me ask the question a different way. In Lancaster County you said you had approximately, what did you say, 2,500 provisional ballots, 1,500 provisional ballots? [LB383]

DAVID SHIVELY: In 2014, we had about 1,500. In a presidential year it's going to be between 3,000 and 4,000 is what we've had. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: And of the 1,500, how many were rejected? Ballpark, I'm just looking for... [LB383]

DAVID SHIVELY: Okay. Well, we counted about 82 percent of them, so I would assume it's going to be between 1,200 and 1,300 (inaudible.) [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: Okay. So 18 percent were rejected approximately. [LB383]

DAVID SHIVELY: Right. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: Of the percentage that was rejected, now many of them were rejected because of the county to county portability? [LB383]

DAVID SHIVELY: I believe we had between 35 and 40 that were registered in another county. The rest of them that were rejected... [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: So not percentage; was there a raw number? [LB383]

DAVID SHIVELY: I don't know what percent that would be. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: Oh, that is 30 percent to 40 percent? [LB383]

DAVID SHIVELY: The raw number would be about 35 to 40, I can't remember. I know I looked at that because we do have to check with the other counties to make sure they didn't vote there before we transfer their record to our county. [LB383]

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SENATOR MURANTE: So if Senator Hansen's bill passes, you would have counted an additional 40 total ballots. Is that correct? [LB383]

DAVID SHIVELY: That's correct, but then of course... [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: But your supposition is, if we create this law there's going to be an explosion of... [LB383]

DAVID SHIVELY: I don't know an explosion, but there would certainly be additional ones. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: Okay. Okay. And how many ballots total did you get? [LB383]

SENATOR LARSON: Two hundred seventy. Two hundred seventy is 18 percent of 1,500. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: Well, I mean, but how many total ballots were cast in Lancaster County in 2014? [LB383]

DAVID SHIVELY: Two thousand fourteen? I believe there were about 65,000. I should have brought my cheat sheet. I forgot to do that. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: You had 65,000 ballots cast and a grand total of 40 had a county-to-county portability issue? [LB383]

DAVID SHIVELY: Right. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: Okay. [LB383]

DAVID SHIVELY: I mean those are people...I mean, if people call in and they're not registered, they're not going to show up. These are for whatever reason they showed up. They thought they were registered in Lancaster County. If they know they haven't changed, they weren't doing that. So I guess I would say if this becomes law people will take advantage of that and that number would go up. I mean, right now they can't do that, so. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: Sure. I see what you're... [LB383]

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SENATOR GROENE: So they stay home. Excuse me, Senator Murante. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: Okay. Any final questions? Seeing none, thank you very much for coming down today. [LB383]

DAVID SHIVELY: Thank you. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: Additional opposition testimony to LB383. Any additional opponents? Any neutral testifiers? Welcome back. [LB383]

BETH BAZYN FERRELL: Thank you. Good afternoon, Chairman Murante, members of the committee. For the record, my name is Beth Bazyn, B-a-z-y-n, Ferrell, F-e-r-r-e-l-l, I'm with the Nebraska Association of County Officials, appearing here neutral on this bill. When our board talked about this bill we had some of the same discussion that you've heard today. We had folks who were in favor of this bill and also county officials who were opposed to this bill. So our position officially is neutral this year. We just wanted to be on the record with that. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: Okay. Thank you very much for your testimony. Any questions? Seeing none, thank you very much. Any final neutral testimony on LB383? Seeing none, Senator Hansen is recognized to close. [LB383]

SENATOR HANSEN: Thank you, Chairman Murante. Let me close just by going over a few of the things that I overheard while listening to all the testimony. First, this bill was I believe characterized as a component of election day registration or election day registration like to, I believe, would be either a direct quote or a fair paraphrase. That was not my intent. That was not...the goal of this bill was to not go necessarily in that direction, regardless of how I may personally feel about election day registration. This was simply to allow all voters in Nebraska to be treated under the same standard regardless of whether or not they move across county lines. Currently, it seems a lot of the opposition or hesitation to a county to county portability rule is simply the technological aspect of how do we confirm that this provisional ballot is the one ballot in the one right location. Senator Larson, you had asked about the HAVA requirements. My bill did not explicitly add any more requirements for reregistering as you would when you walked into an election commissioner had you walked in 11 days prior, beating the deadline. My bill would not have changed any of the election requirements. But I will remind you that it was for people who had already registered once and met all the requirements for the first-time registers in the state of Nebraska. And finally, I would just point out, the way my bill was written was actually delegate the ability to construct the rules and the regulations to the Secretary of State in order to administer those county to county portability system. It is my thought that as our supervisor of elections, if there was a single individual or a single individual office who had

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the ability to design a system that could easily, accurately, fairly, cost effectively determine which provisional ballots could be counted as accurately, it would be the Secretary of State's Office. It was my thinking along the lines, since we're moving to the system of an on-line voter registration system, we have other statewide registration--obviously--documents that components such as this would not be a large burden. To that point, I will note that there's not actually a fiscal note attached to this bill. So there's not any necessarily added costs. They're not hiring a new system. They're not hiring new people to implement this bill. And finally, the one last point I want to say is, just in terms of the lines at election commissions, that was the concern that we'd have a lot more people lining up to cast provisional ballots. Currently, those people can already count provisional ballots. If they move, no matter where they move, no matter if they've registered before or not, all sorts of things, if you go to a polling location you're generally allowed to cast a provisional ballot. All my bill was attempting to do was allow more registered voters in Nebraska who moved to have their provisional ballots accepted and counted. With that, I'd yield to any questions. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you, Senator Hansen. Senator Bloomfield. [LB383]

SENATOR BLOOMFIELD: Thank you. Senator Hansen, do you give any validity at all to Mr. Erickson's concerns about having to check all 91 other counties? [LB383]

SENATOR HANSEN: No more so than that would be a concern currently now. Someone could, say, vote provisionally in all 93 counties and all 93 counties would go through the time and expense of rejecting those at the moment. I don't necessarily think that's an added, say, burden on the counties. So much so, if someone was inclined to engage in disingenuous, fraudulent behavior like that... [LB383]

SENATOR BLOOMFIELD: Imagine that. [LB383]

SENATOR HANSEN: ...that's something that they would have to protect against and watch for. [LB383]

SENATOR BLOOMFIELD: Okay, thank you. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you, Senator Bloomfield. Senator Groene. [LB383]

SENATOR GROENE: Thank you, Chairman. But we all know there's a lot of folks that we've known that say, oh, I forgot to reregister because I moved, so they don't even show up at the poll because they already know they didn't reregister. You're going to have a huge influx of those

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folks now that say, oh, yeah, I can vote so I'd better run down and vote. So there will be more than just...don't you think there will be just more than just the ones that already do it? [LB383]

SENATOR HANSEN: I certainly hope my bill does increase voter turnout in the state of Nebraska. [LB383]

SENATOR GROENE: Honesty. Thank you. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: Senator Garrett. [LB383]

SENATOR GARRETT: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Senator Morfeld (sic) for bringing this bill. I mean it all... [LB383]

SENATOR BLOOMFIELD: Senator who? [LB383]

SENATOR GARRETT: Oh, excuse me. Hansen, excuse me. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: Senator Morfeld has left us for the day. [LB383]

SENATOR GARRETT: Yeah, he's left us. I'm still...I was in the Revenue Committee testifying. Thank you for bringing this bill. I mean it in all sincerity. It's all about getting people out to vote. And I'm often accused of using too many military slogans and acronyms, but...and I appreciate what the election commissioner had to say. But the Navy SEALS have a saying, "embrace the suck." I mean the fact that the lines get long and we have to work harder because folks procrastinate, that's tough because at the end of the day we want everyone voting that wants to vote. And we ought not disenfranchise anybody. So, thank you. [LB383]

SENATOR HANSEN: Thank you. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: Very good question, Senator Garrett. Any final questions? Seeing none, thank you, Senator Hansen, for your introduction of LB383. [LB383]

SENATOR HANSEN: Thank you. [LB383]

SENATOR MURANTE: And we will proceed to the next item on the agenda, LB308. Senator Kolowski is here. Senator Kolowski, welcome back to your Government Committee. [LB308]

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SENATOR KOLOWSKI: Good afternoon, Chairman Murante and members of the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee. Thank you. My name is Senator Rick Kolowski, R-i-c-k K-o-l-o-w-s-k-i, and I represent Legislative District 31 in southwest Omaha. I introduced LB308 to engage young Nebraskans in our political process. LB308 would allow for Nebraska teenagers to preregister to vote while at the Department of Motor Vehicles office receiving their permit or driver's license, similar to how their parents currently register. Or if they choose not to get a driver's license, they can go to their election commissioner to preregister. The goal of preregistration is to encourage a demography that consistently has its lowest turnout rates to get out and vote, much like Senator Garrett's comment just five minutes ago. And we appreciate that very much. Currently, five states have laws similar to LB308: Hawaii, Florida, North Carolina, Rhode Island, and New York. Preregistration functions similar to the current motor-voter process adults use to register or update their own registration. A 16- or a 17-year-old can fill out a preregistration form at the DMV which is delivered to the local county election official. The official holds onto the registration until the individual turns 18. Then a confirmation card is sent out to confirm their current address. And upon receipt of this confirmation card, the election official updates the voter rolls and sends out a voter registration card. Nebraska current law allows for youth age 17 to register to vote if they will be 18 by the general election. Right now there is a huge disparity among youth voters compared to the rest of the population. Seventy-one percent of eligible voters are registered, but only 59 percent of eligible voters age 18 through 24 are registered. Allowing for preregistration at the DMV introduces to teenagers the idea of voting at an earlier age on an annual basis and provides another point of entry for that individual to be involved in our democratic process. As a former high school principal, you can see the connection between one of those most desired items in the age of a youth--which is getting the driver's license--and you're there and you have an opportunity to sign up at that time, with the reality that if that is at 15 or before 16 or at 16, many times we lose those kids by the time they're off to college at 17, 17.5 or 18 and they went, oops, I forgot to register. And that gets to be a reality in too many families that they're down here in Lincoln, they're at Kearney, they're at UNO and living away from home. And there's a disconnect with that process compared to a connect, which would be very important. The importance of civic engagement was extremely important to me as a high school principal and as a former social studies teacher. And we had a very high level of activity in the preparation of leadership at Millard West where I was employed at that time. And the proof of the pudding was having, within our first years of operation, we had the student body president--which means Board of Regents student member--at all three, UNO, UNL, and the Nebraska Medical Center. All graduates of Millard West and all members of the Board of Regents over the first ten years of our existence. Having these bright, active, and engaged students is an extremely important piece of what we try to do in the school I was responsible for. And it proved true with a very high level of activity and in activities programs with a very strong student council and class representatives organized with the four classes of the high school. Opponents for preregistration see the legislation as an avenue to promote and establish voting behavior. Various academic studies point to voting as habit forming and those

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who vote at an early age are more likely to vote consistently throughout their life. Preregistration is one of the ways we can break the negative cycle of nonactivity. Let's start telling 16-year-olds, you matter, your vote matters. Today you will hear from experts in voter legislation and young people who want to see this bill advanced. Thank you and I'm happy to answer any questions we can. [LB308]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you, Senator Kolowski. Senator Larson. [LB308]

SENATOR LARSON: Thank you, Senator Kolowski. And I think a lot of us on the committee loved hearing about people getting involved in civic engagement because I do believe that it's so important. What do you think of individual that have hit voting age being able to run for any office and getting them involved and civically engaged at that point? [LB308]

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: There's a...I mean, that is ripe for discussion and possibilities. Yet I also know on one hand there is brain growth and development up into the early 20s that we know about today, much more than we did much earlier as far as the development of thinking process and those particular skills for logic and reasoning. That doesn't mean students are without that. We have many adults who don't have that very well as well. But they go to the polling places every year. So I would match the students that we're producing today with the...that I have been involved with. And the amount of relevancy that they have toward the political process and the candidates involved and the issues involved in our society today. I don't have any problem with that. The holding of office would be another topic for another time in a more further and deeper discussion time, I believe. [LB308]

SENATOR LARSON: So extraordinary students can probably do well at any level of representation if the voters trust in them. [LB308]

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: Extraordinary and ordinary. I don't think it's a gifted opportunity just to go out and vote. It's for everyone. And I think we have the right and responsibility to address issues in an open, honest, and frank way. And I have a very high trust with anyone to make decisions in our society if they're given all the facts and common sense will many times prevail. [LB308]

SENATOR LARSON: Thank you. [LB308]

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: Thank you. [LB308]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you, Senator Larson. Senator Groene. [LB308]

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SENATOR GROENE: Thank you, Chairman. Have you checked, do other states do this?
[LB308]

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: Yes. I mentioned those states in my opening remarks, sir. [LB308]

SENATOR GROENE: I wasn't paying attention I guess. [LB308]

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: Would you like me to repeat those? [LB308]

SENATOR GROENE: No, that's fine. But my question is this. We talked about voter turnout being low. Is that a function of the fact that registration is up, that we've encouraged people to register that don't plan on voting. With voter ID...I mean, with DMV registration, we got a lot more people registering. But that doesn't mean they're going to vote. And would this give the false impression to these young folks that I registered at 16 and then all of a sudden they went off to college, that they're registered? That's three years later or two years later and they really aren't where they're living at the age of 18 or 20. [LB308]

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: Well, if they are registered, that would open them for an absentee ballot if they connect with their parents and many students I know have done that. And we encourage that as you go off to college. In our civics classes we always mention that as far as the seniors. When you do leave home, be sure to connect with that possibility of your carrying on your right to vote wherever you might end up and get that absentee ballot. [LB308]

SENATOR GROENE: So you're trying to catch the young people who don't happen to go to the DMV between the age...they're 16, the next time you need to register for the DMV is 20 or...
[LB308]

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: Well, they could go to an election official office and do it there as well. But the normal pattern of the age category we're dealing with would be going to the DMV to get my license or prelicense or whatever else they're dealing with before they do secure that. And I think it's sort of like getting ahead of the curve and then reminding them that they have the right to carry on that vote wherever they might head from there, including military or another location they might live in the state, not just college or university, as well. [LB308]

SENATOR GROENE: Thank you. [LB308]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you, Senator Groene. I reluctantly recognize Senator Bloomfield to ask what I think I know what question is coming up. [LB308]

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SENATOR BLOOMFIELD: Not just yet, but it will get there. Do you have any concerns about the 16-year-old and party affiliation decisions at that age? [LB308]

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: I don't know if they'd need to mark it at that age, as far as what they would be. I'd have to examine what the election commissioner would want them to do at that particular age. [LB308]

SENATOR BLOOMFIELD: Because I would think if they register, you generally register as a... [LB308]

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: Most likely picking one. And they would have the right to do that as much as anyone else would. And wherever they come from...in my background and my experience in talking with a lot of kids over a lot of time, most kids seem to register where their parents were. And then there's a connection or a growth differently than that over time depending on where they come from to Independent or either other party. [LB308]

SENATOR BLOOMFIELD: Okay. Now comes the question that Senator Murante was concerned with. [LB308]

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: Sure. [LB308]

SENATOR BLOOMFIELD: If at 18 or 21, 18 in particular, they're old enough to make decisions for government entities if they were to get elected to something, at what age should they be allowed to determine whether or not they wish to wear protective gear when riding a motorcycle? [LB308]

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: It's another topic for another time and you will hear from me on the floor concerning that as you did last year. And we will continue that at another location if that's okay with you. [LB308]

SENATOR BLOOMFIELD: That's fine. Thank you. [LB308]

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: I'd be happy to chime in and get that on the record though. [LB308]

SENATOR BLOOMFIELD: I just had to get it out there. [LB308]

SENATOR GROENE: I want to go home. [LB308]

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SENATOR MURANTE: Senator Kolowski, that is the best answer to a question we've gotten all year in the Government Committee. [LB308]

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: Thank you. I'd like to be known for something. [LB308]

SENATOR MURANTE: Senator Craighead. [LB308]

SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Hi, Senator Kolowski. [LB308]

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: Yes, ma'am. [LB308]

SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: Okay, so as I'm reading this I'm thinking, all right, if we do kind of prevoting, why would we not then want to do...oh, I'm losing my track here. [LB308]

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: Prevoting or preregistering, ma'am? [LB308]

SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: Preregistration. [LB308]

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: Yes, thank you. [LB308]

SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: Preregistration. Same way with getting a learning permit. Why wouldn't we want to do a prelearner's permit when a student is 13 or 14? [LB308]

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: To register them for upcoming voting as they turn 18? [LB308]

SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: Right. We're got an age. [LB308]

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: Sure. [LB308]

SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: See, I'm thinking you're opening a door here because if we do early registration for voting, then we're going to start registering kids to get a learner's permit when they're 12 years old when they can't get a learner's permit till they're 14 or 15. So I see a precedent and I think, quite honestly, I don't know if I see a need for this. [LB308]

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: I think you'll enjoy listening to the students that are going to talk behind me. [LB308]

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SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: I'm sure I will. And thank you so much. [LB308]

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: And if that is a concern...if that is a legitimate concern, I'll go into the business of selling booster seats for 12-year-olds I guess. I don't think that will fit very well, so. Thank you. [LB308]

SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: Thank you. [LB308]

SENATOR MURANTE: Any final questions for Senator Kolowski? Seeing none, thank you very much for coming down today. Much appreciated. [LB308]

SENATOR KOLOWSKI: Thank you. [LB308]

SENATOR MURANTE: And we'll proceed to proponent testimony. Can I get a show of hands how many people here wish to testify in favor of LB308? Okay, that's great. What I'd ask you to do is...we have a bunch of open seats in the front two rows, to come forward and just sit in one of the front two rows and we will look forward to hearing from all of you. At this point, we'd look forward to hearing from any of you. Which one likes to go first. All right. And welcome to the Government, Military, and Veterans Affairs Committee. [LB308]

FAITH HUTCHERSON: (Exhibit 1) Thank you. Good afternoon, Chairman Murante and other members of Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee. My name is Faith Hutcherson, F-a-i-t-h H-u-t-c-h-e-r-s-o-n. I am a sophomore at Lincoln East High School and I represent the voices of youth across Nebraska to you all today. I must preface this testimony with an explanation. About this time last year I sat in a room similar to the one in which we are all here today. I was testifying on Senator Kolowski's school security levy in front of the Education Committee. The reason I bring this up is because it largely contributed to my presence here today. Growing up, I always was interested in politics at a global, national, and local level. That day last year marked the turning point of civic engagement in my life and I began interning in his office shortly thereafter. I learned that I have the ability as a youth in Nebraska to advocate for myself and my fellow citizens. That pivotal moment, as well as the energy and passion that accompany it, is for me something I hope I can spread to other youth. This explains why I am honored to be here today discussing with you LB308. In our office and within our social media campaign to reach you, we like to refer to it as our "Pledge to Reg" bill. When I was initially introduced to Pledge to Reg I was immediately struck by its obvious logic. Our goal of this bill, as pointed out by Senator Kolowski, is to encourage youth to vote in an energetic and positive revitalization. A very real fact that we all must face in our society today is that the excitement for civic engagement in politics is dwindling, perhaps in all voter age groups, but most importantly for our purposes the young voter turnout. A New York Times article dated November 11 of 2014

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states that in 43 of our United States less than half the eligible population bothered to vote and no state broke 60 percent. Unfortunately, it only gets worse when examining the young voter turnout. I am sure you all know that CIRCLE, the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement, records 10 million young people went to the polls in this year's midterm elections. That is a youth turnout rate of 21.5 percent. On a positive note, this was about a .7 percent increase from the 2010 elections. But I would like to say, if we want to see this to continue to grow and watch it take off exponentially, it is important that we adopt LB308. The only way our system of government can function and reach its full potential is by having a civically engaged populace. This places heavy responsibility on us as potential voters, a concept that can easily be introduced at a young age. In an effort to do this on a small scale, we have sought out participation from youth in the community since day one. As a student, I am able to witness daily the energy and excitement of my generation. It's fun to watch our various tools such as social networking serve us in magnificent ways. I fear that perhaps what we are all more familiar with, however, are the upsetting stories we hear in the news. In 2012, however, Professor Cohen of the University of Chicago and Professor Kahne of Mills College, found that 41 percent of Americans between the ages of 15 and 25 who had engaged in at least one act of participatory politics, such as forwarding a political video or starting an on-line group focused on an issue, that those who engaged in these ways were considerably more likely to vote. This is proof that young people can use the tools so often associated with our generation for a greater cause. In the case of Pledge to Reg we have seen this unfold before our very eyes. We gained Twitter followers and, therefore, a statewide awareness that could not have been accomplished without it. The energy and interest I received from numerous friends and peers was very refreshing. And I even had students, as I'm sure you can see behind me, join me to talk to you all today about this bill. I believe that if young people are given this chance to preregister to vote, they will hopefully become involved in these participatory politics and we will see this carried out into their years as young Nebraskan voters. All of us working on the project of Pledge to Reg were excited to hear that this past Friday, Senator Larson's proposed constitutional amendment that would make 18-year-olds eligible to serve as Governor or as state senator was sent to the floor of the Legislature. Naturally, the question that we must ask ourselves now is that if we are now going to allow young people to hold such an important office, then why not extend the excitement of engagement at a younger age. Pledge to Reg allows us the perfect opportunity. Thank you for your time today discussing an issue that is especially of interest to me personally. I look forward to where this will take our communities and would be more than happy to answer any questions you may have. [LB308]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you very much for your testimony. Are there any questions?
Senator Craighead. [LB308]

SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ms. Hutcherson, thank you so much for being here today. And thank you for your involvement. I thought your comment was very

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interesting, in 2014 the voter turnout of 18 to 23-year-olds was 21.5 percent. Other than not having the experience or not choosing to participate in the political arena before that, because what you say, it gets people involved. What other reasons would you contribute that low voter turnout to in your age group? [LB308]

FAITH HUTCHERSON: Thank you, Senator Craighead. I know that one thing that came up in several of our meetings and discussions was the fact that at 18, that's a pivotal age for a lot of youth. You're entering college and there's a lot of changes occurring. That's kind of where one of the goals of Pledge to Reg comes in. If we can allow you to preregister as a 16-year-old, we're less likely to see that "oh, I forgot to register this year" kind of panic set in and unable to participate in elections. [LB308]

SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: What percentage of students from, let's say, age 16 till 18 or high school graduation, choose to stay in their home city, home precinct, home county versus those that move? Do you have any idea? I don't. I'm asking you, I don't know. [LB308]

FAITH HUTCHERSON: I actually do not have that information on me now. But I know that one of our goals in the state of Nebraska is to keep kids here so we can grow our industry. So I would hope we'd be able to support that in this way. [LB308]

SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: Good. I'm working on a first-time home buyer to be able to keep kids here too. Maybe we can work together. Thank you so much for being here today. [LB308]

FAITH HUTCHERSON: Thank you. [LB308]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you very much, Senator Craighead. Senator Bloomfield. [LB308]

SENATOR BLOOMFIELD: Thank you. Ms. Hutcherson, do you have any idea what percentage of the young folks who graduate are under 18 yet when they come out of high school? [LB308]

FAITH HUTCHERSON: I do not have that information with me today. [LB308]

SENATOR BLOOMFIELD: Okay, thank you. [LB308]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you, Senator Bloomfield. Senator Groene. [LB308]

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SENATOR GROENE: Thank you, Chairman. Do you really think any of the young folks here, as anxious as you are, that you will forget to register when you're 18? [LB308]

FAITH HUTCHERSON: I doubt we will but, sadly, not everyone in our generation is the same way. [LB308]

SENATOR GROENE: Thank you. [LB308]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you, Senator Groene. Any final questions? Senator Garrett. [LB308]

SENATOR GARRETT: I've got to get it in. It's an easy question. Did you write this testimony yourself? [LB308]

FAITH HUTCHERSON: Yes, sir. [LB308]

SENATOR GARRETT: Okay. I'm very impressed with your testimony and your professionalism. And just career advice, I think in your...you're a sophomore right now? [LB308]

FAITH HUTCHERSON: Yes, sir. [LB308]

SENATOR GARRETT: I think in your junior year you should get some diversification and work in another senator's office. I need to talk to you. Thank you. [LB308]

FAITH HUTCHERSON: Thank you. [LB308]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you, Senator Garrett. Any final questions? Thank you very much for coming down today. Much appreciated. [LB308]

FAITH HUTCHERSON: Thank you. [LB308]

SENATOR MURANTE: Continuing on with proponent testimony to LB308. Welcome to the Government Committee. [LB308]

IBRAHIM SYED: (Exhibit 2) Good morning or afternoon, I guess. Good afternoon, members of the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee. My name is Ibrahim Syed, that's I-b-

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r-a-h-i-m S-y-e-d, I'm a senior at Millard North High School in Omaha and I live in District 49. I'm very humbled to get to talk to you about Pledge to Reg, a bill I'm extremely passionate about. In the last four years I've noticed something about my generation. They don't seem to be very interested in politics, whether at the local level or at the national level. This is backed by statistics that show that millennials are on average about 20 percent less likely to vote than their parents and grandparents were at their age. My AP government and politics teacher pointed this out the other day and he posed the question, why do you think that is? After a few minutes of silence a student answered, "I think it's because the demographic that has come of age within the last few years has largely grown up in an atmosphere of conflict and has lost hope in our government to solve pressing issues." The millennial generation is less in tune with the American dream than any generation before it. And I believe that this will change with Pledge to Reg. If we can get young Americans involved with the political climate of our country then they'll be in a much better position to keep America at its place on the world superpower table, a seat it's had for a very long time. Statistics show that early registration actually does impact voter turnout. A 2010 case study in Florida and Hawaii found that after preregistration laws passed, youth voter turnout increased. The Scottish referendum, which was recently in the news, is also a great example of how the youth can influence the political climate of a country. Scotland actually extended the vote to 16- and 17-year-olds and the outcome was quite dramatic. Eighty percent of the youth that were eligible turned out to vote, which is an increase of about 3 percent of the population, about 100,000 people. I believe that allowing the youth to preregister will not only counter youth voter apathy, but will also play a part in getting young people to be more knowledgeable about the choices that government makes and push more students to research and vote for politicians that support what they care about. The idea of allowing 16-year-olds to preregister to vote has really taken off like wildfire around my school and this excites me a lot. Passing Pledge to Reg will be another stepping stone in the effort to push more young adults to take part in civic engagement. And that's not to say that students aren't taking part already. The idea that this generation doesn't care about the future of their community and of the nation at large is slightly off. On one end of the spectrum, we've started organizations that teach English to Hispanic immigrants. And on the other end, the rise in social media has started awareness for several human rights campaigns from California to Maine. Youth of all age types are preparing this country for what's to come in the future and we're largely optimistic. I, myself, am part of the International Baccalaureate program at Millard North. And my peers have done a lot to spark youth interest in programs around the city, state, nation, and world. We've started a way to teach English to kids over the Internet. And over the summer, many went overseas to help build a school in Ghana. I, myself, have started a nonprofit initiative to invest in village ventures in our country and around the world. The youth of this generation care about the future of our country. And the passage of this bill will push more of us to want to have our voices heard. The seats you sit in will be filled by members of my generation in the years to come and passing this bill will be a step forward that motivates them to be more knowledgeable and caring about the future of our nation when they get there. Soon your responsibilities will be our responsibilities. And

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passing Pledge to Reg will give us the opportunity to start early, assuming our shared responsibility for the future. Thank you. [LB308]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you for your testimony. Are there any questions? Seeing none, thank you very much for coming down today. Much appreciated. [LB308]

IBRAHIM SYED: Yep, thanks. [LB308]

SENATOR MURANTE: Additional proponents wishing to speak on LB308. And welcome to the Government Committee. [LB308]

RYLEY THOMAS: (Exhibit 3) Thank you. Good afternoon, Chairman Murante and members of the Government, Military, and Veterans Affairs Committee. My name is Ryley Thomas, R-y-l-e-y T-h-o-m-a-s, I'm a junior at Lincoln East High School. At 17-years-old I'm currently being thrust into the whirlwind of growing up. I am receiving more freedom and ultimately more responsibility. One of the largest responsibilities I fondly remember taking on is the privilege to drive. It was my sixteenth birthday. My dad woke me up early so we could beat the rush at the DMV. I am sure at one point or another many of you have been there or have taken one of your children through the experience of getting their provisional license. It's a huge deal. I remember checking the mail every day for the official plastic copy, a shiny token of my future. As I recall that day, I recall the emotions and swell with pride that filled me. I was prepared for the future to hit me. This milestone changed me, as I am sure it changes my peers and did change all of you. To me, being an adult means being a fully privileged and contributing member of society. That day I had an option to help sustain my community through becoming an organ donor. I gladly signed up. If I would have had the opportunity to align myself with adults further through preregistration to vote I promise you, it would not have been a difficult decision. For me, something clicked on that day. I remember saying to myself, I have finally made it. As previously mentioned by Faith Hutcherson, the age group of 18 to 24 has the lowest voter turnout. I firmly believe that if we could tap into that youth idealism at this early pivotal time that that very idealism will be carried on and transfixed onto our civic duties. I, for one, take my civic duty very seriously, as I know many of my peers do. I am counting down the days until I can fully participate in this great democracy. I believe that youth have a transformative power. I've seen it. It's evident in my school with an antibullying campaign. It can be seen on my student council with our numerous charity fund-raisers. Most recently, I have had an opportunity to experience this power by participating in the annual MLK Youth Rally and March. The emotion and pride I felt that day took the chill straight out of our harsh Nebraska wind. I could feel the change swirling around me. It started with a spark. The first step was a catalyst of change. This emotion of taking action paralleled the feeling I felt going to the DMV with my dad on my sixteenth birthday. This emotion reminded me that change was forthcoming and that I was ready

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for it. Allowing us to preregister for inevitable civic duty on one of our landmark turning points of our development will help inspire our youth to be better citizens of our great democracy. At the march I spoke about being a dignitary and the power I believe that each individual holds within, no matter what race, gender, or age they are. This is a power that I have witnessed. This is a power that burns in each and every 16- and 17-year-old. We want to be good members of society. We want to participate and we are ready to take this first step through preregistration. I believe that raw teenage emotion carries a strength that can only be found during those key years of our lives. Anything that can invoke this crazy behavior has power. I do know that if we expect our youngest players in the political game to take action and fulfill their civic duty, we will need to appeal to them at this point in their lives. I believe that this power can take our voter turnout average for ages 18 to 24 and double it. It can take a generation who wonders if littering is illegal to one who is fully capable of discussing legislative issues. Harnessing this power is an obvious must if we want to sustain our democracy in our great state. I, for one, am learning new things every day and I hope to continue this for the entirety of my life. Part of growing up is about finding your voice. As teens we aren't void of language, we are simply in a different place from our parents and grandparents whose voices have been talking for a while longer. We will be able to place our boundless energy more effectively if you allow us this connection to our government and civic responsibilities sooner. It will place our civic duty to vote as one of the first privileges and responsibilities that we receive as part of becoming an adult. Allowing us to preregister to vote will plant a seed working like a catalyst in our minds. That seed will mature over the next few years just as we will, fostering progressive ideas and knowledge. I, for one, as I am sure many of my peers would agree, have been busier these past few years than ever before. The simple time that it would save by preregistering to vote while getting our provisional driver's license may not be huge, but every second of these precious years count because, as many of you know, they are gone in a blink. Many of my peers have talked about getting their full, unrestricted driver's license but not registering to vote. I think this is because this is what we use to gauge adulthood. If we use civic duty based milestones as markers for adulthood, we may not see such a low voter turnout since we will be engaging Nebraska's youth at this pivotal time in their lives. We can change these milestones by first connecting them. Then the emotion, excitement, and pride from receiving our driver's license will transfer to being able to preregister to vote. Finally, being able to preregister to vote will serve as a reminder to all that soon their commitment to society will be privileged with the ability to participate. It will serve as a reminder of what a great state we live in and that we each hold value no matter what our age. Thank you for your time. I hope you have a good weekend. And I am willing to take any questions that you may have now. [LB308]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you very much for your testimony. Are there any questions?
Senator Craighead. [LB308]

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SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: Hi, Ryley. Thank you so much for being here today. I know that a lot of times people much older than you don't have a true understanding and knowledge of issues. And they listen to campaign propaganda and maybe know 5 percent of what the issue is. Do you think that your generation is better at really digging into issues? [LB308]

RYLEY THOMAS: I mean, I think that every individual comes from a different background and I think that every person is different and so I think that's definitely a person to person basis. But I think that digging into issues and I think that through education, we can help that and that people...they can...I think that...I think it's about you have to inspire people and you have to help them be educated on issues too. [LB308]

SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: What would you think if people had to register to vote as they were getting their driver's license or they couldn't get their driver's license? [LB308]

RYLEY THOMAS: Well, I think that would certainly work then, wouldn't it? [LB308]

SENATOR CRAIGHEAD: It might be a thought, huh? Thank you so much for being here today. [LB308]

RYLEY THOMAS: Absolutely. Thank you, guys. [LB308]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you, Senator Craighead. Senator Groene. [LB308]

SENATOR GROENE: I'm just curious. Did you pass your driver's license the first time? [LB308]

RYLEY THOMAS: Yes, I did. [LB308]

SENATOR GROENE: Good. [LB308]

SENATOR MURANTE: This is getting personal. [LB308]

RYLEY THOMAS: Yeah. My dad would not have been happy with me. [LB308]

SENATOR GROENE: My next question was, if you flunk your driver's license, does that mean your registration don't count? [LB308]

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SENATOR MURANTE: Now that's an idea. [LB308]

RYLEY THOMAS: Yeah. I mean, getting penalized for having a lead foot may be a little different than, you know, but... [LB308]

SENATOR GROENE: All right. Thank you. [LB308]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you very much for coming down today. Much appreciated it. [LB308]

RYLEY THOMAS: Yep. Thank you, guys. [LB308]

SENATOR MURANTE: Additional proponents wishing to speak. And welcome to the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee. [LB308]

KEAGAN WARKENTIN: Thank you. Is it okay if I start? [LB308]

SENATOR MURANTE: Go ahead. [LB308]

KEAGAN WARKENTIN: (Exhibits 4, 5) Okay. Well, good afternoon. My name is Keagan Warkentin, that's K-e-a-g-a-n W-a-r-k-e-n-t-i-n, I'm a student involved with several organizations centered around East High School. For example, I am vice president of the student council at East, as well as being involved with East's chapter of DECA and being the business and on-line editor for The Oracle, which that's East's newspaper. Foremost, I want to thank Chairman Murante and fellow members of the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee for the opportunity to speak to you today in support of LB308, Pledge to Reg. LB308, with the purpose to provide for preregistration to vote, was a huge step in getting young voters to participate in elections. This past November voters from all over Nebraska cast their ballots and elected a Governor, a senator, and a District 2 representative. However, comparatively, the 18 to 24 age group was the least represented in voting booths, throughout the U.S. on average having around 41 percent voter turnout. So what makes that age group less likely to vote? Well, we're typically not as informed as other age groups. And, again, I'm going to say typically, after all only 24 percent of 12th graders scored at the proficient level on the most recent National Assessment for Educational Progress in civics. That being said, it's our inexperience that leads us to be less engaged and therefore less interested. That's why we see the lower voter turnout. However, if we can get the younger generations more knowledgeable on how elections work, I believe we'll see an increase in the voter turnout from that age group. One way LB308 will do this, as mentioned, is by having high school aged students preregister to vote when they get their

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license. It's the perfect time and a perfect place to do this. As it's the primary motive identification in the U.S., a driver's license can potentially begin the voting process. Jump starting that knowledge base that voters will need when it comes time to actually cast their ballot. Within DECA we have a saying: The best business plan is worthless if nobody knows about the business. That can be applied to what's happening here. Young voters who aren't in the loop aren't showing up for elections because they're not informed in what's going on. Allowing for this process we started earlier on, high school aged students can be more knowledgeable by the time they turn 18, overall making the decisions of informed and responsible voters. I also took the liberty of bringing along spreads of an article written by myself that appeared in the most recent issue of The Oracle. As I mentioned, that's East's newspaper. Every once in a while we get one of these bills that comes along that we can't resist to write about, one that not only impacts the students but also gets them more involved and have that civic duty. LB308 is one such bill. We've seen a lot of support for the bill at East, and it's apparent why. Students want to be involved. They want that knowledge base. LB308 gives that to them. In conclusion, again, I think this is a great opportunity to get the younger generations more active in elections. High school aged students are excited for this. I'm excited for this and so I support LB308. Thank you for your time. [LB308]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you very much for your testimony. Are there any questions? Seeing none, thank you very much for coming down today. It's very much appreciated. [LB308]

KEAGAN WARKENTIN: Thank you. [LB308]

SENATOR MURANTE: Are there additional proponents wishing to speak on LB308? Ms. McLarty, welcome back to your Committee on Government, Military and Veterans Affairs. [LB308]

BRI McLARTY: Thank you. I will not belabor the point. My name is Bri McLarty, that's B-r-i M-c-L-a-r-t-y, and I am the director of voting rights with Nebraskans for Civic Reform. I wanted to let the senators know that I will get those statistics for you on the numbers of students that stay in Nebraska as well as those that graduate at less than the age of 18. Fortunately, I don't have those numbers here today but I do have a number. They talked a little bit about some of the states that have passed preregistration bills. And I do have one specific number that I found very interesting. In studying the impact in Florida what they looked at is students that preregistered compared to those that didn't register. And they actually saw a 4.7 percent higher turnout rate. So those that preregistered turned out at a higher rate than those that registered when they were 18. And then when they looked at it further down the line that number just grew exponentially. So it really created a...what they said was, it broke the disengagement cycle. By preregistering they became more engaged earlier, they turned out at a higher rate than their counterparts that

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registered at 18, and then they continued to turn out consistently throughout the rest of their life as voters. Some numbers I did have, I'm sure we're kind of curious about the impact that this bill will have fiscally as well as on the counties. Pulling up the numbers from the DMV in 2013, there were about 42,280 licensed drivers ages 16 to 17. This included Class O licenses, provisional operator's permits, as well as learner's permits. Unfortunately, I couldn't find any specific population data on those two exact ages. This is the closest I could get to kind of get an idea of how much this would cost, specifically to send the confirmation card out. Already county clerks and election commissioners are required to send a biennial mailing, a confirmation card saying, hey, it's been two years. You still live here, right? The confirmation card that's required under this bill would be very similar. It's estimated that on average it will cost about \$2 to \$3; that's postage, printing, and mailing it. Douglas County does have a larger card, so I imagine that their costs are a little bit higher since they can't use the classic 34-cent postcard postage. So looking at those numbers, guessing \$3 to \$4, I think we averaged it at \$2.25 per person. We estimated the cost statewide would be \$95,130. Unfortunately, the DMV doesn't have statistics of age broken down by county. So kind of just, if we were to guess that as an equal number of 16- to 17-year-olds and if they all participated in preregistration and they were all sent confirmation cards and they were all equally distributed across counties, it would be about \$1,000 per county. Of course, Lancaster and Douglas will be a little higher and some of the smaller counties with smaller populations will be a little less. But I thought you may want to have just kind of an idea of the cost since there is a confirmation card requirement within here. So with that, I'll answer any questions you may have. And I think the students said it best. [LB308]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you very much for your testimony. Are there any questions? Seeing none, thank you very much for coming down today. [LB308]

BRI McLARTY: Thanks. [LB308]

SENATOR MURANTE: Additional proponents wishing to speak on LB308. Welcome back. [LB308]

PEGGY ADAIR: (Exhibit 6) Good afternoon, Senator Murante and members of the committee. For the record, my name is Peggy Adair, A-d-a-i-r, I represent the League of Women Voters of Greater Omaha. And at this moment I feel very, very old, but very enthusiastic about the future of our state. The League of Women Voters of Greater Omaha supports LB308, a bill that provides the preregistration of 16-year-old citizens to vote. This bill will serve to encourage young people to become engaged in the political process by providing them experiential civil education while they're still in high school. I would like to point out that while kids are 16 and 17 years old and they're juniors and seniors in high school, they have to take a government class and they take social studies classes. And so they have a trained professional there who is guiding

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them. And actually, the League of Women Voters can go into these high schools and register voters because we are deputy registrars. So we can go on-site to those government classes, to those social studies classes. The teacher can be teaching them experiential civics and we can be there preregistering them on the site. It's a very exciting process and I find I'm just thrilled about this bill. And I'm going to put a plug in for Senator Larson's bill. I think it's great that we would lower the age from 21 to 18 for young people who want to run for public office. It doesn't mean that they might get it, it doesn't mean they might be in public office, but what a wonderful opportunity for young people to have. I would have to say that it kind of has bothered me all afternoon that the previous bills a couple of the election commissioners and the Secretary of State's Office came and opposed those bills, because I find that all of the bills that are here today help to increase voter turnout. And to me, the election commissioners and the Secretary of State should be encouraging increased voter turnout. They're supposed to be helping people to vote. And for them to come here today and oppose increased voter turnout just kind of bothers me. I would like to say, too, Senator Bloomfield asked about how old children were when they graduated from high school. I have four children. And two out of the four were under 18 when they graduated from high school, just to answer your question. So the League of Women Voters supports legislation that increases voter participation and LB308 serves that purpose. We thank Senator Kolowski for introducing LB308. And we encourage this committee to move this bill forward to General File for full debate. And I welcome any questions. [LB308]

SENATOR MURANTE: Senator Bloomfield. [LB308]

PEGGY ADAIR: Yes, sir. [LB308]

SENATOR BLOOMFIELD: Thank you. My reason for that question was--and maybe you can proceed down that line a little bit--when they reached voting age were they still at the same precinct they were at when they would have preregistered at 16? [LB308]

PEGGY ADAIR: I have to think about it. Let's see, the first one... [LB308]

SENATOR BLOOMFIELD: That's my concern is that we're going to be reregistering again all over if they move elsewhere after graduation. [LB308]

PEGGY ADAIR: Well, my understanding of the way that the bill works is that once they reach that voting age of 18, that they will be sent another confirmation. And if that bounces back--you know, say if they've moved--if that bounces back then they send to...I'll have to look at the bill. But... [LB308]

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SENATOR BLOOMFIELD: Okay. And my understanding of that is, at that point, then the county has done wasted the \$5 to preregister them and reregister them. [LB308]

PEGGY ADAIR: I don't think...yeah, but I don't think registering people to vote is ever a waste of dollars. [LB308]

SENATOR BLOOMFIELD: Well, it is if they can't vote yet. [LB308]

PEGGY ADAIR: If they can't vote? [LB308]

SENATOR BLOOMFIELD: Registering at 16 and moving away from there by the time you're 18 is a waste. [LB308]

PEGGY ADAIR: I don't think so, because they register at 16, they're in high school. They're being taught by the government teacher; they're being taught by the social studies teacher. [LB308]

SENATOR BLOOMFIELD: That's a little scary in and of itself. [LB308]

PEGGY ADAIR: They're being taught the process of voter registration and so hopefully they will know that when they move they have to register again. And, again, the League of Women Voters comes into those high schools and we'll tell them that, too. Voter education is very important to us and that's why we would continue to educate the young people. [LB308]

SENATOR BLOOMFIELD: Okay, that was another thing that surprised me just a little when you said the League could go in and talk to them and register from there. [LB308]

PEGGY ADAIR: Yes, sir. [LB308]

SENATOR BLOOMFIELD: Are the political parties able to do that, do you know? [LB308]

PEGGY ADAIR: No. The League of Women Voters is nonpartisan, so when we come into a high school we have to have two deputy registrars, one from one political party and one from another political party. It's very controlled. We're trained by the election commissioner in that process. [LB308]

SENATOR BLOOMFIELD: Okay. Thank you. [LB308]

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PEGGY ADAIR: You're welcome. [LB308]

SENATOR MURANTE: Thank you, Senator Bloomfield. Any final questions? Thank you very much. [LB308]

PEGGY ADAIR: You're welcome. [LB308]

SENATOR MURANTE: Additional proponents wishing to speak on LB308. Seeing none, is there any opposition testimony to LB308? Welcome back. [LB308]

BETH BAZYN FERRELL: Thank you. Good afternoon again, Chairman Murante and members of the committee. For the record, my name is Beth Bazyn, B-a-z-y-n, Ferrell, F-e-r-r-e-l-l, I'm with the Nebraska Association of County Officials. I'm appearing here in opposition to the bill, not to the policy of students and young people being civically engaged; we do want to support that. We just had some concerns when we initially talked about the bill about how to implement it. There were just some pieces of it that we weren't quite sure how they were going to fit together. And we had some of the same questions that Senator Craighead had and Senator Bloomfield had about whether students would remain in the same precinct where they registered when they were then 18 and what to do with sort of those suspended registrations in between. As we looked at the bill further, it looks like the Secretary of State would develop some processes and procedures. And in the fiscal note it talks about the Secretary of State developing some functionality to automate the required notices on the information to the preregistrant. I think that mitigates some of our concerns, so our opposition is probably pretty light at this point. [LB308]

SENATOR MURANTE: (Exhibits 7, 8, 9) Okay. Thank you very much for your testimony. Any questions? Seeing none, thank you very much for coming down today. Any remaining opposition testimony to LB308? Seeing none, is there any neutral testimony? Seeing none, Senator Kolowski has waived closing. But before I close the hearing on LB308, I have three letters of opposition to be read into the record: one from Diana Olmer, Platte County Election Commissioner; another from Dave Phipps, Douglas County Election Commissioner; and one from Sherry Schweitzer, the Seward County Clerk. And with that, we close the hearing on LB308. And that ends our hearing for the day and our hearings for the year. Thank you, everyone, for coming down. [LB308]