



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF NEBRASKA

4600 Valley Road
Suite 306
Lincoln, NE 68510
402-475-1411

www.lwv-ne.org

February 2, 2016

Nebraska Legislature, Health and Human Services Committee

Testimony re: LB 802 Create the Health and Climate Resiliency Task Force

Senator Campbell and Committee members,

The League of Women Voters supports measures which preserve the integrity of ecosystems with maximum protection of public health and the environment. The University of Nebraska-Lincoln report on “Understanding and Assessing Climate Change Implications for Nebraska” provides an outline of what some of the health impacts we may expect for our State. We have already seen an overall warming in Nebraska of about 1.5 degrees since 1895, and the drought of 2012 brought a wakeup call to many. There is consensus among climate scientists that human activities have influenced this warming trend. The impact of climate change in Nebraska has the potential to be very detrimental to human health and well-being, and a comprehensive strategy to prevent, mitigate and respond to these health issues is warranted. Just as Nebraska has a plan for other types of disasters that span many sectors, climate-related health response requires a broad scope of representation from the several Legislative committees designated in this bill, as well as the appropriate ex officio members and advisory groups.

The UN-L report states that “early and committed preparedness and prevention can do much to reduce health problems and provide important health benefits”. A task force meets the need to plan for the increased incidence of heat stroke, respiratory illness, diseases carried by mosquitoes, interruption of food and water sources and other consequences that will result from continued warming. Populations most vulnerable to these adverse health effects are children, the elderly, and, as we have seen with the Zika virus, pregnant women and the unborn.

LB 802 provides the Legislature with the means to develop a proactive and coordinated approach to mitigating the health effects of climate change in Nebraska.

Sherry Miller, President
League of Women Voters of Nebraska

Janece Mollhoff, Natural Resources Director
League of Women Voters of Nebraska