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March 23, 2021

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Your Nebraska financial aid professionals: Advocating for students and facilitating dialogue for how best to distribute financial resources for students pursuing higher education in the State of Nebraska.

RE: LB62
Position: In support

Dear Sen. Walz and Members of the Education Committee:

On behalf of the membership of the Nebraska Association of Student Financial Aid (NeASFAA), we thank you for your continued support of Nebraska students in their pursuit of a postsecondary education. NeASFAA is an organization of professional financial aid administrators, committed to providing financial aid and financial aid support and services to prospective and currently enrolled college students. One of our core mission objectives is to bring about the implementation of programs that will have a positive impact on students' ability to pay for programs of higher education. Therefore, on behalf of NeASFAA I am writing in support of LB 62 and ask that my letter of support be included as part of the public hearing record.

LB62 would provide 62% of the education lottery dollars to the Nebraska Opportunity Grant, Nebraska's only need-based financial aid program. This program assists approximately 40% of the eligible students each year by providing financial assistance for their educational expenses. Under current statute, the disbursement of lottery funds for educational purposes terminates on June 30, 2021. If a bill does not pass this session these funds will no longer be available to assist Nebraska's low-income students in pursuing a college education.

Additionally, LB62 would provide lottery dollars for the first time to the Access College Early (ACE) Scholarship. This program has been very successful in encouraging high school students to get a start on their college education by taking college coursework while still in high school. Studies have shown that high school students that take college work while still in high school are more likely to go on to college, are more likely to return for their second year of college, and are more likely to graduate. Therefore, increasing the funding for this program to assist additional students would be quite beneficial.

Should you have any questions or need any additional information please do not hesitate to contact me at 308-865-8782 or President@NeASFAA.org.

Sincerely,

Renee Besse, President

