

On behalf of the Nebraska Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NeASFAA) we would like to thank you and the Education Committee for continued support of postsecondary education in the state. One of NeASFAA's core objectives is to support programs that positively impact the affordability and accessibility for students enrolled in postsecondary education. Therefore, we wish to present neutral testimony on LB529.

The Nebraska Opportunity Grant (NOG) is Nebraska's only need-based financial aid program that financially assists college students from low-income families. In 2019-20, the program was able to assist 41% of the eligible students at an average grant of \$1,446.46. Reducing the amount of lottery funds available to the program could result in a decrease in students who receive the grant or a decreased average award amount. Therefore, we would prefer that the current allocation of 62% of the available education funding from the lottery program be preserved.

The Access College Early (ACE) Scholarship is a program to help eligible low-income high school students take college coursework. Studies have shown that these students enroll in college at higher rates, are more likely to persist, and graduate from college at a higher rate than their peers who do not complete early college coursework. In 2019-20, 2,473 low-income high school students from 231 public and private high schools were awarded an ACE Scholarship. These students took 4,420 courses, and 76% of the grades received was a B or higher. Receiving additional funding from the lottery program for the ACE Scholarship will allow additional students the ability to take advantage of this very successful program.

These figures illustrate how valuable need-based aid for postsecondary education is to Nebraska students, and NeASFAA would encourage your commitment to this funding. Should you have any questions please contact me at [President@NeASFAA.org](mailto:President@NeASFAA.org).

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