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Executive Board Committee
February 06, 2017

[LB646 LB648]

The Executive Board of the Legislative Council met at 12:00 p.m. on Monday, February 6, 2017, in Room 2102 of the State Capitol, Lincoln, Nebraska. Senators present: Dan Watermeier, Chairperson; John Kuehn, Vice Chairperson; Kate Bolz; Ernie Chambers; Sue Crawford; Dan Hughes; Tyson Larson; John McCollister; Jim Scheer; and John Stinner. Senators absent: None.

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Welcome to the Executive Board Committee hearing. My name is Dan Watermeier. I'm from Syracuse and represent the southeast corner of the state. I serve as Chair of the Executive Board. The committee will take up the bills in the order that's posted outside. Our hearing today is your public part of the legislative process and your opportunity to express your position on the proposed legislation before us today. The committee members may come and go during the hearing. We get called away for various reasons and it is not an indication that we are not interested in the bill but we do have other things going on in the building at the same time. To better facilitate today's proceedings I ask that you abide by a couple procedures. Please silence or turn off your cell phone. The order of the testimony will be the introducer, the proponent, the opponent, neutral, and then closing by the introducer. If you are testifying, please make sure you fill out a green testifier sheet and those are located in the back, in the entrance. When you come up to testify, please hand the green paper to the page. Please state and spell your name for the record at the start of your testimony. If you will not be testifying but want to go on record as having a position on the bill being heard today, there is a white sheet in the entrance and where you can leave your name. These sign-in sheets will become exhibits in the permanent record at the end of today's hearing. Written materials may be distributed to committee members while testimony is being offered. Please hand these to the page. We will need 12 copies in order to get to every committee member. To my immediate right is Legal Counsel Janice Satra; to my left is Committee Clerk Laura Olson. The committee members with us today will introduce themselves. And our page today is Alex from Aurora, Nebraska. So we'll start down here with our members.

SENATOR MCCOLLISTER: John McCollister, District 20, Omaha.

SENATOR BOLZ: Senator Kate Bolz, District 29, south-central Lincoln.

SENATOR SCHEER: Senator Scheer, District 19.

SENATOR KUEHN: John Kuehn, District 38.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Ernie Chambers, District 11.

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SENATOR CRAWFORD: Good afternoon. Senator Sue Crawford, District 45.

SENATOR STINNER: John Stinner, District 48.

SENATOR WATERMEIER: All right. Also on the committee but not here yet, or may not be here at all today, is Senator Hughes from Venango, Senator Larson from northeast Nebraska. With that, we'll go ahead and get started with testimony. Senator Pansing Brooks, welcome. [LB648]

SENATOR PANSING BROOKS: Thank you very much, Chairman Watermeier. And thank you, members of the Executive Board. For the record, I am Patty Pansing Brooks, P-a-t-t-y P-a-n-s-i-n-g B-r-o-o-k-s, representing District 28 right here in the heart of Lincoln. In reflecting on the best ways to go forward to achieve the goals of LB648 which is the first bill before us, I believe...right, Senator Watermeier? [LB648]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Hmm, yes, correct. [LB648]

SENATOR PANSING BROOKS: Okay, good. I have decided that an interim study would be a better course of action for this issue. An interim study will allow us the time to explore how our state can better prepare for changing technologies and the impact those changes will have in the areas of business, education, and work force development. So once again I ask you not to advance this legislation at this time and I thank you for your time today and, with that, I will close. [LB648]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: With that, very good. Thank you, Senator. Are there questions though? All right. Thank you, Senator. So that was your closing as well? [LB648]

SENATOR PANSING BROOKS: Yes. [LB648]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: All right. Is there anyone here today in testimony, proponent for LB648? Opponent for LB648? Anyone in the neutral capacity? All right. We have no letters to enter into the record so that will close the hearing on LB648. We'll now open the hearing on LB646. Before you get started, Senator, I would like to ask at this time, how many people are here to testify, either proponent or opponent, on the next bill? All right. Okay. We are going to have to limit the testimony to two minutes. I'm sorry for that. If you would change your mind at the middle of it, we might be able to change it but I'll give...Senator Brooks obviously will have a chance to close on the testimony on this bill. Senator Brooks, you're welcome to open. [LB648]

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SENATOR PANSING BROOKS: Yes. Thank you, Chairman Watermeier and members of the Executive Board. For the record, I'm Patty Pansing Brooks, P-a-t-t-y P-a-n-s-i-n-g B-r-o-o-k-s, representing District 28 right here in the heart of Lincoln. And I am here to introduce LB646 today so that Nebraska can better prepare for the threats posed by pests, drought, flood, high winds, and other extreme weather patterns. During the interim I was fortunate to sit on the LR455 Special Committee to examine issues related to extreme weather events and climate change. Senator Larson and former Senator Ken Haar chaired this committee. The conclusion of that report that came from that committee said, "It is time for the State of Nebraska to create a climate action plan. The plan should be based on empirical evidence and Nebraska-based data, making use of Nebraska expertise and developed through outreach to the public and coordinating (sic: coordination) of public and private sector interests." This recommendation follows a 2014 University of Nebraska-Lincoln report entitled "Understanding and Assessing Climate Change Implications for Nebraska." This report also recommended a climate action plan for our state. LB646 is the next logical step to move us forward toward that goal. Thirty-four states have already adopted climate action plans. With so much at stake in Nebraska, it is long past the time that we follow suit. As the UNL report states, "Action now is preferable and more cost effective than reaction later." That is why a broad coalition of senators, both rural and urban, have joined me in cosponsoring LB646. People are becoming keenly aware of the implications for Nebraska if we do not act. Agriculture, water, healthcare, energy generation and usage, ecosystems, forestry, rural and urban communities, transportation, and commerce and industry are just some of the sectors impacted by these extreme weather conditions. Nebraska's life-giving water and soil resources continue to be subject to new stressors and risks. Rural Nebraskans understand this. A 2015 Nebraska rural poll found that 61 percent of rural Nebraskans supported the creation of a climate action plan. Opportunities exist for the people to respond appropriately to these risks, including economic opportunities through development of renewable energy from our wind and solar resources, reduction of pollutants through efforts to reduce the use of fossil fuels and development of new technologies, new agricultural crops and harvesting methods, and new products that match Nebraska's vibrant and changing needs and resources. But we must plan ahead to respond appropriately, the same as we would plan for any disaster. I remember as a child when I attended Sheridan Elementary School right here in Lincoln, over 50 years ago, we had tornado drills. This is no different than what we're talking about here. I remember sitting under the desk and being told if a tornado comes what you're supposed to do. That was a weather preparedness plan that was happening 50 years ago. It's common sense to protect ourselves, our state resources, and our economic security. LB646 is about preparedness and mitigating damages; it is about a resiliency plan to protect our state's interests. It is also important that any task force include input and collaboration with the experts that we have in Nebraska including and especially including the University of Nebraska. We are blessed with top-rate academic institutions in this state and we need to make sure their expertise is a part of this process. Utilizing our own state resources would be a much more cost-effective way to tackle this issue. I know we have a lot of people behind me, whom I'm grateful for, who are waiting to testify, so I

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promised to keep my introduction short so, in closing, I would ask you to advance LB646.
[LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: All right. Thank you, Senator. [LB646]

SENATOR PANSING BROOKS: Thank you. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Are there questions from the committee? All right, very good. You are going to close, I assume? [LB646]

SENATOR PANSING BROOKS: Well, I sort of closed but we'll see. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: I think...well, I think you'll be...you'll have time to close. We'll try to make it. Can I get another show of hands, our proponents to LB646? All right, we...Senator Haar, I'll allow you to come up and speak for five minutes and after that we're going to have testimony for two minutes on the bill. All right. Senator, welcome. [LB646]

KEN HAAR: (Exhibit 1) Thank you very much. I'm Senator--I get to keep the title, my salary has gone down but I keep the title--Ken Haar, K-e-n H-a-a-r. And I'll let the Speaker give you the details later if he wants to, but last year he taught me how to peel a banana. Thank you very much. [LB646]

SENATOR SCHEER: Actually it was YouTube. [LB646]

KEN HAAR: Okay, good. (Laugh) Well, today...and I want to thank all of you for being here and listening to this. And, Senator Larson, thank you so much for cochairing the committee. We worked together a lot last fall, presented that report. We hope you'll read it. Today I want to talk about Who Moved My Cheese? This is a book by Dr. Spencer Johnson who also wrote The One Minute Manager and a lot of other little books like that. And basically the story is this. Two mice and tiny little people were in a maze and they found a big chunk of cheese and they kept eating it until the cheese disappeared. The mice had no problem. They went and looked for other cheese. The little people had some problems and I think one of them starved because he refused to go and look for new cheese. That's the story that I'm going to build on. If you look at page 2, these again are a review of the projected changes in Nebraska's climate and average temperature rise of 4 to 5 degrees--this is if we do something about it, 8 to 9 if we don't--and so on. And you're familiar with these I think from last year. And the who of my cheese, the cheese of course is Nebraska's water and the who is climate change because the climate change is moving Nebraska's water. "Water is life," Senator Carlson's favorite saying, and I really agreed with that.

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The diagram in the middle shows all of the sort of the forces going on that balance water in our environment. And when all those over time have pretty much been in balance, pretty much in balance and we've been able to look at the past to predict the future, that's called stationarity. And we use stationarity for planning all kinds of things: our roads, our agriculture, the infrastructure we build. We look at the past to build for the future. But with climate change and the predictions that we've heard, if you look at that middle diagram again, with the atmosphere warming and the ocean heat content increasing, all of these things are shifting. And so we have now, if you look at the last page, and I'll try to keep this short, stationarity is really dead, as some people have said. We can't look at the past to predict what the future is going to be like. We face a new area of risks and challenges and opportunities. And by the way, all the people of this article, and you can go out and look at the article--it's only a two-pager--but they're all water experts, they're people with the federal government and so on who are concerned of how do we do planning with water now that stationarity is dead, now that we can't count on just looking at the past to predict the future. So I'm a strong proponent of Senator Pansing Brooks's bill. I hope you'll consider it. And again, just to share some other wisdom on this thing of the moving cheese, Yogi Berra said, "The future ain't what it used to be." (Laughter) Thank you very much. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Thank you, Senator. Are there questions for the senator? All right. Thank you for testifying. I did forget to mention one person. Is there somebody here with the university that had some basis in the background to the bill? I would allow that testimony next. Go ahead, come on up. Thank you. [LB646]

MARTHA SHULSKI: Good morning. My name is Martha Shulski, M-a-r-t-h-a, Shulski, S-h-u-l-s-k-i. I'm an associate professor of applied climate science in the School of Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska in Lincoln. I serve as the director of the Nebraska State Climate Office. I have been at UNL since 2009. My educational background is in the disciplines of meteorology, climatology, agronomy, and soil science. I appear before you today to testify in favor of the concepts embodied in LB646. With minor technical changes to the verbiage, this is a very important legislative action that will increase our resiliency to extreme weather events and ultimately reduce harmful impacts. My role as faculty in the school consists of teaching, research, and administering the State Climate Office. I teach a course each year that is a freshman-level introduction to climate and gives students knowledge and capacity to understand our ever-changing climate. For my research I am engaged in multidisciplinary applied climate projects that bring together scientists and stakeholders working through real-world problems such that climate information can help inform management decisions. Given my role at the university, I am continually invited by many stakeholder groups in Nebraska and beyond to provide insights into what the impacts to future weather and climate events will be in our ever-changing climate. Sectors such as pest management, arborists, agricultural producers, water and natural resource managers, and urban planners come to myself and others at the university to ask

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for our scientific assessment on what the future may hold. Since the first of the year alone, our office has delivered 15 invited presentations to Nebraska stakeholders that specifically discuss our variable and changing climate and potential impacts. In 2016 our office delivered 64 invited presentations to more than 3,300 individuals on this topic. It's clear to me that groups and agencies in Nebraska are thinking about this topic of resiliency and risk management. I am also involved in Nebraska Extension activities on and off campus. In order to maximize effectiveness of extension programming, the unit surveyed citizens of the state in 2015 with regard to what their concerns are. Based on the survey results, 18 issue teams were formulated to help Nebraska Extension faculty and staff respond to these stated concerns. Climate is one of the key concerns and is the primary focus of one of the issue teams. Central to the mission of this team is helping Nebraskans become more resilient to climate variability and extreme weather events by adopting best management practices and risk management strategies. For example, one of the efforts of the team is focused on weather-ready farms. Nebraska has one of the most variable climates in the country. We already have cold spells, heat waves, extreme droughts, flooding, blizzards, hail events, and so on. Even preparing for weather we currently experience makes sense. Working through scenarios and taking future events into consideration will ultimately help reduce risk and build resilience to these events. Thresholds beyond which impacts begin to occur vary by sector and depend upon planning time horizon and decision-making needs. Therefore, I feel it's wise to look at specific sectors, as exemplified in the bill language. Through engagement with these various sectors, complex information can be tailored and delivered in a meaningful and actionable way. There is much expertise that exists in Nebraska throughout the university system on areas related to planning, health, agriculture, climate, weather, economics, and adaptive management. Furthermore, state agencies, nonprofit groups, municipalities, and other entities would also offer a wealth of input and knowledge into the development of a preparedness plan. For example, emergency management efforts on risk management for Nebraska communities in the coming two years will be a key effort that can be consulted and complemented with an effort such as outlined here. The effort put forth in this bill will bring a holistic and comprehensive approach to maximizing our preparedness and resilience. I have more but I noticed the red light is on. Should I stop? [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: All right. Can you wrap it up real quick? [LB646]

MARTHA SHULSKI: Yes. I will complete by giving the following analogy. When we drive across Nebraska from Lincoln to Scottsbluff, we don't look in the rear-view mirror to do so. We plan our routes and accordingly so we can be prepared for what lies ahead. Thank you and I'd be happy to take any questions if there is time. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: All right. Thank you for your testimony, Ms...Skolowski (phonetically)? [LB646]

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MARTHA SHULSKI: Shulski. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Shulski, excuse me. Questions from the committee? Thank you. [LB646]

MARTHA SHULSKI: Thank you. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Oh, I'm sorry. Speaker Scheer. [LB646]

SENATOR SCHEER: Just a request. You mentioned a few modifications. If you could just send us those so we could see them. I don't want to take up a lot of time with that. Whatever modifications (inaudible) if you could just e-mail them to the Chairman so that we could get a copy of those. [LB646]

MARTHA SHULSKI: Sure, I'd be happy to do so. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Please do that. All right. Thank you. Oh, I'm sorry. Senator Larson, you have to get your hand up. [LB646]

SENATOR LARSON: Sorry. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Miss, can you hold on for one more question? [LB646]

MARTHA SHULSKI: Yes. [LB646]

SENATOR LARSON: Real quick, reading through LB646, it just asks for educational input. Is that why the university didn't put a fiscal note on the bill, because the university isn't drafting it under its current language, the special task force is? [LB646]

MARTHA SHULSKI: That would be my guess. I don't have... [LB646]

SENATOR LARSON: So it wouldn't...so that's what...that would be why the university didn't put a fiscal note on it? [LB646]

MARTHA SHULSKI: Yes. [LB646]

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SENATOR LARSON: Okay. [LB646]

MARTHA SHULSKI: I'm assuming, although I'm probably not the best person to ask, but that's a good question. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: All right. Thank you for your testimony. I did forget to mention now we'll start with proponents but we'll have a light system: green when you get started, yellow with one minute left, and the red I'd ask you to wrap it up. So welcome. [LB646]

JANECE MOLLHOFF: (Exhibit 2) My name is Janece Mollhoff, J-a-n-e-c-e M-o-l-l-h-o-f-f. I represent the League of Women Voters of Nebraska. I'm their natural resources director for the state. The year 2016 was the warmest on record, and my latest OPPD bill showed that the average high and low temps in January 2017 were 5 to 6 degrees warmer than the same month last year, so we're headed in the wrong direction. Here in Nebraska, heat waves are becoming more frequent and intense, putting our agricultural economy at risk. More frequent severe rainstorms are overwhelming storm sewers and causing flooding. As a member of the Ashland City Council, I understand that. Warmer temperatures and changing precipitation patterns are affecting water availability. The League of Women Voters of the U.S. recognizes that "The magnitude of the climate change will be determined by the choices we as a society make about...future emissions. Through our mitigation efforts--the actions we take to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases...and increase the removal of CO2 from the atmosphere--we can limit future warming and minimize future impacts." Extreme weather is a symptom of climate change, and a comprehensive state plan that finds mitigation tactics for the symptoms as well as a strategy for reducing the threat is needed without delay. Indeed, the bipartisan special committee recommended that the Legislature create a climate action plan. This may cost something. The University of Nebraska has world-class researchers, educators, facilities, and expertise to fully explore and develop a climate action plan for Nebraska. One example of the financial cost of climate change is that forest fire and grassland burned in 2012 at a cost of \$12 million. The 2011 Missouri flooding cost Nebraska \$400 million and the 2012 drought and subsequent increase exceeded \$887 million in loss to livestock producers. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Wrap, can you wrap it up? That's fine. Go ahead. Appreciate it. [LB646]

JANECE MOLLHOFF: The League of Women Voters of Nebraska supports a climate action plan that involves the University of Nebraska in the process. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: All right. Thank you for your testimony. Questions? All right, thank you. In order to speed this up today, I have been given a list here, but whoever would like to

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Speak next, it would be helpful if you'd just stand behind the speaker when you can sense the red light is on and we can keep this rolling here. So, welcome. [LB646]

MACE HACK: Thank you. I have information. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Just lay it down and we'll get it. Go ahead and get started. [LB646]

MACE HACK: (Exhibit 3) My name is Mace Hack. Mr. Chairman, members of the Executive Board, I'm the executive director of The Nature Conservancy of Nebraska. I appreciate your attention today on this important bill. The Nature Conservancy is one of the world's leading nonprofit organizations focused on conserving our lands and waters. We've been active in Nebraska for 46 years. I'm not a familiar face to most, even though I've been in this position for ten years, because we only get engaged on legislative issues that are really important and this is one of them. We feel that climate change is the overarching environmental issue of our time, but not only that, has tremendous impacts for our economy, especially agriculture, for human health, for many sectors of our state's society. And so we really feel it's an important issue to now take proactive, thoughtful action to start addressing. Thirty-four states have engaged in climate action planning. It is, we've heard before, about 61 percent of Nebraskans in 2015 when they were polled, rural Nebraskans believe that the state should take action on building a comprehensive climate plan. And we are very much in agreement there. I would say a couple of points. One, this is an opportunity, again, to take a proactive approach that matches the needs of Nebraskans. We really encourage a very inclusive process to get all voices heard and take grasp of our own destiny in this regard. The university has already laid a lot of the groundwork for this through the different conversations and reports they've produced. We think they should continue in a leadership role. They're a wonderful asset and they're a trusted asset by Nebraskans. The Nature Conservancy really wants to support this effort. We ask for your support of this bill and we think it's a great way to basically prepare now before it's too late and too costly to take action and have it be an inclusive process that engages all sectors of our society. Thank you. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Thank you for your testimony. Questions from the committee? Thank you, Mr. Hack. Come on up. Welcome. [LB646]

NANCY MEYER: (Exhibits 4 and 5) Hi. I have copies here, one for each. And those copies are not showing the...that is the expanded testimony. I have cut it in half. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Okay. All right, very good. [LB646]

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NANCY MEYER: So my name is Nancy Meyer, N-a-n-c-y M-e-y-e-r. I'm a rural Nebraskan here to ask you to support LB646. I live in a 113-year-old farmhouse a mile and a half from the Platte River in northern Saunders County. I know that this committee, the State Legislature, and all Nebraskans have a high opinion of our state's largest and most respected institution of higher learning, which is the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, and that's why I'm letting Professor Don Wilhite's report do the talking for me today. I'm quoting from an article in Nebraska Today that appeared on September 26, 2014, about Dr. Wilhite's report. "The report says the projected climate changes are of 'vital concern' and calls for strategies to adapt to the climate changes now underway...the number of 100-degree-plus days is projected to increase significantly in Nebraska and the Great Plains. By mid-century, the increase in Nebraska would equate to summer temperatures equivalent to those experienced during the 2012 drought and heat wave." Now last night I talked to an NRD member and a lifetime farmer, corn farmer, while we watched the Super Bowl. And he was telling me that over 100 degrees is very damaging to crops. He, by the way, does not believe that climate change is man-made. However, he does believe, as do most people in this state, that the climate is changing. And that is the important issue. He said that the NRD's chief concern is providing enough water for Nebraska citizens in general, and in particular for our state's farm and ranch economy so that it can survive. He said we are overdue in our area for a water sequestration project on the Platte River which would allow rural needs and future calls for water by the city of Omaha to be met. When I told him that Nebraska's summers will soon all be like the summer of 2012, he was very concerned and he said, well, we are in for a world of hurt then because that's the only summer in my life that I have had to put more than five inches of water on my fields. This man is in his late 80s. The Wilhite report says current and continued projected reduction in snowpack in the central and northern Rocky Mountains will continue to affect Nebraska in reduced flows in the Platte and Missouri Rivers. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Ms. Meyer, could you wrap it up, please. [LB646]

NANCY MEYER: Okay. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Your red light is on. [LB646]

NANCY MEYER: So what I would like to ask to ask you to do on behalf of the farmers and the people of Nebraska is pass LB646 and listen to some of these NRD members who are extremely concerned about our water which is heavily impacted by this. Thank you. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Thank you for your testimony. Are there questions from the committee? Thank you. Welcome. [LB646]

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HELEN GREER: Welcome. Hi. Please forgive my trembling. I have a benign essential tremor and I look as though I'm saying no to all of you. (Laughter) I'm not. I try not to grit my teeth so... [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: I apologize. [LB646]

HELEN GREER: ...it won't be so bad. My name is Reverend "Penny" Greer, Helen L. Greer legally: H-e-l-e-n, initial "L," G-r-e-e-r. I live at 1716 Trelawney Drive in Lincoln. I'm an ordained pastor in the United Church of Christ for 35 years and I'm president of the board of Nebraska Interfaith Power and Light. Many of our members are here to testify. But I also wear another hat. I have a recent bachelor's degree in geology, in 2006, and I've been studying climate for the last seven years, currently in the division of applied climate at UNL. I'm on a research team studying extreme precipitation, specializing in the Corn Belt states. And I begin with that hat. In a recent heralded article in Nature Geoscience, using carefully gridded models, researchers are predicting as much as a 400 percent increase, 400 percent increase in extreme precipitation throughout the continental United States, that is to say, precipitation lasting less than a day. We are already seeing such events in Nebraska, the flooding and erosion that such events have brought, to name a few of their effects. At the same time as these events are increasing, more moderate and mild precipitation events will be decreasing. Think of how that will affect our agriculture throughout our state. Growing beans, corn, and wheat will become ever more challenging, to name our majority crops, with less meaningful precipitation during the growing season. It's almost as though we may be moving into a time of extreme precipitation followed by predrought conditions with all the conditions that took place in 2012 as a more great guideline. LB646 is a start in what needs to be a more thorough going plan to look at all aspects of climate change as the science has developed. And as a Christian I quote a verse that I go back to all the time: The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof, the world, and those who live in it. There, more than any other place in the Bible, I am enjoined to live as a steward. This creation is not mine to neglect or abuse. And so it is true with all of us, regardless of our faith or spirituality. Our state sorely needs this guidance. Thank you. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: All right. Thank you, Reverend. Questions? Thank you for your testimony, Reverend. Welcome, Ken. [LB646]

KEN WINSTON: (Exhibit 6) Thank you, Senator. Good afternoon, Chairman Watermeier and members of the Executive Board. My name is Ken Winston, K-e-n W-i-n-s-t-o-n. Today I am testifying in support of LB646 as the policy and outreach director for the Nebraska Interfaith Power and Light. And "Penny" Greer, who just testified, is the chair of our board. My testimony is from the perspective of a layperson who sits in the back row of the choir loft, as opposed to an ordained minister, so but the focus of my testimony is basically on a couple of well-known faith

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stories that basically talk about the need, for one, for courage; the second one, for innovation; and the third is for good planning. Now the story of David and Goliath is one that we all know and but that's a fundamental story of our faith tradition. It's basically the story of an underdog taking on a giant, but it's also a story of innovation because of the fact that, in addition to taking on the giant which took a lot of courage, he also used a better technique for fighting the battle, which is why he won. Now today I would say that the fossil fuel industry is a giant. And I'm not going to speak of them in an evil way but, rather, they are a giant. They have a great deal of influence over our political and economic activity. It takes a great deal of courage to stand up against a giant. However, just as David had a better way to fight, we have innovations right here in Nebraska. We have better ways of producing energy through wind and solar. The second story is one of Joseph and when he was in Egypt and his prophecy about preparing for the lean years. And because of the fact that they did prepare for the lean years, it led to a period of prosperity for the Egyptians, just the same way if we make proper preparations here we can lead to prosperity for Nebraskans. Finally, as I...as was indicated earlier, we have great resources here in Nebraska. The State Climate Office and the National Drought Mitigation Center are just two of them. And then finally, as Mr. Hack indicated, we need to bring all Nebraskans together to work on this plan. We'd be glad to answer questions. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: All right. Thank you, Mr. Winston. Questions from the committee? Thank you for your testimony. [LB646]

KEN WINSTON: Thank you. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Good afternoon and welcome. [LB646]

ALAN MOELLER: (Exhibit 7) Good afternoon, Chairman Watermeier and members of the Executive Board. My name is Alan Moeller, A-l-a-n M-o-e-l-l-e-r. I am here today representing a group of elder citizens in strong support of LB646. Ours is an emerging group made up of individuals who are passionate about leaving a positive legacy for our grandchildren. For in my case, Owen, Hattie, Anna, and little August will be the bearers of decisions we make now. We want to do all we can to make sure that through responsible stewardship of our planet, that all children are not straddled with problems that degrade their quality of life through no fault of their own. Our Eco-Elders group recognizes there are some daunting challenges before us because of climate change that require action. LB646 is a start and includes action that is headed in the right direction. It is hard to deny that we are experiencing extreme weather and record temperatures across the planet. It would be irresponsible to these young people if we do not plan now to do what we can to change these trends for the better, and to develop strategies to adapt to these new conditions as we work to stabilize and, in time, hopefully reverse them. While the challenges appear daunting, there are also opportunities for Nebraska. In developing ways to

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diminish the effects of extreme weather and temperature change there are economic opportunities. For example, Nebraska ranks 4th in wind energy potential while ranking approximately 20th in installed wind generation capacity. It currently has only a few solar power facilities in place while ranking 13th in solar power potential, real potential for not only helping Nebraska meet some daunting challenges, while at the same time creating responsible business and investment opportunities. Development of a data-driven, research-based action plan for the state of Nebraska to mitigate and adapt to the consequences of climate change is critical. Each year we do nothing increases the severity of policy actions needed. On behalf of our Eco-Elders group, we urge you to move LB646 to the floor of the Legislature. We thank you for the opportunity to share our views. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Thank you, Mr. Moeller. Questions from the committee? Thank you. All right, next proponent. Welcome. [LB646]

MARILYN McNABB: (Exhibit 8) Good morning. I'm Marilyn McNabb. I live at 1701 West Rose Street in Lincoln. I'm retired from working several decades in the Legislature. I also served on the Lincoln Electric System Board for nine years. I wanted to talk about the sections in LB646 and also mentioned in LR455 that talk about the development of renewable energy. The future of our energy is renewable energy and we're seeing that in some numbers that were produced recently by the federal Department of Energy. They issued their second annual U.S. Energy and Employment Report. It gathered information about the industry which is about 14 percent of the jobs in this country, which is really fairly substantial. It found that solar power employed twice as many workers in 2016 than the combined employment of coal, gas, and oil. The solar work force made up about 43 percent of the employees in the power generation field. Fossil fuel generation accounts for 22 percent. In terms of employment, in 2016, coal declined, oil and nuclear grew slowly, natural gas rose but at a much slower pace than solar and wind. In terms of energy generation in megawatt-hours, between 2006 and September 2016, coal declined by 53 percent, natural gas increased by 33 percent, and solar grew by over 5,000 percent. The chart I passed out is from the U.S. Energy Information Administration. It illustrates the trends that I was just describing up to 2015. Those are facts and then they make their own projections, and you can see what that looks like. The city of Kearney just in the last day or so has shown us how to do it. They opened...they have an agreement for a 5.8 megawatt solar project that will bring about high-tech firm into the city, at least one and maybe more. In the long run, it will bring them low energy prices and stable energy prices because the cost of fuel for solar does not go up. They lost Facebook to Iowa but they're coming back strong. The future of energy is clean energy. And I think that needs to be part of this study. It's already named in the study. Questions? [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: All right. Thank you for your testimony. Any questions? Thank you. Good afternoon and welcome. [LB646]

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ANICA BROWN: Hi. My name is Anica Brown. I'm a Lincoln Public Schools seventh grade science teacher but today I'm not here on behalf of my school district. I'm here as a concerned grandmother and citizen to ask you to support LB646. It is because I am a science teacher that I speak from experiences I've had that go outside the box, learning and seeing for myself the evidence about climate change from scientists at the University of Nebraska through programs like the ANDRILL antarctic geological drilling project and from workshops with scientists collaborating on climate research from the JOIDES Resolution, an ocean core drilling research ship. Both of these projects have produced extensive research collecting and analyzing evidence-based data revealing climate change over millions of years through sediment core samples. The research is clear. We have reached and exceeded the CO2 levels the earth has not seen for millions of years. Our climate is changing rapidly at an unprecedented rate. Through the Agriculture in the Classroom program, I have traveled to farms and ranches in the Sandhills, have shared conversations with agriculture and conservation methods and protection of our ecosystems. LB646 sets in motion the examination of extreme weather impacts on our state and how we must adapt to these increasing changes. I believe Nebraska is at a crossroads where we must move forward quickly to respond to changing climate conditions and develop renewable energy. I am here for the future of our youth, for my grandchildren and yours. With the expertise of University of Nebraska scientists, we will seek technology to produce renewable resources for a sustainable future. We must encourage our youth to open the doors to STEM careers in Nebraska so they can continue to innovate and create sustainable energy for the future. LB646 is the catalyst that will model for our children our serious commitment to act on climate change now. Support LB646. Thank you. Any questions? [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Thank you. Thank you for your testimony. [LB646]

CAROL WINDRUM: (Exhibit 9) Good afternoon. My name is Carol Windrum. I live at 3735 North 39th Street, Omaha, and I am a United Methodist clergy person, here today representing Nebraska Interfaith Power and Light. I grew up listening to my dad talk about being raised on a farm in Richardson County during the Dust Bowl, that devastating drought made much worse by poor farming practices and overgrazing. Those were hard years. We cannot live and prosper without a livable climate. During 2015 and 2016, world temperatures surged to a new record. Secretary General Michel Jarraud of the World Meteorological Organization warns, "We are moving into uncharted territory at a frightening speed." Nebraska Interfaith Power and Light supports LB646 because it's really past time to have a climate plan for our state. The consequences of the Dust Bowl seem slight compared to what we are up against now. And if we continue to deny, ignore, and refuse to take responsibility for a changing, warming climate, we are cursing generations to come. The context of my testimony today is religious. From the Judeo-Christian tradition the creation story of human being created out of dirt reminds us of our connection with the earth. God made a covenant with all living things. We are dependent on each

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other--animals, birds, water, air, land--and we humans have not been good stewards. Creation is indeed in crisis and it's up to us to step up now. Please support LB646. Thank you. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Thank you, Ms. Windrum. Could you spell your name for the record, your last name? [LB646]

CAROL WINDRUM: C-a-r-o-l W-i-n-d-r-u-m. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: All right, thank you. Questions from the committee? Thank you for your testimony. Welcome. [LB646]

JOHN POLLACK: (Exhibit 10) Good afternoon. I am John Pollack, J-o-h-n P-o-l-l-a-c-k, and I'm here today testifying on behalf of the Nebraska chapter of the Sierra Club. I'm going to abbreviate my remarks. I've prepared testimony and I'd rather just go off the cuff to shorten it. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Sure. [LB646]

JOHN POLLACK: I'm a meteorologist. I was a forecaster with the National Weather Service in Omaha from 1978 to 2009. Also, I married into a farming family, so I have some idea of the impact of weather on agriculture--Antelope and Holt Counties for anybody who is curious. My forecaster perspective is practical. Planning helps. If people have plans, they know what to do and they do it and avoid some of the worst impacts of weather. The other part of the practicality for me is that I've seen a lot of bad weather. Our climate is changing. I've seen the evidence both in my daily forecasting career and what's happened since with increased flooding. And people may be wondering, how can you have both a flooding risk and drought risk increase at the same time? And the answer is that when you warm up the air, you increase the moisture budget. When the air is thirsty, you have a worse drought. When the air is loaded with moisture, you have a worse flood. So you do get both at the same time, or not simultaneously but as a consequence of climate change, and it's not a contradiction to have both those things going on. One other thing, a lot of people have talked about the role of the university. I get this fat publication about climate twice a month. In this one, Michael Hayes, who is a UNL researcher, is one of the people writing about how you evaluate drought indices going into the future. These models give us drought indices. What's the real deal? So there's a lot of practical research going on at UNL in the university system. They need to be included very much and this plan is a good start. Thank you. [LB646]

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SENATOR WATERMEIER: All right. Thank you, Mr. Pollack. Is there questions? Thank you for your testimony. Welcome. [LB646]

FRANCES MENDENHALL: (Exhibit 11) Thank you. My name is Frances Mendenhall. I'm a retired dentist and I'm really grateful for the opportunity to address this great group today. Thank you, Senator Watermeier and everybody. I was really pleased to see this bill come forward. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Could you...why don't you spell your last name so we have it properly in the transcripts. Thank you. [LB646]

FRANCES MENDENHALL: Oh, I'll do that. M-e-n-d-e-n-h-a-l-l. Want the address? [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: No. [LB646]

FRANCES MENDENHALL: Yes, well, I'm a Creighton grad as far as dentistry is concerned, but before that I went to UCLA and I want to say a couple things about what California has done. I hope you find it interesting. California has done more than just prepare for the bad effects of climate change. They have actually adopted carbon pricing in their state. But in addition to that, last fall the legislature of California came out in favor by an overwhelming vote of supporting national legislation for carbon pricing. My organization is called Citizens Climate Lobby and we advocate the kind of carbon pricing we call carbon fee and dividend. I'm going to give you the cheat sheet on this. Carbon fee and dividend is not just preparing for the worst; it's preventing some of the worst. And they say we still can prevent some of the worst. So that's what we also need to be doing. I'm grateful that this committee exists, grateful for the bill that exists. But I would encourage the study, the people doing the studies, to look into how carbon pricing could work in Nebraska. We expect...our organization tells us they will introduce and pass carbon fee and dividend this year. The details about carbon fee and dividend are on this panel. It's under the headline, "Stabilize the Climate and Boost the Economy." And a couple quick hits and then I'll call it quits. Carbon fee and dividend would in 20 years cut greenhouse gas emissions by 33 percent and it would create 2 million jobs nationally in 10 years. I'll close in the interest of time. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: All right, thank you, Ms. Mendenhall. Questions from the committee? Thank you. [LB646]

JOHN ERIXSON: (Exhibit 12) Good afternoon, Senators. [LB646]

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SENATOR WATERMEIER: Welcome. [LB646]

JOHN ERIXSON: My name is John Erixson, J-o-h-n E-r-i-x-s-o-n. I'm the deputy director for the Nebraska Forest Service and I'm here today to testify in support of LB646. We all benefit from trees and forests, whether in our rural areas or our cities or towns. From the water we drink, the air we breathe, the wildlife we enjoy, and the green spaces that soothe us, we are essentially...or they are essential to the good life we all enjoy and they are increasingly at risk from extreme weather events. A few of these events that affected trees in Nebraska over the past decade include the increase in the number and severity of wildfires which have destroyed tens of thousands of acres of forest, like those fires of 2006 and 2012, both drought-related events, heavy early season snow events like winter storm Atlas of 2013 which caused billions of dollars in economic losses, and flooding along the Missouri River of 2011 caused by heavy snow events in the Dakotas and Montana followed by heavy spring rains. To expand on one of these, Nebraska has seen an increase in the number of large, intense wildfires over the past 50 years. During most of the 20th century the state saw large fire seasons every 20 to 25 years. Since 1990, the time between such large events is about every six years. The scale of these fires have also dramatically increased. Fifty years ago, a large fire season was around 150,000 acres. In 2012, we burned nearly 500,000 acres. So in closing I'll just skip ahead. A comprehensive, multifaceted, strategic response is needed. By developing an Extreme Weather Preparedness Task Force, Nebraska will have the opportunity to develop a strategic plan to address the issues and prepare for future events. So with that, I'd thank you and ask if there are any questions. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Thank you, Mr. Erixson. Any questions from the committee? Okay, that's fine. Thank you for your testimony. Good afternoon. [LB646]

DUANE HOVORKA: Good afternoon. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Welcome. [LB646]

DUANE HOVORKA: My name is Duane, D-u-a-n-e, Hovorka, H-o-v-o-r-k-a. I'm executive director of the Nebraska Wildlife Federation and pleased to be here to testify in favor of LB646. We'll be providing you some more information about some of the risks of not taking action, things like the risk to Nebraska cold-water streams to the wetlands in our state, to the Prairie Pothole wetlands north of us. And they're frankly pretty scary. But I want to leave you with a positive note which is the opportunities, the economic opportunities by moving ahead quickly with clean energy solutions. In about 2010, Lincoln Electric System was getting about 8 percent of their electricity from renewable energy sources, primarily a little wind and some hydroelectric power. In 2014, they had already moved to invest some additional funds in energy efficiency

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programs and in 2014 they decided to go big on wind energy and build the state's largest, for a little while, solar plant. What they announced was that they would be able to get to by last year about 48 percent renewable energy at Lincoln Electric System and in the process save LES ratepayers over \$400 million, so big savings moving towards renewable energy. Omaha Public Power District has moved also with some investments in managing demand better, in adding wind. They expect to be about 30 percent renewable energy soon. Just end of last year looked at some calculations looking out over the next 20 years. What they concluded was going to 40 percent wind and then 50 percent renewable energy would save their customers hundreds of millions of dollars over that time. So the good news is that these clean energy solutions that we're talking about are very affordable. They're good for the environment but they're also good for our ratepayers. So thank you for your time and attention and we look forward to supporting the bill. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: All right. Thank you, Mr. Hovorka. Questions? Thank you. Hello. [LB646]

MARJORIE WILLEKE: (Exhibit 13) Hello. Good afternoon. My name is Marjorie Willeke, M-a-r-j-o-r-i-e W-i-l-l-e-k-e, and I live at 6750 Shadow Ridge Road in Lincoln. First of all I want to say that I strongly support LB646. I want to thank Senators Ken Haar and Tyson Larson for chairing the special legislative committee that created a framework for a Nebraska climate action plan. I'd like to also thank Senator Patty Pansing Brooks for introducing this legislation and the ten senators who are cosponsoring the bill. As you know and has been testified, in 2014 scientists at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln published a well-researched report: Understanding and Assessing Climate Change Implications for Nebraska. In the report the authors listed risks for Nebraskans from climate change. Among the risks are extreme weather events such as tornadoes and floods, increase in droughts and forest fires, and increase in health risks. The state and the communities in Nebraska need to address these risks. We need to plan how to cope. Planning for the challenges we face is sound policy. By passing legislation, the Unicameral will acknowledge the challenges posed by climate change and the intention to take positive actions to mitigate the inevitable effects of extreme weather events and climate change. In Nebraska we have largely untapped resources, the third best wind potential in the country, and the solar power resources. Just as important, we have human resources, especially with our internationally recognized climate scientists at UNL. We need their expertise to develop a comprehensive plan based on empirical evidence which addresses impacts in numerous areas such as agriculture, energy generation, forestry, industry, transportation, and water resources. Finally, I want to say that I spent 30 years of my professional career working in the areas of program planning and evaluation. From experience I know that developing evidence-based, long-range strategic plans results in better outcomes. Planning works. Thank you for your attention. Do you have any questions? [LB646]

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SENATOR WATERMEIER: Thank you, Ms. Willeke. All right. Questions for Ms. Willeke? Thank you for your testimony. Mr. Hansen. [LB646]

JOHN HANSEN: Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, for the record, my name is John Hansen, J-o-h-n, Hansen, H-a-n-s-e-n. I'm the president of Nebraska Farmers Union. We're the second largest general farm organization in the state. We have been working on climate issues for about 15 years and about 12 years ago we put together an effort to give farmers and ranchers the opportunity to voluntarily participate in a cap and trade market-based program to modify their cultural practices, their grazing patterns, in order to take advantage of the selling of the sequestered carbon that comes out of the atmosphere that goes into the soil through crop production and foliage and pasture and legumes and those kinds of things. And we had 1.2 million acres signed up in our shop. In Nebraska we were a little over 3 million acres. Nebraska was the top state in the nation that was participating in this voluntary program. And the takeaway from that is a couple things. One is that it really is important to be able to, as we think about how we go forward with this committee, is to actively encourage the stakeholders who are going to be impacted in all of the different sectors. And that's the difference whether you're doing things with folks or to folks, but there's a lot of expertise out there and that we have to have that buy-in if we're going to have an effective plan. We need to have a plan sooner rather than later and that also from a technical standpoint that agriculture/agriforestry has the opportunity, if properly engaged in a constructive kind of way, to take somewhere around 25 to 28 percent of all the carbon that's in the atmosphere and sequester it in the soil and help build capacity and resiliency in the soil. So we are obviously going to be impacted by what goes on through the regulatory arena and also by what goes on with carbon emissions themselves and how it changes the weather and the climate. But we are also a part of the solution. And so with that, I'd be glad to end my remarks and answer any questions if you have any at this late day. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Thank you, Mr. Hansen. Questions from the committee? Senator Bolz. [LB646]

SENATOR BOLZ: Thanks for coming, Mr. Hansen. And I know you've been engaged in this kind of work for a long time, so maybe this is an appropriate question for you. I'm wondering if you think that this task force...I think the need for the task force is clear but it's pretty ambitious to try to manage all of these different things and all of these different interests. Do you have any thoughts or ideas or suggestions about how the task force should work so that we result in effective, useful policy recommendations? [LB646]

JOHN HANSEN: Well, I think that there needs to be involvement by the Legislature but, quite frankly, that's probably not where the expertise is lodged on this issue. But they're the decision makers, they're in a position of authority, they can help move the ball forward. The University of

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Nebraska has a lot of expertise in terms of just the history and the mechanics and the particulars of what goes on and we've worked with them for a long time, Dr. Don Wilhite and others. And so we think that they have to be hooked into the more technical part of helping give guidance. And then each of the different sectors, I think you kind of bite them off one sector at a time. There are certainly a lot of interested and capable stakeholders in each one of those different areas. And so to me it seems like that kind of subcommittee kind of approach that deals with agriculture, that deals with electrical generation, that deals with water resources, that deals with...so you kind of go at each one of those differently. And they can be going more or less fast based on how they're getting along. But the technical expertise is there at the university and then certainly the Legislature needs to be involved in all of this but as so that everyone involved from top to bottom has stakeholder involvement and engagement. And, you know, the conversation is a very different conversation, having done this for a long time, between whether you...when you stop debating whether we are or aren't having climate change and you start talking about, well, what do we do about it, then it's like a different set of neurons click in and we start having a very constructive, concrete, practical discussion. And that's the kind of discussion we need in my opinion. [LB646]

SENATOR BOLZ: I appreciate that. And maybe it's a question for the introducer or a question for the university as to how we staff this. I just know from my personal experience having a staff of two and trying to eat an elephant which is a big issue, sometimes it's difficult to get where you need to go in terms of both gathering the appropriate information, finding consensus on issues, facilitating the conversations. And I just want to make sure that we appropriately structure this very large initiative so that we get where we want to go. [LB646]

JOHN HANSEN: We have already done, as a part of the legislation that was already passed to do this study, all of those different stakeholder meetings, which I attended I think three of them I thought were very constructive. And so I think that's a good place to start. [LB646]

SENATOR BOLZ: Thank you. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: All right, Senator Bolz. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Hansen. [LB646]

JOHN HANSEN: And thank you. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: All right. Come on up. Good afternoon. [LB646]

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DIANE BEACHLY: Thank you. And I'd like to thank the senators for introducing this bill which is a beginning step in addressing extreme weather and other problems associated with climate change. My name is Diane Beachly, D-i-a-n-e B-e-a-c-h-l-y. I'm here as a representative for two different groups that are in the Hastings area. We are both pro/for LB646. There's one caveat I'll talk about. So first, I'm one of the advisers of the Hastings College Student Environmental Action Coalition, SEAC, or "seek" (phonetically). Climate is the main concern of this group. Their mission and values statement is: SEAC affirms that all life on earth has intrinsic value and is entitled to a healthy planet that will be viable for generations to come. Our mission is to create a sustainable Hastings College campus for both the college and our surrounding community. As individuals we will strive to lower our personal carbon footprint as a way of showing respect. We reject the premise that a few people have the right to ravage our heritage by destroying the common areas of our planet and our future. So SEAC is active in some renewable energy projects, sustainability, recycling, education as well. Secondly, I'm one of the members and a representative of a newly formed group in the Hastings area. This is the Hastings Environmental Action Team, HEAT, and that formed because of a common concern about climate by all of our members. And we're working on several sustainability projects, recycling glass, developing renewable energy in our area, creating habitat for pollinators, composting, energy rebates for energy efficiency upgrades, and education activities. HEAT believes preventing climate change is a moral issue that can also create many positive economic outcomes. So we're for the bill. We have one caveat and that is there's a mention about that the funding may come from the Nebraska Environmental Trust. And I was one of the people who voted for that the lottery funds go toward funding wildlife projects in the state of Nebraska. The trust is already active in funding recycling, electric cars, and some other things, so the remaining funds need to be devoted to habitat and this should not be open to being raided by the Nebraska Legislature. So in closing, HEAT and SEAC both believe that we must be addressing climate change now for the sake of our children and our children's children. We know that many of the solutions to climate change, such as renewable energy and energy efficiency improvements, will create economic opportunities for Nebraska. We urge your support of LB646. Thank you. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: All right. Thank you for your testimony. Questions? Thank you, Ms. Beachly. [LB646]

DIANE BEACHLY: Thank you. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: I will remind everybody there is another hearing in this room in about 15 minutes, so we'll have to move things right along. When I see the red light I'm going to ask you to clean it up. Thank you. [LB646]

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ALEX HOUCHIN: (Exhibit 14) Well, I've had to talk quite a bit so I'm going to go a little quick. Good afternoon, Senator Watermeier and the members of the Executive Board. My name is Alex Houchin; that's A-l-e-x H-o-u-c-h-i-n. I'd like to thank you all for the time and energy you put into serving the citizens of this great state, and I would like to thank you for this opportunity to speak today in support of my senator's excellent bill, LB646. As you heard Ms. Mendenhall discuss a few minutes ago, she mentioned Citizens Climate Lobby and what it aims to do. That's great because that's the part that I cut. I would like to talk about how we do it. The primary goal of CCL, as we call it, is to forge cordial and constructive working relationships with members of the U.S. Congress in an effort to build the political will needed to pass national carbon fee and dividend legislation. It sounds lofty, but we have reason to believe we're moving the needle. Around this time last year, thanks to the efforts of our volunteers nationwide, the Climate Solutions Caucus was founded in the U.S. House of Representatives. As a testament to the bipartisan nature of our work, the caucus has a special requirement to join: any representative that wants a seat at the table must find a member of the opposing party to join with them. It's only been a year, and there are already 20 members. We're still working on Representative Fortenberry, but I think he's getting closer. The reason I share this with you today has less to do with the CCL proposal than it does its approach. As a strictly nonpartisan organization, CCL believes that the climate crisis is a bigger issue than any one party and, thus, requires more than any one party to solve. We believe that when people of different ideological views all take a seat at the table with a shared desire to meet a challenge head-on in a way that everyone can agree on, that's how problems get solved. And that's the spirit at the heart of LB646 which, it seems to me, has something for everyone. There's a stated goal of protecting our state's mostly agricultural economy from the financial catastrophes posed by increasingly frequent extreme weather events; there's a drive to seek out economic opportunities to be found in upgrading and diversifying our energy infrastructure; there's a strong adherence to fact-based and data-driven economic modeling; and there's a broad-based approach that seeks to examine and mitigate the impact of climate change on virtually every sector, from agriculture to transportation to public health. I urge you to approve LB646. And once it's on the floor, I urge you to continue to push for it until it becomes law. This bill won't solve climate change on its own, but it's an excellent step in the right direction. I hope I've made clear today that that's a step we will all need to take together. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: All right. Thank you for your testimony, Mr. Houchin. Questions? Thank you. Hello. Welcome. [LB646]

LISA LEE: Hi. Hi. My name is Lisa Lee; the last name is just L-e-e. And I'm here in support of LB646. I want to begin by thanking Senator Patty Pansing Brooks. Thank you so much. I can only imagine the time you've had to take to educate yourself on such a complicated issue and to put together such a thoughtful bill. Thank you so much. I also appreciate the other ten coauthors, three of you that are here today, but I don't want to attempt to say your names because I'll

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probably not say them right. But you know who you are, so thank you. I'm not an expert on this topic. I'm currently a stay-at-home mom actually. But in my previous life I was an internal auditor for Farmers Insurance. My husband's background is the same and he is currently the director of internal audit at Assurity Life Insurance Company here in Lincoln. Since I'm not an expert, I'm not going to pretend to be one either. Instead I thought I would just share a little about my personal story about how I became a believer in climate change and that there is...that I have now an understanding that we have a shared responsibility to act on this. And as a lifelong Republican, I was born and raised in the Midwest but I was very skeptical on the issue as of 2010. But in the process of building a new house, I came to learn about the new energy efficiency options that were out there and just reignited my passion about energy efficiency. It's already yellow here so I will just say that since then I went on a search to find the truth about climate change because I was a...I am a voter. I had issues with even the Alaskan pipeline. What do you do with that? That's...how many years ago was that? I'll say obviously we have an issue here that we do have to address and I suggest that it's kind of complicated. I'll use myself as an example that some, we might start by helping ourself and realize sometimes our belief systems may be wrong and we may need to reconsider where we are on the issue. So I'll just end...also, oh, so I'm really glad with the bill because it's about education, which obviously someone like me needed to be educated with the facts not with my belief system. So, and the last thing I'll end with, unfortunately I didn't bring it today, but I have a picture I took two years ago of a billboard in Missouri that said: Winging it is not an emergency plan. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Thank you for your testimony, Ms. Lee. Good afternoon. [LB646]

CAROL DICKS: (Exhibit 15) Good afternoon. My name is Carol Dicks, D-i-c-k-s. And I'm sorry about being late. I was just rear-ended pretty hard on the way here and I'm a little shook up. But anyway, thank you so much for your time. Thank you so much for taking this seriously. And I'm going to keep this short. I feel this bill is a really big, crucial step in a conversation really taking place with greater Nebraska, with the cities, the suburbs, the rural towns, the ranches, the reservations--you know, west, east, north, south--in our large state to work together to benefit everybody here and beyond. The conversation is happening right now. It's happening at the high schools. It's happening in preschool. It's happening at the corner stores. They are way ahead of a lot of politicians and I just...really let's get on board with this because the energy is now. There is energy out there to do productive, amazing things and we can get it done for the state. So thank you so much for taking this seriously. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Thank you for your testimony. Questions? All right, thank you. Good afternoon. [LB646]

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TIM RINNE: Good afternoon, Senators. My name is Tim Rinne; that is T-i-m R-i-n-n-e. I live at 605 North 26th Street in Lincoln and I'm delighted that you're here today and I've also been really impressed with how attentive you all have been, particularly since we're working over the lunch hour. And I apologize if you heard my stomach growling back there because I really haven't had much to eat since breakfast, which is why I'm here this morning is I wasn't planning--actually, it's afternoon--I wasn't planning on testifying today. And I've heard wonderful testimony but I haven't heard anybody talk about food. We've talked about agriculture a little but nobody has talked about our food supply. Right now the average bite of food on our plate, when we dash out of here to go grab something before you folks go into session or other meetings this afternoon, is that average bite of food is traveling almost 2,000 miles to get here. A fifth of the food that we now eat, one out of every five bites, comes from outside the country. Last May WikiLeaks released another cable. This is a State Department cable from Nestle, the world's largest food corporation--hardly what one would call a left-wing outfit. All right? And here's what they said in their report. "On present trends, Nestle thinks one-third of the world's population will be affected by fresh water scarcity by 2025," that's eight years from now, "with the situation only becoming more dire thereafter and potentially catastrophic by 2050. Nestle believes that the world will face a cereals shortfall of as much as 30 percent by 2025." We are looking at an insecure food supply and this is our opportunity right now with this climate plan to not only look at how this is going to impact energy, how it's going to impact agriculture, how it's going to impact health. We can look at how it's going to impact food. When I dash out of here to go eat something, it's not going to go be to eat a plate of field corn or a plate of soybeans. I'm going to eat some food and that food is going to travel 2,000 miles to get to my mouth. Thank you very much. I hope you will advance this bill. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Thank you for your testimony, Mr. Rinne. Further proponents? Okay. Go right ahead. Welcome. [LB646]

JUDY KING: I'm scared to death--first time. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: No, you're fine. Just take your time. [LB646]

JUDY KING: My name is Judy King and I'm here to testify in support of LB646. And first of all, I worked at the State Fire Marshal's Office in the pipeline and underground storage tank division and I was one that would call over to DEQ about the pipeline spills...or not the pipeline spills, the underground storage tank spills. And that got me interested into finding how and if they were ever cleaned up and then it got me into wanting to know about clean water and that got me into learning about climate change. And first of all, I believe in science and I believe in overwhelming scientific evidence from the brightest science minds in critical climate fields that indicate climate change is real. There are people that have questions but both science and

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scientists have indicated that we are already experiencing and seeing the evidence of global climate change and extreme weather. As a state we must be prepared. This could save us...this could save the state in natural resources. In times of drought, farmers would be able to use the task force to help with water to use water more efficiently. The task force could help determine how to protect our water and land during times when there is flooding. We are already seeing storms become more violent and even in my neighborhood which is in Lincoln, Nebraska, electrical, wind, and hail. Preparation is critical. Lincoln has set a great example for flooding within our city limits. It couldn't have been accomplished without the use of scientists that work with climate and engineering. The University of Nebraska would be a great resource with all of its science, scientists on the task force. Thank you for your time. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: You're fine. Go ahead. You're not up to two minutes yet. [LB646]

JUDY KING: That's it; that's all I have. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Is that...is that...all right. Thank you... [LB646]

JUDY KING: Thank you. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: ...for your testimony, Ms. King. [LB646]

JUDY KING: Thank you. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: (Exhibits 16-23) Is there any questions? Thank you for being here today. All right, are there any more proponents on LB646? Those wishing to testify in opposition to LB646? Those in the neutral capacity? Senator Pansing Brooks, come on up. While she's here, I'm going to read letters in support from: Christian Thomsen; Katie Nieland; Tim Fickenscher; Sheila Schrader; Anne DeVries; Vincent Schramer; Alan Meyer; and John Albin from the Department of Labor. [LB646]

SENATOR PANSING BROOKS: And, Senator Watermeier, I was wondering if you would take any written testimony that's left of people who were trying to be considerate of the time, if there are...could you just see a raise of...a show of hands of people who might not have testified that want to put their testimony at least in the record? [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: We can do that. I...we have them right here. [LB646]

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SENATOR PANSING BROOKS: You do think you have it? [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: I think so. I counted 12 hands at the beginning and we went through 24 people. [LB646]

SENATOR PANSING BROOKS: Okay, okay. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: So hopefully we covered people. [LB646]

SENATOR PANSING BROOKS: I know. I just wondered if there's more. Okay. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Okay. [LB646]

SENATOR PANSING BROOKS: Okay. First I want to thank all the testifiers that came, totally unexpected to me. I had...we had not put out an alert. We didn't know that this was all going to happen. As you can tell, there's really passionate opinions held. And when we drafted this bill we really worked hard to focus on what we were attempting to do in Nebraska. And, Senator Bolz, you asked a really good question about the size of the elephant and how to go forward. Any ideas that you would have, we would love to go forward and have your input on. Clearly the Aging Task Force and the Poverty Task Force that we've had in the past are giant, significant issues that, you know, you do have to deal with the elephant. But in addition to that, I would like to say that the fact that we have the University of Nebraska as a worldwide expert in weather preparedness, climate change, whatever you want to call it, we have their input, we have their incredible expertise. They are sought around the world for their...what they have presented. So it's not the same situation where we have to reinvent the wheel. They have created plans and we can go farther from what they have done. So I feel fortunate about that. To me it makes total common sense to plan for our future, to make a plan for extreme weather event mitigation and resiliency. I want to also...and to just...last summer I was...I'm grateful for Senator Larson and Senator Haar's leading of the committee to just continue to study whether or not to have a plan. That study came up with the decision that, yeah, we do need a plan. We're one of 34 states...34 states have the plan and we do not. So I think it's really important. And it was shocking to me during all those hearings last summer to keep addressing whether or not to have a plan. The schools have plans. The military has plans for weather, extreme weather events. The FEMA has plans. Nebraska doesn't have a plan. That's shocking to me. Why not a Nebraska-centric plan to deal with and mitigate any damages that would come to the many sectors, but especially to our ag sector, from all the extreme weather prepare...weather events that are occurring. And that includes, I mean, there's so many different things. There can be channels made to help deal with flooding. There are all sorts of ideas on how to go forward with this. So to say that, you know, I know that Senator Bolz is saying it's a big thing, we've got to deal with it, yeah, it's big but we

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also have a foot...we have a really big step up by the incredible expertise at the university. And so I hope you'll forward this to the body. Thanks so much for listening today so carefully. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Thank you, Senator. [LB646]

SENATOR PANSING BROOKS: Thank you. [LB646]

SENATOR WATERMEIER: Questions of the senator? Thank you for your testimony and that will close today's hearing on LB646. [LB646]

SENATOR PANSING BROOKS: Thank you. [LB646]