



Testimony in support of Legislative Bill 1207
Before the Executive Board of the 106th Nebraska Legislature
February 12, 2020

Chairman Hilgers, members of the committee, my name is Westin Miller, W-E-S-T-I-N M-I-L-L-E-R, I'm the Director of Public Policy for Civic Nebraska. We're a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization committed to creating a more modern and robust democracy for all Nebraskans.

Civic Nebraska supports improving our redistricting process any way we can -- through an independent commission, through a bill like 1207, or through good legislative rules. We just want the process to be transparent and accessible.

We support the provisions of LB1207, but as you consider whether to advance this bill, I do want to point out one thing a little unusual about LB1207, which is really a quirk of the broader redistricting conversation. Most of the major issues this body discusses -- property taxes, school funding, prison overcrowding, and even other election issues like Voter ID and voting by mail -- most of these issues are constantly relevant. They have a consistent annual queue of bills from year to year, and are therefore surrounded by constant chatter. If one of your constituents wants to know about property taxes, they need only do a quick google search or listen to NET for more than 30 minutes. You don't need to make much of an effort to make that information available.

Redistricting is different. This once-a-decade process is dense, it can be confusing, and, regardless of the reality, is perceived by many of your constituents as a highly partisan process lacking transparency.

That's why, as an organization dedicated to improving public trust in the electoral process, we are asking you today to, regardless of whether or not you plan to vote for LB1207, to advance it to the floor so your constituents can see a robust floor debate about redistricting. Let your constituents watch online, let the press write about it, and give this once-a-decade issue at least 3 hours of discussion.

I think that discussion has tremendous value to the state, regardless of what happens to LB1207.

I'm happy to answer any questions, otherwise thank you all for your time.