

**COLLABORATION MEMBERS**

Nebraska Council of School Administrators

Nebraska Association of School Boards

Nebraska State Education Association

Schools Taking Action for Children's Education (STANCE)

Greater Nebraska Schools Association

Nebraska Rural Community Schools Association

Educational Service Units Coordinating Council

Stand for Schools

DATE: July 17, 2020

TO: Members of Nebraska Legislature

RE: Continued LB 1106 opposition

Dear Senators:

As the Legislature reconvenes to complete its work for the 106th session, members of Nebraska's Education Collaboration write once again to clarify our collective opposition to LB 1106, proposed amendments and those brought forth since the March recess. Proposed changes to LB 1106 have not resulted in a change of position as we have illustrated in letters to you regarding the early version of LB 1106 (LB 974) dated February 27th, and again on April 28th. Despite what you may have heard, there is not an urban/rural, or equalized/non-equalized division as it relates to LB 1106. School districts, large and small, urban and rural, educational service units, school boards, teachers, and administrators stand united in opposition.

Since the March recess, we have shared our concerns with several Senators. While the potential impact of LB 1106 may vary from district to district there are overriding concerns that are shared by all 244 public school districts:

Erosion of local control: LB 1106 severely limits local control by giving school district leadership very little flexibility as to how they can use revenue, making planning for future needs difficult. Districts have locally elected leaders who want to keep tax rates as low as possible. School spending growth has averaged just 3.5% annually as result.

Sustainability: Funding for this proposal is not sustainable, especially with pandemic-related costs and revenue reduction, which will likely result in cuts to TEEOSA and other priorities. The revenue growth identified to fund LB 1106 is a risky proposition. We are concerned that when revenue fails to meet LB 1106 obligations—as is currently happening in the COVID-19 pandemic, before the bill has even been debated—TEEOSA will be the first to be cut. Mechanisms within LB 1106 intended for districts to make up the difference in shortfalls DO NOT make schools “whole”.

Stability: Many of the bill's elements will result in less stable revenues for schools.

While the bill number has changed, our concerns remain consistent. Any one of the members from our organization can share specific examples and show data and modeling to illustrate the real effects of these and other concerns. As we have shared in previous letters, we remain committed to finding solutions that do not harm schools and the children they serve.