From: Kopsa, Ryan
To: Kopsa, Ryan
Cc: Pinkerman, Justin
Subject: Governor"s Office Daily Update - 2-21-20
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Ag Valley Co-op
Eustis, NE

Commodity	Delivery	Price	Basis	Date (as of)
Corn	Feb 2020	3.54	-25.00	07:44
Corn	Dec 2020	3.48	-40.00	07:44
Milo	Feb 2020	2.91	-88.00	07:44
Milo	Dec 2020	3.03	-85.00	07:44
Soybeans	Feb 2020	7.99	-95.00	07:44
Soybeans	Dec 2020	8.13	-105.00	07:44
Wheat	Feb 2020	4.07	-70.00	07:44
Wheat	Jul 2020	4.22	-70.00	07:44

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KSCJ: Linehan Hopes To Bolster Support For Nebraska Property Tax Bill
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OWH: Debate pauses, negotiations continue on Nebraska Legislature's main property tax reduction plan

LINCOLN — Lawmakers put a major property tax and school aid measure on pause Thursday while the bill's chief sponsor works on building support.

Speaker of the Legislature Jim Scheer of Norfolk ended debate on Legislative Bill 974 after discussion hit the three-hour mark. The measure seeks to ratchet down property taxes by increasing and redistributing state aid to schools.

Scheer's practice has been to pull bills from the first-round agenda after three hours of debate. Legislative sponsors must prove that they have enough votes to advance those bills before they will be scheduled for debate again.

State Sen. Lou Ann Linehan of Elkhorn, who chairs the Revenue Committee, said she has "32½ or 33" votes to end a filibuster, even if not all of those senators will vote to advance the bill. She said she hopes to resume the debate early next week.

"The reality is I have the votes, but we need a break," she said.

Others questioned her vote count, saying they believe the bill would fall well short of 33.

Between now and then, Linehan said she plans to meet with school officials, who have been united in their opposition to LB 974. She said she would be willing to make some changes to the bill but not in sections that would tighten limits on school budget growth and property tax levies.

She also wants to get the message across to legislative leaders that getting LB 974 passed is critical to getting support for a business tax incentives package.

A group of rural senators blocked last year's business tax incentive bill after the session's major property tax relief plan stalled for lack of votes.

Sen. Wendy DeBoer of Bennington, who offered her own version of a property tax and state aid bill, called for lawmakers to work on a compromise that brings opposing sides together. She said such a compromise established the framework for the current school aid formula, which also sought to reduce property taxes.

"We've got to find a solution that works, mostly, for everyone," DeBoer said.

Thursday afternoon, Taylor Gage, spokesman for Gov. Pete Ricketts, said, "Property tax relief is the most important priority in the Legislature, and it's time for senators and stakeholders to rally around LB 974 to get the job done."

One option could be an amendment offered by Sen. John McCollister of Omaha, which would boost the state's Property Tax Credit Fund to $380 million a year, up from $275 million currently. The credits offset a portion of the property taxes levied on homes, businesses and agricultural land. The amount of the credit is based on the valuation of the property.

LB 974 represents the culmination of months of wrangling among Revenue Committee members, Gov. Pete

Ricketts and other interested groups. It has been driven particularly by pressure from farmers and ranchers, who saw their property taxes shoot up as the valuation of agricultural land soared.
Nebraska school organizations have lined up in opposition. They argue that the bill would squeeze funding for schools and be fiscally unsustainable. It tightens limits on school property tax levies and on school budget growth.
LB 974 would reduce the property valuations used in calculating school property taxes. Valuations for agricultural land would drop to 55% of actual value, down from 75% now. Home valuations would drop to 87%, down from 100% now. An earlier version of the bill would have put home valuations at 85%.
The bill also would direct more aid to the state's smaller, rural school districts, which no longer qualify for equalization aid. Such aid is meant to fill the gap between what schools need to educate students and the amount they can raise with property taxes.
Under LB 974, the state would provide foundation aid for each student in a school and also eliminate a state aid factor called the averaging adjustment, which has benefited the state's largest schools.
It would raise taxes for one group, however. It would eliminate the state's personal property tax exemption, through which businesses and farmers do not have to pay property taxes on the first $10,000 of valuation of machinery and equipment.
By Martha Stoddard

LJS: Timeout halts property tax, school aid debate

Legislative debate on this year's major property tax relief and school aid reform bill was halted Thursday as Revenue Committee Chairwoman Lou Ann Linehan sought time to attempt to negotiate a compromise with schools that remain opposed to the landmark proposal.
Linehan said she has the votes required to continue debate on the bill (LB974) at its first-stage floor consideration, "but we need a break" that will allow time to attempt to fashion an agreement with school officials concerned about the impact of the major reform package.
"Nobody likes change," the Elkhorn senator said. "It scares them."
"We need to sit down calmly" with a mindset that "we all have to compromise" in order to enact the groundbreaking legislation, she said.
Linehan needs to show Speaker Jim Scheer of Norfolk that she has the 33 votes required by the speaker to proceed with debate on the bill.
"I have the votes," she said, "33 votes — or 32½ votes."
If the bill moves forward, it eventually would need at least 33 votes to break a filibuster waged by its opponents.
During the timeout period, Linehan said, "we will be meeting with school officials."
Opposition to the bill has centered in metropolitan Omaha and Lincoln, where school officials believe they will lose future funding support under terms of the legislation.
But, Linehan said, Lincoln already is headed toward "a $20 million loss if we don't do anything."
That loss of funding support for Lincoln schools would be triggered under the current state aid formula because of an increase in property valuations, she said.
Before Linehan's timeout, Sen. Wendy DeBoer of Bennington filed a motion to bracket the bill, a legislative maneuver that would shelve the proposal for the remainder of this year's session.
"Education opposes this bill," she argued. "It's bad for Nebraska and bad for our kids."
Linehan said "it makes sense to pause," meet with school officials over the weekend and "come back early next week" to resume consideration of the measure.
"Our job is to take care of every child in the state," she said. "I think it's doable."
Although Gov. Pete Ricketts is not directly involved in the newest effort to reach an agreement, Linehan said, "I feel the governor is with us. He understands we need to work this out."
By Don Walton

AP: Key senator hopes to meet with schools on property tax bill

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — A Nebraska senator who is pushing the Legislature's main bill to lower property taxes said

Thursday she hopes to reach a deal with opponents who are trying to derail it out of concern that it could hurt the state's K-12 public schools.
Sen. Lou Ann Linehan, of Omaha, said she and other senators will try to find an agreement with school officials who are lobbying against the measure.
"We want to sit down with the schools and see how we can go forward," she said during legislative debate.
The bill has won support from farm and business groups and Gov. Pete Ricketts because it would lower taxes that have risen over the last decade. But school administrators, school boards and the state teachers' union argue it would hinder their long-term spending flexibility.
"This bill is bad for Nebraska and it's bad for our kids," said Sen. Wendy DeBoer, of Bennington, who opposed the measure.
The bill would boost state aid to schools by about $520 million over three years and redistribute it so that smaller, rural schools get a larger increase. In exchange, it would lower property taxes by restricting school districts' ability to tax and spend and requiring voter approval of certain tax increases.
Lawmakers debated the bill Thursday but passed over it without taking a vote. To bring it to a vote, Linehan has to show that she has support from at least 33 of the Legislature's 49 state senators. It's unclear whether she has the votes.

LJS: Nebraska senator who introduced 'red flag' bill said he was threatened by gun enthusiasts

Lincoln Sen. Adam Morfeld has gotten strong pushback on a bill he introduced last session, and a veiled threat on a gun store Facebook page.
Morfeld's bill (LB58), known as a "red flag" proposal, would allow a court to intervene in extreme cases where people have demonstrated they are a danger to themselves or others, have access to a firearm and have made threats of violence.
Morfeld said that on Sunday, a person posting on the Facebook page of Lincoln's Deguns.net Firearms Sales and Service suggested that someone should take the senator for a "helicopter ride," which he interprets as a reference to political assassinations carried out by military juntas. In these "death flights," dissidents are pushed from helicopters over oceans, rivers or mountains.
An Omaha man who is a gun enthusiast, and who has posted the defiant expression "Molon Labe," or "Come and Take (Them)," on his Facebook page, wrote "Helicopter ride?????" on the Deguns.net post.
Cody Thomas, spokesman for the Nebraska State Patrol, confirmed the state's law enforcement agency received the report Tuesday from Morfeld and is investigating the post.
Morfeld said he and his fiancee are concerned for their safety. The gun store's Facebook page published Morfeld's home address with a photo of him and a red X through it in encouraging people to oppose his bill.
In a column this week, Gov. Pete Ricketts wrote about "Protecting the Right to Bear Arms," in which he said Morfeld's bill would be "a clear violation of due process rights under the guise of public safety. LB58 would create a judicial weapon for anti-gun activists who wish to roll back the gun rights enshrined in both our federal and state constitutions."
He encouraged people to contact their state senators to tell them they are opposed to Morfeld's bill.
The National Rifle Association sent out an "In case you missed it" alert Wednesday under the subject line: "Nebraska Gov. Pete Ricketts denounces a dangerous 'Red Flag' bill."
The Lincoln senator said the governor and other advocates can reasonably disagree on the policy merits of the bill. "But to lie about the judicial process that's put in place and to call it a dangerous bill creates dangerous rhetoric that legitimizes extremists and concerns otherwise reasonable people," Morfeld said Thursday.
And to call it a judicial weapon is inflammatory, he said.
Ricketts said in the column that it's important to be vigilant against legislative attempts to erode Second Amendment rights and that LB58 would infringe on the right to bear arms in Nebraska.
Ricketts spokesman Taylor Gage says the governor's column is accurate and there are no grounds for Morfeld's false accusations.
According to the bill, an affidavit could be filed with the court by a family member, household member, law enforcement or a school superintendent if it is perceived that there is a danger from a person with a gun. If the

court finds that person poses a significant risk of injuring himself or herself or others with a firearm, that person could be temporarily prohibited from purchasing and possessing guns and required to turn over their guns while the order is in effect.
Due process, according to the bill, would allow the respondent the right to a timely hearing before the protection order is made permanent. It's in effect for 12 months if not rescinded or renewed.
Morfeld said he introduced the bill at the request of the Lincoln Police Department and the Sarpy County Sheriff's Office. At the same time, he was looking for solutions after the 2018 Parkland, Florida, shootings that killed 17 people and injured 17 others.
Judiciary Committee members voted 5-2, with Omaha Sen. Justin Wayne not voting, to advance the bill from committee. Voting against advancing the bill were Sens. Julie Slama of Peru and Tom Brandt of Plymouth. Voting in favor were Sens. Morfeld, Ernie Chambers, Wendy DeBoer, Steve Lathrop and Patty Pansing Brooks.
The bill does not have a priority designation. If it is not debated or advanced this year, it would die at the end of the session.
By JoAnne Young

OWH: Rita Sanders, former Bellevue mayor, will seek District 45 seat in Nebraska Legislature

LINCOLN — Former Bellevue Mayor Rita Sanders has announced her candidacy to represent District 45 in the Nebraska Legislature.
Sanders, a 61-year-old Republican, joins two other Bellevue residents, Susan Hester and Doug Cook, who have filed so far for the post. State Sen. Sue Crawford of Bellevue, who currently represents District 45, is barred by term limits from seeking reelection.
Sanders said in a press release that she’s already gained the “strong support” from several top Republican officials, including Gov. Pete Ricketts and U.S. Sen. Deb Fischer.
“I enjoyed working for our community as mayor and look forward to representing District 45 in Lincoln to ensure the quality of our schools, support our veterans, reduce our property tax burden and continue to bring good-paying jobs to Nebraska,” Sanders said.
Sanders and her husband own a retirement home in Bellevue. She served two terms as mayor of Bellevue before declining to run for a third term in 2018.
By Paul Hammel

LJS: Former Bellevue mayor seeks legislative seat

Former Bellevue Mayor Rita Sanders announced Thursday she will seek the District 45 seat in the Legislature.
Sanders' announcement was accompanied by endorsements from leading Republican officeholders, including Gov. Pete Ricketts, Sen. Deb Fischer, Rep. Jeff Fortenberry and Rep. Don Bacon.
Sanders was elected mayor of Bellevue in 2010 and reelected in 2014.
If elected, she said, she would work in the Legislature to "ensure the quality of our schools," support veterans, reduce property taxes and "continue to bring good-paying jobs to Nebraska."
"Rita was a champion for Bellevue during her time as mayor," Ricketts said.
Sanders and her husband developed and own the Richmont Senior Living Retirement Campus in Bellevue.
District 45 covers eastern Sarpy County, including much of Bellevue and Offutt Air Force Base.
The district currently is represented in the nonpartisan Legislature by Sen. Sue Crawford of Bellevue, a Democrat who is completing her second and final four-year term.
By Don Walton

LJS: State seeks to block installation of historical horse racing terminals at Fonner Park

The Nebraska Attorney General's Office sought to stop wagering on historical horse racing at Fonner Park from getting out of the gates Thursday.
State horse racing regulators made an illegal decision to expand gambling by approving the terminals for the

Grand Island track last year, Assistant Attorney General Ryan Post said as a lawsuit seeking to invalidate their authorization continues.
And the Nebraska State Racing Commission made that decision in contradiction of its own regulations and after the Attorney General's Office warned that it would spawn legal challenges, he argued during a court hearing.
"The commission's openly daring the state to shut them down," Post said.
But lawyers for Fonner Park, the commission and the company that makes the terminals countered that the state had not proven that the machines are not simply new forms of already legal pari-mutuel wagering in Nebraska.
The machines may look like slot machines, but they're not, the lawyers argued.
"What this case is not is an expanded gambling attempt," said Brian Brislen, one of the commission's attorneys.
Lancaster County District Judge Andrew Jacobsen took no action Thursday on the state's request.
Previous attempts by the Nebraska Legislature to enact historical horse racing or to have voters approve it at the ballot box failed.
But the State Racing Commission's narrow decision to approve the wagering method for Fonner Park marks the latest attempt to draw people to horse tracks as the industry in Nebraska has slid into decline.
Fonner Park officials had hoped to have 50 PariMAX terminals up and running to coincide with the start of the track's live meet Friday.
Fonner Park CEO Chris Kotulak said the track will wait to install the terminals until the judge has ruled.
Gambling with the Good Life, an organization opposing expanded gambling in Nebraska, has filed a friend of the court brief in the case, backing the state's position and arguing slot-style gambling directly contributes to an array of social ills.
Much of the state's argument for a temporary injunction preventing Fonner Park from installing the terminals focused on the process.
The horse racing terminals allow a bettor to make wagers on unidentified horses in previously run races from across the U.S., company officials say.
But historical horse racing is only considered pari-mutuel wagering because the industry says so, Post said.
Unlike live or simulcast races, no certificate is issued to the bettor after a wager is made, he said.
Plus, the races have already been run, which contradicts state requirements that a pari-mutuel wager be on a live or simulcast race, Post said.
Letting Fonner Park install the machines would be a public nuisance and cause irreparable harm, he said.
But no one would be harmed by the terminals because they're going into a place where people are expecting to make these kinds of wagers, attorneys for Fonner Park and the commission argued.
The terminals should be judged on how they operate, not how they look, said Scott Lautenbaugh, who represents PariMAX.
Just because they have flashing lights doesn't mean they're slot machines, he said.
"I followed a tow truck around all morning," Lautenbaugh said. "It did not pay out."
After an afternoon court hearing, Jacobsen took the case under advisement but didn't give a time frame for his decision.
The Attorney General's lawsuit followed a previous lawsuit filed by two Hall County residents seeking to have the commission's decision declared unconstitutional.
That case is being heard by Jacobsen and remains pending in district court.
By Riley Johnson

LJS: Kearney YRTC youths transferred to Lincoln, Geneva, Hastings

Several youths are being transferred from the Kearney Youth Rehabilitation and Treatment Center to facilities in Lincoln, Geneva and Hastings.
Several incidents occurred at the center in recent weeks, ranging from youth escaping from the facility to staff assaults. CEO Dannette Smith said the Department of Health and Human Services is taking immediate and necessary steps to address the situation.
In a news release, she said the department is in the process of transferring several high-needs boys to its Lincoln facility. That transfer started this week and there will be up to six boys residing there by Monday, said

spokeswoman Leah Bucco-White.
The Lincoln facility provides more-intensive interventions such as targeted behavioral and trauma-based programming. The state leased space at the Lancaster County Youth Services Center for five years, with an option for another five years. Rent started at $352,946 annually.
The Nebraska Department of Correctional Services will provide extra staffing at the Lincoln facility for the next 90 days. Three Corrections staff will work alongside the HHS team inside the facility, according to the release. They will undergo the same training as HHS employees and follow the same processes and protocols.
Smith said it was critical that the facility and programming is an appropriate match for the youths served there.
In addition, three girls who are close to transitioning back into their communities have relocated to the newly renovated LaFlesche Cottage at YRTC-Geneva, a reentry program in a less-restrictive environment with a more home-like setting.
Two boys will go to the Hastings Regional Center campus, which provides residential substance-abuse treatment.
By JoAnne Young

Scottsbluff SH: Debates on property tax reform taking time during Nebraska Legislature's short session

As the Nebraska Legislature approaches the halfway point in its 60-day 2020 session, 482 bills must receive an initial hearing and about 100 of them could be designated as priorities.
During a conference call on Thursday, District 48 State Sen. John Stinner of Gering said the bill currently taking up much of their debate time is LB 974. The 59-page bill, introduced by the Revenue Committee, would reduce property taxes on Nebraska's farmers, ranchers and homeowners. The bill's goal is to reduce the state's reliance on property taxes to support K-12 education.
"Currently, I think we're short on votes to pass it," Stinner said. "We have 27 or 28 votes, but we need 33, so it might be pulled. Hopefully, we can bring people together and make some adjustments and try to get something across the finish line on property tax."
Stinner said he understands there have been concerns from schools about both current and future funding under the bill. However, the Legislature is trying to get the bill as revenue neutral as possible.
The Legislature has struggled over property tax reform for years as competing interests keep popping up. Property taxes are also the top concern among Nebraskans.
An editorial in the Feb. 19 Omaha World-Herald was blunt: "It's time to give state senators an ultimatum. Enough is enough. It's time to get it done...This time around, failure is not an option."
Another major bill up for debate is LB 720, which creates the ImagiNE Nebraska Act to offer incentives for new businesses interested in coming to Nebraska and those wishing to expand.
"The current Nebraska Advantage Act sunsets at the end of the year," Stinner said. "Not having a major incentive program really limits our opportunities to attract and maintain business."
Stinner also spoke about his priority bill, LB 424. The bill would allow municipalities to create land banks in areas of the state outside Lincoln/Omaha. Land banks would help facilitate the return of vacant, abandoned and tax delinquent properties to productive use.
"I think land banks are important for western Nebraska to address some of the concerns we have about abandoned buildings," Stinner said. "A land bank in western Nebraska could possibly be set up as a regional group to serve municipalities around the area."
Closely related to land bank authority is LB 733, which would make a one-time transfer of $10 million from the general fund into the Rural Workforce Housing Investment Fund.
The bill got its first hearing before Stinner's Appropriations Committee. Sen. Matt Williams, who introduced the bill, said the funding might have to be spread out over several years due to the state's tight budget.
"I'm going to recommend my committee take the whole $10 million out of the rainy day fund because it's a one-time expenditure," Stinner said. "The governor likes that bill as well so I should be able to get it through."
Another point of debate during the current session has been over the state prisons. Stinner said it was interesting that after he called for sentencing reform to help overcrowding in the prisons, a possible alternative was presented.

Between October and December of 2019, the average daily population in Nebraska's prisons was 116% over their operational capacity of 4,807, the second highest in the country.
Earlier this week, Corrections Director Scott Frakes said they were considering the possibility of a private-public partnership to build a new 1,600-bed prison somewhere between Lincoln and Omaha to help deal with overcrowding.
"It was a request for information, not a request to actually build a prison," Stinner said. "I think this is going to be on everybody's radar screen in the next two to three years."
By Jerry Purvis

OWH: Obstetricians clash over Nebraska bill that would ban second-trimester abortion method

LINCOLN — Two obstetricians painted very different pictures Thursday of a proposed ban on a common second-trimester abortion method.
One told Nebraska lawmakers that the measure would prevent fetuses from suffering pain, spare women from guilt and keep health care workers from becoming hardened.
"This is a humanitarian bill," said Dr. Kathi Aultman, the medical director at a Planned Parenthood clinic in the 1980s who now works to limit abortion rights.
The other said the ban would expose women getting abortions to greater health risks and would potentially send them out of the state to end their pregnancies.
"Laws like this only harm women," said Dr. Jody Steinauer, an Omaha native who is a professor at the University of California, San Francisco and whose clinical practice includes abortions.
The two testified on opposite sides at a hearing on Legislative Bill 814, introduced by State Sen. Suzanne Geist of Lincoln and 21 co-sponsors. Geist has named it her priority for the year.
The bill would ban an abortion procedure used from week 13 through week 24 of a woman's pregnancy. The procedure, which involves dilating a woman's cervix and removing the fetus in pieces, is known medically as dilation and evacuation. Opponents call it dismemberment abortion.
Geist argued that the proposal would not harm women's access to second-trimester abortions in Nebraska but would do away with an abortion method she called immoral.
"This practice truly has no place in modern medicine and should not be happening in our society," she said.
LB 814 would prohibit abortions in which clamps, forceps or similar instruments are used to remove pieces of a living fetus. It would not apply if suction is used to remove pieces. It also would not apply if the fetus was dead before being removed.
The bill would make it a Class IV felony, punishable by up to two years in prison and a $10,000 fine, for a doctor to perform such an abortion. The bill would also allow a doctor to be sued for performing the procedure. The woman having such an abortion could not be charged.
Aultman said an easy alternative allowed by the bill would be for the doctor to terminate the pregnancy before removing the fetus. She said that could be done by injecting the fetus with digoxin or potassium chloride or by cutting the umbilical cord. The injections are done through the abdomen, similar to the procedure used for amniocentesis testing.
Steinauer said such injections increase the health risks to women, along with causing more pain. She said that the substances used to terminate the pregnancy can get into a woman's system and that there are case studies of them causing cardiac arrest and sepsis.
The bill also carries legal risks, according to Scout Richters, who testified for the ACLU of Nebraska. She said it would probably run afoul of women's constitutional right to abortion.
She said a dozen other states have passed laws banning such abortions. But the laws are in effect in only two states, neither of which have abortion providers that perform second-trimester abortions.
The rest have been ruled unconstitutional or are enjoined while they face legal challenges. In June, the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear an appeal of an 11th Circuit Court of Appeals ruling permanently barring Alabama's law from taking effect.
But Marion Miner, speaking on behalf of the Nebraska Catholic Conference, said Nebraska is in a different position than those other states. A key issue in those states has been the prevalence of the method. National studies have

found that it is used in 95% of second-trimester abortions.
A report published by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services showed that there were 32 dilation and evacuation abortions in the state in 2018, or 18% of those done at 13 weeks or later. None of those who testified Thursday could explain why Nebraska's numbers are different from the rest of the country.
By Martha Stoddard

LJS: Nebraska Judiciary Committee hears medical testimony on dismemberment abortion bill

Both supporters and opponents of a dismemberment abortion bill brought in medical personnel to offer testimony Thursday on the safety, humanity and effects on women and their doctors of the most common second-trimester abortion method.
The bill (LB814) would prohibit dismemberment abortions on a live fetus and would provide for criminal penalties for doctors who perform them, as well as mechanisms for civil lawsuits and stopping the procedure.
"Regardless of our individual opinions on abortion," Lincoln Sen. Suzanne Geist said at the Legislature's Judiciary Committee hearing, "I think we can agree that no living creature, and certainly no living human being, should be subject to this barbaric act in the name of women's health."
Dr. Kathi Aultman, a retired board-certified obstetrics and gynecology physician who was a medical director for Planned Parenthood of Northeast Florida, led the proponent testimony. She performed dismemberment abortions, usually done between 13 to 24 weeks of gestation, and said she had also had an abortion herself.
She said it matters that the fetus is not alive during a dismemberment abortion because of evidence the fetus feels pain at 20 weeks. And a recent review of literature showed that may be the case as early as 12 weeks.
"I support this bill because it prevents the infliction of needless pain and suffering on innocent human beings, and preserves the integrity of the medical profession," Aultman said.
When she did the procedure, she said, she was focused on making it as painless as possible for her patient and didn't consider fetal pain.
"I hope that you will have more compassion on these innocent human beings than I did, and pass this bill," she said.
It doesn't prevent a woman from having a dilation-and-evacuation abortion, she said.
"There's no medical reason that the baby has to be alive at the time this procedure is done, unless you're trying to get fresh fetal tissue for research or something," the doctor said.
At the time she was performing those abortions, Aultman said she felt it was a woman's right, and even got extra training to do them. But once she had a baby herself, she saw fetuses as little people and couldn't justify killing them just because they weren't wanted. She eventually came to believe she was practicing mass murder.
There's also concerns about exposing young residents to the procedure and expecting them to be compassionate in other care of patients, she said.
Kristen New, who worked with a counselor during college and graduate school at two abortion clinics, said she believed at the time abortions helped women. Things drastically changed when she observed a dismemberment abortion, she said.
She watched as the fetus pulled its leg out of the doctor's forceps, then its arm, and curled into a fetal position with its back to the forceps, she said. She believed the fetus experienced pain and was fighting for its life. She left the abortion clinic three months later, she said.
Opponents of the bill included Dr. Jody Steinauer, a Nebraska native and professor of obstetrics and gynecology at the University of California in San Francisco.
Steinauer said she strongly opposed the bill, as a doctor, teacher, Nebraskan and advocate for her patients.
"This bill is not about patient safety or about helping a physician provide quality medical care to a patient," she said. "It is a ban on a very safe method of abortion."
If the bill became law, it would make it a crime for doctors to use their best medical judgment in treating their patients, Steinauer said. She mentioned treating a patient that needed a second-trimester abortion because of a medical illness, so that she could be there to care for her other children. Another patient she treated that same day was 16 and hadn't realized she was pregnant until after the first trimester because she had irregular periods.
"It would go against my medical oath to not be able to offer the safest possible method of abortion to my patients

in the second trimester," she said.
It should be up to patients and doctors, not dictated by lawmakers, she said.
Jon Wood, a medical student at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, said appendectomies, gall bladder removal and wisdom tooth extraction are all dismemberment procedures.
"I believe that those who support this bill don't necessarily dislike dismemberment per se, but what they typically oppose is the word that comes after," Wood said.
He said bills such as this one exacerbate the state's brain drain. He would love to stay in Nebraska when he graduates but could go anywhere to practice medicine.
Every time the Legislature passes anti-evidence and intentionally inflammatory legislation such as this bill, that restricts clinicians from providing safe and effective medical procedures, or requires them to provide nonevidence-based information to patients, it is saying senators' feelings outweigh their scientific background and clinical judgment, Wood said.
"The medically underserved citizens of your state are ultimately the ones who will pay for your decision," he said.
LB814 is Geist's priority bill, which increases the likelihood it would be debated if it comes out of the Judiciary Committee.
By JoAnne Young

OWH: OPS superintendent backs measures to close age loophole on educator sexual misconduct

LINCOLN — A loophole in Nebraska law is putting kids at risk from their own schoolteachers, principals and coaches.
That was the message delivered to a panel of Nebraska lawmakers Thursday.
Education and law enforcement officials testified in support of criminalizing sex between Nebraska educators and students who are 16 or older.
Nebraska law already defines sex with a child under 16 years old as statutory rape, acknowledging that children that age are too immature to consent.
But educators who have sex with students 16 or older can escape prosecution because the age of consent for sex in Nebraska is 16.
Four bills have been introduced to make it a crime regardless of whether the student consented.
Supporters of the effort included Cheryl Logan, superintendent of Omaha Public Schools; Deputy Douglas County Attorney Molly Keane; and Tom Venzor, executive director of the Nebraska Catholic Conference.
In all, nine people, including a Grand Island school board member who said her daughter was groomed for sex by a substitute teacher, testified in favor of one or all of the bills before the Legislature's Judiciary Committee.
Each bill would protect students of high school age who are technically old enough to consent to sex under Nebraska law but vulnerable to manipulation and grooming by predatory teachers, coaches and administrators.
The bills differ in the details, varying for instance in whether they would apply only to educators or to all authority figures with control over a student, such as a foster parent or club sports coach.
The senators who sponsored them said they would be willing to work with the committee to create the best bill to address the problem.
Testifying in opposition was Christopher Eickholt, a lobbyist for the Nebraska Criminal Defense Attorneys Association who expressed concern that the language in the bills needed to be more clear, particularly when it comes to specifying the ages of the students who would be covered by the new statute.
He said the bills would "add another layer of inconsistency" to the state's sexual assault laws.
Logan testified in favor of Legislative Bill 1210, which was introduced by State Sen. Tony Vargas at the request of OPS officials.
"The purpose of this bill is to close what we believe is a loophole in current law," she said.
While existing policies allow for removal of a predatory teacher, the bill "will provide the needed legal repercussions," Logan said.
Sex with a student "should not be legally permissible simply because a young person is the age of consent," she said.
As of 2017, 22 states, including Iowa, Wyoming and Colorado, had laws making it a crime for a person of trust or

authority to have sex with a child, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.
Those laws vary in penalties and the age range covered.
The laws reflect the notion that because coaches, teachers and other trusted adults have authority over a victim, the relationship is unbalanced and there can't be genuine consent to sex.
A World-Herald investigation last year found that over a five-year period, on average, 10 Nebraska educators were caught and disciplined or prosecuted each year for sexual contact or inappropriate communication of a sexual nature with students.
Experts believe the frequency is higher because they estimate that only one in 10 student victims reports it. In some of the Nebraska cases, the students were 16 or older and there were no criminal charges, but the State Education Department revoked the educators' teaching certificates.
Lisa Albers, a Grand Island Public Schools board member, testified that a substitute teacher groomed her high school-age daughter and then had sex with her at age 17, less than two weeks after graduation.
"These laws would have protected her," Albers said.
Kids deserve a legal safety net, she said.
Venzor expressed the church's support.
"While the church across the world has had to reconcile with its past and the patterns of failure regarding child sexual abuse, we know that child sexual abuse can happen anywhere," he said. "It's a societal problem. … It can and does happen in our school systems."
Catholic schools in Nebraska enroll nearly 29,000 students.
Keane, appearing on behalf of the Nebraska County Attorneys Association, said the group favors LB 766. She said the group prefers the bill's broader language that would make it a crime for "authority figures" to have sex with children over whom they have a position of trust and authority.
Keane said she's had cases she was unable to prosecute. The language would allow prosecution of abusive clergy, for instance, or a foster parent or youth program leader, she said.
She said that under some of the bills, a coach in a school could be held accountable for sex with a student, but a coach in a private club could not.
The Nebraska State Education Association and several other education groups also backed the bills.
By Joe Dejka

OWH: Capitol Digest: Legislature advances bill that would ban out-of-network rates for emergency services

Out-of-network rates.
A bill that would prohibit Nebraska health care providers from charging patients higher, out-of-network rates for emergency services won first-round approval Thursday from state lawmakers.
Senators voted 43-0 to advance the measure to prevent "surprise medical bills" through the first of three required votes.
State Sen. Adam Morfeld of Lincoln proposed the bill to try to protect consumers from unexpected out-of-network costs during a medical emergency. Morfeld argued that unexpected medical bills are a leading cause of personal bankruptcies.
The bill received support from insurers and advocates for low-income people, but a group representing hospitals raised concerns during a legislative hearing earlier this month.
Two more votes are required before the bill goes to the governor.
Group contracts. A seemingly simple bill to allow "group contracts" with political subdivisions in other states ran into a raft of questions about whether state lawmakers were delegating too much power to the state agency that handles bids for services, the Nebraska Department of Administrative Services.
Sens. Mark Kolterman of Seward, Patty Pansing Brooks of Lincoln and John McCollister of Omaha questioned the wisdom of Legislative Bill 790.
Kolterman, who introduced a bill on public bidding last year, said LB 790 doesn't allow unsuccessful bidders the opportunity to contest decisions by the department, except to file a lawsuit. A state audit released in December questioned whether the department had adequate "internal controls" over the bidding process.

Peru Sen. Julie Slama, the sponsor of LB 790, said there were no “ghosts or ghouls” in the proposal. She said group contracts were used by 38 other states to allow the state to bargain for additional cost savings.
Time ran out before a first-round vote could be taken on the bill, which Kolterman said he’d support if it was amended.
By Paul Hammel

AP: Nebraska senators advance emergency medical services bill

A bill that would prohibit Nebraska health care providers from charging patients higher, out-of-network rates for emergency services won first-round approval Thursday from state lawmakers.
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OWH: 11 of 13 travelers who came to Omaha from cruise ship test positive for coronavirus, quarantined at UNMC

Eleven of the 13 people under quarantine on the University of Nebraska Medical Center campus have been confirmed positive for the novel coronavirus, Nebraska Medicine officials announced Thursday evening.
All 13 were tested when they arrived in Omaha on Monday after being evacuated from the Diamond Princess cruise ship docked off the coast of Japan.
The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Thursday confirmed the results of the tests conducted by the Nebraska Public Health Laboratory, which is on the UNMC campus. Two of the 13 tested negative for the illness, called COVID-19.
Three of the American travelers are being housed in the Nebraska Biocontainment Unit, and 10 are lodging in the separate National Quarantine Unit. Both are also on the UNMC campus.
Most of the travelers aren’t showing symptoms of the respiratory condition. Symptoms include cough and fever but can worsen to a more serious illness. All three in the biocontainment unit were in stable condition.
Those who tested positive will have to remain in quarantine until they have two negative tests taken 24 hours apart.
Taylor Wilson, a Nebraska Medicine spokesman, said he did not know how long that might take.
“I think this is uncharted territory,” he said.
The 13 were among 328 Americans evacuated from the virus-stricken cruise ship. The 13 were known to have tested positive for or been exposed to the virus when they arrived in Omaha.
Two infected elderly passengers taken off the quarantined ship have died, Japan’s Health Ministry said Thursday. They became the first fatalities from the vessel.
Meantime, 57 Americans who have spent the past 14 days in a separate quarantine at Camp Ashland completed their final health checks Thursday morning. With a clean bill of health, they hugged and took selfies with health care workers at the camp and began catching commercial flights for home.
There is no connection between the 57 travelers who came from the Wuhan, China, area and the 13 evacuated from the ship.
The 57 travelers, all of whom came to Nebraska on Feb. 7, are headed to spots across the country from Seattle to New York, said Joe Smith, a CDC spokesman.
About a quarter of the 57 had headed out of Omaha’s Eppley Airfield by late Thursday morning. Almost all were to be gone by Thursday night; the rest will trickle out Friday.
At Camp Ashland, a Nebraska National Guard camp about 30 miles southwest of Omaha, they were screened twice daily and have had no symptoms of the coronavirus.

“We started out with 57 healthy people,” Smith said, “and that’s what we ended up with.”
One woman in her 40s was taken to the Nebraska Medical Center for evaluation late last week after developing a cough. She twice tested negative for the coronavirus and was taken back to Camp Ashland on Saturday.
The departure of the 57 closes out a portion of the first federal quarantine in roughly 50 years.
For them, the process has been difficult and frustrating, Smith said, but they have proved to be resilient.
On Thursday, everyone at Camp Ashland was up early. After their final health check, the masks came off and the cameras came out for photos with the federal workers who have overseen their stay.
“It was selfies and high-fives,” Smith said.
A little girl presented a thank-you card to one of the federal workers who has led yoga sessions at the camp. In the card, the girl’s mother had drawn a picture of the worker doing yoga in a mask. Smith said the worker teared up when she saw it.
Because some people among the 57 had expressed concerns about negative attention that might come with their time in quarantine, there was no fanfare associated with their departure.
Most people at the airport appeared unconcerned. But at least one traveler was taking precautions. P.J. Caplan, a frequent traveler who was returning home to Augusta, Georgia, donned a mask. He also carried Clorox wipes and vitamin C tablets.
Caplan said doesn’t usually take such steps, but he will do so occasionally when influenza season is at its peak so he doesn’t bring germs home to his family.
“I just did this because I heard about the quarantine they’re doing in Omaha,” he said.
Smith, the CDC official, stressed that the 57 pose no threat to their fellow passengers or to the communities to which they’re returning.
“They’re ready to be normal people again,” he said. “They’re ready to be back to their lives.”
By Julie Anderson

OWH: Defense Secretary tours StratCom's new $1.3 billion command center, aims to modernize nuclear arsenal

Defense Secretary Mark Esper stopped by Offutt Air Force Base for his first tour of the new U.S. Strategic Command headquarters since it was completed in December.
He got a close-up look at what $1.3 billion can buy. And he liked what he saw.
“It’s great to see this new headquarters,” he told a gathering of more than 800 military and civilian workers in the atrium of the new Gen. Curtis E. LeMay Building. “I remember the old one. This one is quite (a bit) better.”
The trip to Offutt was part of a two-day swing through the Midwest that also included a visit Wednesday to Minot Air Force Base, where he visited a field of intercontinental ballistic missiles and viewed B-52 bombers capable of carrying nuclear weapons.
Esper, 55, served 21 years in the Army, National Guard and reserves after graduating in 1986 from the U.S. Military Academy. He is a veteran of the 1991 Persian Gulf War.
He later worked as a congressional staffer, including a stint with then-Sen. Chuck Hagel, R-Neb., and later as a lobbyist. He was named Secretary of the Army by President Donald Trump in 2017, and became Secretary of Defense two years later.
At Offutt on Thursday he met with Adm. Charles Richard, StratCom’s commander, and toured the new LeMay Building with him.
The building was dedicated in November, seven years after ground was broken and more than two years behind schedule. The project was plagued with difficulties: drainage problems that forced a redesign, mold growing in the ductwork, floods, a fire, even a tornado. When initial bids came in over budget, designers had to scale back the size of the building.
After the tour, he ate lunch with Offutt airmen before taking questions from the workers during a town hall meeting.
Esper also received a tour of the base, including the southern portion that was devastated by flooding in March 2019. The floods destroyed 137 structures, including 44 buildings with more than 1.2 million square feet of office space. More than 3,000 Offutt employees were displaced by the floods. Damage totaled at least $790 million and

could reach $1 billion.
In his public comments, Esper talked up the need to modernize the nation's nuclear triad, including nuclear submarines, long-range strategic bombers and land-based missiles. StratCom's duties include maintaining the nuclear arsenal and preparing nuclear war plans.
"Russia and China are both modernizing and expanding their nuclear arsenals," Esper told reporters at Minot. "We need to have the confidence that our triad and related systems are effective."
The Congressional Budget Office has estimated the first 10 years of the modernization plan will cost nearly $500 billion, and that over a 30-year span the total would hit $1.2 trillion, including the cost of sustaining the current and future force.
The key new weapons are a replacement for the current Minuteman 3 ICBM, a new-generation Columbia-class ballistic missile submarine fleet, and a new long-range bomber, dubbed the B-21 Raider, to replace the B-2 stealth bomber that is to be retired even as the older B-52 bomber remains. The B-52, which entered service in the 1960s, is getting new engines and other major upgrades.
Last week, the Trump administration unveiled a proposed 2021 budget that included nearly $46 billion for nuclear weapons, divided between the Defense Department, which is responsible for operating the weapons, and the Energy Department, which maintains the warhead stockpile.
Under current planning, the Pentagon alone would spend a combined $85 billion in the coming five years for the new bomber, the new ICBM, the Columbia-class submarine and modernization of the communications and warning systems that support the whole system of nuclear command and control.
"I think we're on the right path," Esper said. "This administration is investing billions of dollars in all three legs."
At the same time, Esper told the gathering of Offutt employees, the Defense Department must prioritize its spending with an emphasis on meeting the challenge of "great power conflict" with Russia and China.
"We are in an era of fiscal constraint," he said. "It's important that we're making the best use of our people and money."
By Steve Liewer

LJS: Justice Department: Walthill board violated federal law by denying church permit to build

The Justice Department on Thursday filed a lawsuit against Walthill, alleging the village on the Omaha Reservation in northeast Nebraska unlawfully denied a nondenominational, multi-ethnic Christian congregation a permit to construct a new church there in 2017.
Light of the World Gospel Ministries already had sued the village over the denial.
That lawsuit is pending in U.S. District Court of Nebraska, where the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice filed the new lawsuit.
In it, the government alleges that Walthill violated federal law by imposing a substantial burden on the church's religious exercise without adequate justification and treated the church worse than comparable nonreligious assemblies and institutions.
"Treating places of worship less favorably than nonreligious assemblies is unlawful discrimination against religious exercise," said Assistant Attorney General Eric Dreiband of the Civil Rights Division. "The Department of Justice is committed to ensuring that governments do not deny congregations their federally protected right to exercise their faith through construction of places of worship."
Joe Kelly, U.S. Attorney for the District of Nebraska, said Walthill is "obligated to treat religious assemblies and institutions on equal terms with nonreligious assemblies and institutions."
He said the complaint reflects a commitment to protect the religious liberties of all people in Nebraska.
Specifically, the complaint alleges that Sept. 13, 2017, the village denied Light of the World's application for a special-use permit to construct a church on property it owns in downtown Walthill. During the same period, the village approved construction of a library and an education center.
The complaint alleges the denial of Light of the World's application violates a provision of the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act, known as the "equal terms" provision, that requires religious assemblies to be treated at least as well as nonreligious assemblies.
The lawsuit also alleges that Walthill's actions imposed a substantial burden on the church's religious exercise in

violation of another provision of the act.
In June 2018, the Justice Department announced its Place to Worship Initiative, which focuses on provisions of that act that protect the rights of places of worship and other religious institutions to worship on their land.
The Religious Liberty Task Force was formed a month later.
Omaha attorney Jason Grams said Thursday the Village of Walthill does not comment on pending litigation.
But in the lawsuit filed by the church, the village argued its permitting procedure didn't constitute a "substantial burden" on the church to comply.
Even if the Religious Land Use Act applies, Lincoln attorney Jerry Pigsley wrote on behalf of the board, Walthill has a compelling interest in protecting the governmental interest in public health and safety, and its actions were the least-restrictive means of furthering that interest.
In the 2018 lawsuit filed by Light of the World, the church alleged that the village board was violating its First Amendment rights of free speech and assembly by passing zoning laws designed to discriminate against the church.
Light of the World, which on its website calls itself a Christian church with a diverse, multicultural congregation, first applied for a building permit in December 2013, saying the converted funeral home it occupies at 214 Main St. had become too crowded to accommodate the approximately 200 people who regularly attend worship services and other events. The church had bought several dilapidated buildings across the street, with the intention of demolishing them and building a new church.
By Lori Pilger

OWH Editorial: State, local officials must be prepared for new action on vaping by youths

Vaping-related lung injuries have now affected more than 2,600 Americans, with 59 deaths so far, federal health officials report. Meanwhile, local school officials in Nebraska continue to express concern about the major increase in vaping by students.
Nebraska officials last year rightly increased the vaping age to 19, and the federal government has now raised it to 21. State officials should be prepared for further action as conditions warrant. An interim study to compile comprehensive information in preparation for the 2021 legislative session is a prudent option. State senators need to be fully informed in order to make sound, careful decisions, given this issue's complexities.
Among the policy options are penalties against underage users or retail sellers of the devices; bans on particular types of the devices; and an outright ban on vaping in public indoor spaces
About 27.5% of high school and 10.5% of middle school students reported current use of e-cigarettes in 2019, according to the Journal of the American Medical Association. That equates to about one in four U.S. high school students, up from about one in 10 three years ago. Such findings are in line with testimony by local school officials in Nebraska during legislative hearings.
Iowa lawmakers, too, are debating vaping issues. One proposal would outlaw vaping in all public places, including restaurants and government buildings.
"The body of literature, as it stands right now, indicates there is a lot we don't know about the effects of vaping in general — including the effects of secondhand exposure," said Dr. Caitlin Pedati, Iowa's state medical director and state epidemiologist. "There is quite a range of these devices in terms of how they are manufactured. And there's also quite a range in terms of the liquids you can put into them."
Local school districts, too, face decisions on what steps are appropriate to address the problem. The Fairbury Public Schools in southeast Nebraska, for example, now requires random nicotine testing of all students who participate in extracurricular activities. Health officials warn about the addictive capability of nicotine-laden e-cigarettes.
Vaping presents "a huge problem" for schools, says Stephen Grizzle, the school district's superintendent. "We want to provide a safe, substance-free school as best we can, and we're just hoping that through the implementation of the policy, that we're helping students make the best decision."
Nebraska officials at the state and local levels must be resolute in monitoring conditions, informing themselves well to take new steps as conditions warrant in addressing this ongoing health challenge for young people.

OWH: No to discrimination

I disagree with Gov. Ricketts' assessment that approving of LGBT protections would place additional burdens on the state. It is the duty of the state to protect all citizens, and LGBT people have had more than their share of discrimination.
Sexual orientation and gender identification are not conscious choices. Religion is a choice. It isn't logical to protect those who willfully discriminate. Bad religion discriminates, let's stop supporting it.
Stanley Gocek, Blair, Neb.

LJS Editorial, 2/21: Sentencing reform key to easing crisis

On Tuesday, the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services took a small step toward addressing the state's prison overcrowding crisis by announcing it is seeking requests for information for the construction of a new 1,600 bed prison between Lincoln and Omaha.
In the next few weeks, the Nebraska Legislature can take another, more immediate and equally necessary step by approving Sen. Patty Pansing Brooks' LB131. The sentencing reform measure would require a minimum sentence be no more than half the years of the maximum number of years. So, for example, if the maximum sentence is 20 years, the minimum could be no more than 10 years.
If passed, LB131 would allow offenders to become parole-eligible sooner, thereby reducing overcrowding year after year with a far lower cost than the more than $200 million cost of building a new prison, much less the costs for its staffing and operations.
Opposition to the bill has comes from those who believe that those convicted of manslaughter, aggravated assault, burglary and sexual assault of a child should not be able to become parole eligible until a year or two before the maximum sentence ends – concerns that could be addressed with amendments to the bill – and those who claim that the guidelines would tie the hands of judges in sentencing.
But it is within the Legislature's purview to make the sentencing change and require it of judges.
In many ways, the passage of LB131 is more important and effective as a measure to reduce the state's prison overcrowding than the new prison proposal.
The Corrections Department now faces a July 1 deadline to lower its inmate population to 140% of capacity and has admitted it probably will fail to do so. That could lead to the immediate release of all parole-eligible prisoners.
Even if Corrections is able to reduce the population to the 140% capacity mandated by state law in the next year, the prison population crisis will continue. And the state cannot wait the three to four years it would take, at a minimum, to build a new prison before it takes substantial action to cut the number of inmates in the system.
There is, of course, a significant hang-up to the LB131 plan that's created by the overcrowding it is intended to address. Because the prisons are so full and the system faces staffing and overtime issues, there is little

LJS Local View: Abortion access vital to equality

As we enter a very important year for the future of reproductive rights and abortion access, it's imperative that we also recognize how political extremism puts women and their families at risk. Here in Nebraska, Gov. Pete Ricketts has been working tirelessly to deny Nebraskans access to abortion care and take away control over their personal medical decisions.
Just last year, Gov. Ricketts declared Nebraska a "pro-life state" and signed legislation requiring physicians to inform patients that they could reverse their abortions after taking an abortion pill -- a dangerous claim not backed by science that anti-abortionists have been pushing for years.
The state's efforts don't stop there. Legislators have even gone so far as to introduce a bill that would ban some abortions altogether, imposing their own beliefs on other people's decisions about their own health care and destinies.
As a mother and nurse for more than 40 years, my commitment to ensuring that a woman's right to abortion is protected by the Constitution is both personal and professional.
I raised two sons in Nebraska as a single mom. Abortion wasn't the right decision for me and my family, but it's

clear to me that a person cannot have true civil rights without full control over when and if they have children. Politicians have no business imposing their own personal views on our lives.

Still, elected officials in the state have been able to successfully impose these beliefs. In fact, 41% of Nebraska women live in a county with no access to an abortion clinic.

As a healthcare professional and former member of the Nebraska State Board of Nursing, I understand the negative health consequences of forcing women to carry a pregnancy to term against their will by denying them the option of abortion.

Too often, women are forced to stay pregnant because they don't have access to abortion care, are stigmatized or shamed about their decisions or cannot afford the procedure. We also know that carrying an unwanted pregnancy to term can lead to mental trauma and financial insecurity. In fact, most women who decide to have abortions cite economic reasons for making that choice.

Two-thirds of women who have abortions are already mothers -- they are uniquely qualified to understand what it means to have children. Rather than second guess women about basic decisions that impact their health, economic futures and ability to provide for their existing children, we should trust women to make the right choices for themselves and their families. Research shows most women who decide to have abortions do not regret the decision.

Any elected official who claims to care about women, children and families must understand that abortion is health care -- it is a fundamental part of civil rights for anyone who can get pregnant. Reproductive health affects half our population.

Instead of working to make abortion care even more inaccessible like Gov. Ricketts is, our elected leaders should keep politics out of our health care and ensure everyone has the power to make decisions about their own bodies and their own futures.

Without real abortion access, true equity in our country is impossible. Abortion care is fundamental to our equality and freedom. It is fundamental to our health and humanity. We won't stand for our state to turn back the clock on reproductive freedom.

Gov. Ricketts, Nebraskans deserve better than extremism and interference.

Susan Foster has lived in Lincoln since 1970. She retired last year but had worked as a licensed practical nurse since 1978.

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