

What is Let Lincoln Vote?

Let Lincoln Vote is a grassroots ballot initiative launched by Lincoln voters. We want to ensure Title 11 of the Lincoln City Code (the document that defines who is protected against discrimination) includes updated protections for **military status, veteran status, disability, race, national origin, marital status and sex**.

On February 14th, the Lincoln City Council adopted (5-0) Title 11 updates and language revisions. The Nebraska Family Alliance (a local group opposed to these amended protections) successfully launched a “rescind” campaign. On June 13th, the Lincoln City Council voted to **rescind the amended language that 4 months earlier they had supported**. While City Council representatives Raybould, Ward, and Washington voted against the rescind measure, councilmen Bowers, Beckius, Meginnis, and Shobe voted in support of the rescind proponents.

We believe Lincoln, given the opportunity to vote, will vote to be inclusive, caring, and protective of marginalized citizens due to military status, veteran status, disability, race, national origin, marital status and sex. That is why we want to put this issue on the ballot. **Lincoln is not divided on the issue of anti-discrimination.**

Registered voters in Lincoln have until August 1 to sign a petition to put the non-discrimination language on the ballot.

How do I Collect Signatures as a Volunteer?

To ensure all signatures collected count, follow these steps:

1. Get a clipboard.
2. Make sure the word VOLUNTEER is clearly seen on the top of your clipboard.
3. Identify yourself as a volunteer for the “Let Lincoln Vote” ballot initiative.
4. Make sure all signers are REGISTERED VOTERS in the city of Lincoln, NE.
5. Hold the clipboard when registered voters sign.
6. Get each petition notarized by a notary once you have filled all signature slots. (Your personal bank should be able to notarize for free).

How do these protections HELP Lincoln citizens of military status?

Military Status

In some cases, landlords and employers have used the discharge status of veterans, PTSD, and active military status as a decision maker to not rent to or employ persons of military status. By including military status (active military and veterans) as a protected class in the Title 11 sections, persons with military status receive additional civil rights protections. The Lincoln Human Rights Commission can hear cases where a has been discriminated against due to their veteran or active military status.

Why is revising the language of Title 11 so important?

The Title 11 section of the Lincoln municipal charter has not been updated since 1996. Updates include aligning language with national legislation to ensure that the Lincoln Human Rights Commission can hear cases locally. If language is not revised, even though citizens are protected by national legislation, those citizens will be referred to federal courts. Most Lincolniters do not have the time or the finances to take their discrimination cases to federal courts. By passing the Title 11 revisions, Lincolniters who have faced discrimination can have their cases heard locally.

How is sex defined?

Sex shall mean female, male, neither, or both, and includes, but is not limited to, sexual orientation and gender identity as well as pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions.

Misconceptions/Falsehoods About Title 11 proposed revisions:

You can't win this. The opposition is too fierce. In looking at voter demographics regarding Lincoln Municipal elections in the past four years, it is clear this initiative would pass by a large margin. Simply looking at the last mayoral election, the anti-LGBTQ candidate (Cyndi Lamm) was bested by the pro-LGBTQ/progressive candidate (Leirion Baird) by nearly 10% points. In addition, Lincoln has elected three out LGBTQ council representatives. Add to all these wins, a recent poll of 500 Lincoln voters found that 73% would vote FOR a Fairness Initiative if placed on the ballot.

Vulnerable people will be traumatized by putting this on the ballot do this. Since 1994 there have been several studies that prove the only way to ensure marginalized people feel protected is through community support offered in the ways outlined in this anti-discrimination ordinance. Without legal protections in housing, work, and public accommodations, marginalized individuals often feel anxious and depressed. When there are legal protections in place, those rates of anxiety and depression are no different from the rest of the population. In addition, research has shown that communities that have such anti-discrimination ordinances in their code actually *are* more affirming, accepting, and less discriminatory.

This petition is not supported by the LGBTQ community. This is false. Of the 6 co-signers on the initiative, there are two gay men, a lesbian, one queer-identified person, a cis-gendered man, and a trans man. The LGBTQ community is vast and diverse. We may not always agree, but this initiative will not only support LGBTQ people in Lincoln, but offer important protections for people who are disabled, active duty military, and racial minorities among others. There are so many people who will benefit from these updates/revisions; it would be horrible to deny everyone affected by this non-discrimination protection because there are a few people who are against it.

If this passes, men will prey upon women by entering women's bathrooms and locker rooms. Over 400 cities/towns in the U.S. (including Omaha, Des Moines, Kansas City, and St. Joseph, Missouri) have extended protections in their city code. **THERE IS NO REPORTED EVIDENCE OF MALE PREDATORS ENTERING FEMALE BATHROOMS AS A RESULT OF FAIRNESS LANGUAGE BEING ADDED TO CITY CODES.**

These amendments threaten business owners with devastating financial liability and empowers the government to punish citizens with Biblical beliefs on marriage and sexuality. When businesses open their doors to the public, they must open them to everyone on the same terms, regardless of race, color, national origin, disability, military status, sex/gender.

We don't need this because in 2020 the Supreme Court ruled that protections are granted to people regardless of sex/gender expression. Federal laws that govern protected status are in place; however, by not updating the city code a person who feels they have been discriminated against has to file a lawsuit in Federal Court. By putting non-discrimination language into the city code, **discrimination issues can be resolved locally without the expense and process of a federal court case.** Most people do not have the time or money to file a federal lawsuit.

Due to the ordinance's broad reach and ill-defined, unverifiable definition of "sex," a business or non-profit could be guilty of violating the law for failing to use someone's preferred pronouns. This is false. The amendments have no language regarding preferred pronouns.

You could be liable for creating a "hostile work environment" for expressing Biblical beliefs on marriage and sexuality. This is false. The definition of "hostile work environment" does not include reference to Biblical beliefs.

Businesses and churches allowing outside groups to use their building could be forced to allow events or promote ideas that violate their beliefs. This is false. A church or business can protect themselves by having documented policies about outside groups and building use.