

Resolution in support of raising the salary of Members of the Nebraska Legislature

Sponsored by: *Philip Deevy, Male Delegate, LD32*
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WHEREAS the Nebraska Democratic Party (NDP) advocates for the recruitment, selection and election of candidates from diverse backgrounds and from all socio-economic groups within society;

WHEREAS the NDP recognizes the need and desirability to remove barriers to entry for Democrats seeking to run for an elected office;

WHEREAS the duties and responsibilities performed by members of the Nebraska Legislature are effectively those of a full-time employee;

WHEREAS the average Nebraska per-capita income as calculated by the US Census Bureau for the years 2016-2020¹ is \$33,205 per annum (in 2020 dollars);

WHEREAS Article III, Section 7 of the Constitution of Nebraska prescribes that the salary of a member of the Nebraska Legislature is set at \$1,000 per month (or \$12,000 per annum) during the term of their office plus expenses², and said rate has not been changed since 1988, and the salary of \$1,000 per month for members of the Legislature is insufficient to adequately recompense the work done by members on behalf of their constituents;

WHEREAS said salary acts as a barrier to the recruitment, selection and election of quality candidates who due to socio-economic circumstances cannot afford to put themselves forward as candidates for the Legislature given the low remuneration prescribed in Article III, Section 7 of the Constitution of Nebraska;

WHEREAS such barriers to entry are harmful to the candidate recruitment efforts of the NDP and changing the salary of a member of the Nebraska Legislature to a level that reflects the time, effort, and skill involved in fulfillment of the duties of a member of the Nebraska Legislature would lower such socio-economic barriers to entry, and deepen and diversify the pool of potential candidates for public office in the Nebraska Legislature;

WHEREAS the amendment of Article III, Section 7 of the Nebraska Constitution, would require a bill to be drafted in the manner prescribed by the Nebraska Rules of the Legislature³ with the intent of amending the text of the Nebraska Constitution to increase the salary to the equivalent of a living wage, and that said bill would require: (1) passage of a legislative resolution by the Nebraska Legislature with a 3/5ths majority (or 4/5ths if a special election is to be called)

¹ [U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Nebraska](#)

² [Article III, Section 7 of the Nebraska Constitution](#)

³ [Rules of the Nebraska Legislature](#)

specifying the date of the election at which the proposed ballot measure is to be presented to voters, and (2) the proposed text of the constitutional amendment be voted upon as a ballot measure at that election and approved by the voters of Nebraska;

WHEREAS such a bill has previously been introduced by Senator Adam Morfeld during the 106th Legislature (as LR12CA⁴) proposing that the annual salary of a member of the Legislature be set at “an annual salary during the term of his or her office equal to fifty percent of the median household income for the State of Nebraska as defined by the most recent report of such income published by the United States Bureau of the Census prior to the first Wednesday after the first Monday of January in each odd-numbered year”⁵, and an annual salary set by this proposed formula would be in the amount of \$31,507.50 per annum in 2020 dollars;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the NDP shall support the increase of the salary of an elected member of the Legislature to a level commensurate with the work and duties performed in that role and advocate for the increase of said salary to be set at “an annual salary during the term of his or her office equal to fifty percent of the median household income for the State of Nebraska as defined by the most recent report of such income published by the United States Bureau of the Census prior to the first Wednesday after the first Monday of January in each odd-numbered year”;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NDP shall support the passage of any such legislative resolution and/or ballot initiative on the basis that a constitutional amendment raising the annual salary of a member of the Nebraska Legislature to a living wage would have the effect of lowering socio-economic barriers to running for elected public office and deepen and diversify the pool of candidates available to run for elected public office in the State of Nebraska.

⁴ [Nebraska Legislature - 106th Legislature - Bill LR12CA](#)

⁵ [LR12CA.pdf \(nebraskalegislature.gov\)](#)