



Nebraska – CPAC Scorecard

Center for Legislative Analysis

11th Edition – 2024

Summary

The latest edition of the Nebraska CPAC Scorecard assesses 12 votes in the Nebraska legislature. Nebraska's legislature is unicameral and non-partisan. The average CPAC rating for 2024 was 52% which was exactly the same as the average score from 2023.

In 2024 Nebraska legislators strengthened election security and defended religious freedom. They also defended school choice, although Nebraska's school choice program was repealed by a referendum in November, 2024. Overall, the legislation from the 2024 session was a mixed bag. Nebraska legislators voted for the conservative position on high-profile issues, but they also expanded the state bureaucracy in ways that will eventually undermine conservative priorities.

Key Takeaways

Religious freedom protections were defended successfully against a subtle attempt to weaken them.

The proposed amendment to LB 43 (AM2701) sought to quietly strip out a crucial safeguard in Nebraska's First Freedom Act, which ensures that religious institutions are protected from government discrimination regardless of when a law was passed. By attempting to limit the law's applicability, it would have allowed older laws to remain a backdoor for targeting faith-based organizations. CPAC strongly opposed this maneuver, viewing it as an underhanded way to erode core religious liberty protections without openly repealing the law. The Nebraska Senate ultimately defeated this amendment decisively on March 4, 2024, by a vote of 12-30, sending a strong signal that lawmakers were not willing to compromise the integrity of religious freedom.

The legislature continued to expand the government's role in healthcare services despite opposition from limited-government advocates.

LB 62, which passed the Senate 34-6, requires the state to cover all translation and interpretation services for medical assistance recipients. While presented as an accessibility measure for vulnerable populations, this bill significantly grows the bureaucracy's footprint in healthcare by creating a new entitlement and imposing additional costs on taxpayers. Similarly, LB 164 passed 37-6 and went even further, funneling resources into inland port authorities to build "innovation hubs" and establishing new grant programs to subsidize childcare for favored

workforce groups. Together, these bills represent a legislative push toward increased government intervention in healthcare and workforce development, a direction CPAC opposed as it undermines market solutions and grows dependency on taxpayer-funded programs.

Nebraska advanced modest election integrity reforms aimed at closing loopholes in ballot handling.

LB 287 (AM2343) was adopted by the Senate on February 5, 2024, in a 25-14 vote, placing new limits on the number of ballots a single “voter agent” may submit on behalf of others.

Specifically, it capped that number at two, aiming to curb ballot harvesting practices and tighten chain-of-custody procedures for absentee ballots. CPAC supported this measure as a commonsense step toward safeguarding elections from abuse, reinforcing voter confidence, and ensuring that ballots are less susceptible to mishandling or coercion.

Highlighted Votes Analyzed

LB 840 Requiring the Creation of Pro-DEI Welfare Plans at the Local Level.

This bill enacts the Poverty Elimination Action Plan Act, the likes of which will require cities to develop plans to reduce poverty in their area. These plans must include a blueprint for increasing “equity and inclusivity,” expanding access to social services, and implementing strategies to increase affordable housing options. CPAC believes that the state government should not be requiring local governments to plan to promote DEI or expand their welfare nets and opposed this bill. The Senate passed this bill on April 11, 2024 by a vote of 28-19 and the bill later became law.

LB 62 Allowing Foreigners to Use More Government Resources.

This bill requires the state bureaucracy to provide coverage for all translation and interpretation services for medical recipients utilizing the government’s medical assistance program services. CPAC opposes this expansion of the role of the government in providing healthcare services and opposed this bill. The Senate passed this bill on April 11, 2024 by a vote of 34-6.

LB 1092 (MO1312) Attempting to Kill a Bill to Protect Minors from Pornography.

This motion attempts to bracket a bill that would prohibit certain websites with adult content from allowing people to use their services without performing a reasonable verification of their age. CPAC supports efforts to protect minors from pornography, recognizes that this motion intended to help kill or “indefinitely postpone” the bill, and opposed this motion. The Senate defeated this motion on March 26, 2024 by a vote of 5-29.

Trends and Observations

Lawmakers imposed new top-down diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) mandates on local governments under the guise of poverty reduction.

LB 840, which passed the Senate 28-19 and later became law, compels cities to develop comprehensive poverty elimination action plans that explicitly promote “equity and inclusivity,”

expand social services, and increase affordable housing options. This bill effectively centralizes control by requiring local governments to adopt a state-mandated framework aligned with DEI principles rather than allowing communities to address poverty on their own terms. CPAC opposed the bill, arguing that it represents an unnecessary intrusion into municipal governance, pushes left-leaning social agendas, and forces communities into expanded welfare obligations. Nonetheless, the bill's passage underscores a broader legislative trend of embedding DEI-oriented policies into multiple layers of government.

Efforts were made to limit the permanence of a government health program, resulting in a partial but meaningful win for fiscal restraint.

LB 857 (FA218) amended the Prenatal Plus Program by adding a sunset provision that terminates the program in 2028. Although CPAC opposed the creation of the program itself, believing it to be an example of government overreach into personal and family matters, this amendment was seen as a pragmatic step to ensure it does not become an entrenched, open-ended entitlement. The amendment passed 25-15 on February 14, 2024, reflecting some legislative appetite for limiting government expansion even when new programs are approved. By forcing future lawmakers to revisit the program before it can continue, this sunset clause creates an opportunity for reevaluation rather than allowing unchecked bureaucratic growth.

Pro-life safeguards were preserved by rejecting an abortion-friendly revision to the Nebraska Pregnancy Help Act.

LB 937 (AM3187) sought to expand the definition of qualifying pregnancy help centers to include those that refer for or recommend abortions, effectively watering down the pro-life intent of the original bill. CPAC strongly opposed this amendment, viewing it as a deceptive attempt to blur the distinction between true life-affirming pregnancy centers and facilities that ultimately steer women toward abortion. The Senate rejected this amendment 17-24 on March 28, 2024, clearing the way for stronger pro-life language to be inserted into the act. This outcome represents a clear victory for those seeking to ensure that state-supported pregnancy help initiatives remain focused solely on life-affirming services, without inadvertently funneling resources toward abortion-related counseling.

Conservative Excellence

Joni Albrecht - 90%

Bruce Bostelman - 91%

Robert Clements - 92%

Brian Hardin - 92%

Loren Lippincott - 92%

John Lowe - 92%

Dave Murman - 90%

Conservative Achievement

Steve Erdman - 82%

Steve Halloran - 89%

Teresa Ibach - 82%

Kathleen Kauth - 83%

Fred Meyer - 82%

