



January 31, 2020

Dear Senators:

On behalf of our activists all across Nebraska, I urge you to support LB 206. This vote may be recorded in our 2020 session legislative scorecard.

LB 206 would extend the First Amendment rights of freedom of speech and freedom of the press to student journalists and their media advisors. The bill ensures these protections are available for all students in public high schools and postsecondary educational institutions.

Americans for Prosperity is a strong proponent of press freedom. This vital right enables journalists to hold those in government to account and to seek out information for a knowledgeable electorate. Protecting student journalists from censorship enables them to practice skills, freely seek out and report on stories that are important to them and their communities and, in doing so, enrich discussions within those schools and universities.

Budding journalists shouldn't be taught they have to keep their heads down, factoring potential administrative censorship into whether or not they're going to pursue a story. But this happens. Just last term at Radford University, [800 copies of the \*Tartan\*](#), the student-run paper, were seized by a disgruntled student employee displeased with an article pertaining to the death of a lecturer. This isn't the first of these incidents, that range from targeting budget reductions, [to straight censorship](#).

LB 206 is essential to protect the free speech rights of our students. Education can play an integral role in helping the next generation of journalists refine how to speak truth to power, even when its controversial, because it's a hallmark of a free press and the cornerstone of a vibrant democracy.

For this reason, I urge you to vote yes on LB 206.

Sincerely,

Jessica Shelburn  
State Director  
Americans for Prosperity- Nebraska