

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
AND THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
JOINT SUBCOMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES
AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS**

**Seventy-Fifth Session
March 3, 2009**

Following is an excerpt of the draft minutes of the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means and the Senate Committee on Finance Joint Subcommittee on Human Services and Capital Improvements held on March 3, 2009, in Room 3137 of the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 4412E of the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada. The meeting was called to order by Chair Sheila Leslie at 8:05 a.m.

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Assemblywoman Sheila Leslie, Chair
Assemblyman John Ocegüera, Vice Chair
Assemblyman Morse Arberry Jr.
Assemblywoman Barbara E. Buckley
Assemblywoman Debbie Smith
Assemblywoman Heidi S. Gansert
Assemblyman Joseph (Joe) P. Hardy

SENATE COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Bob Coffin, Chair
Senator Bernice Mathews
Senator William J. Raggio

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Gary Ghiggeri, Senate Fiscal Analyst
Steve Abba, Principal Deputy Fiscal Analyst
Mark Krmpotic, Principal Deputy Fiscal Analyst
Carol Thomsen, Committee Secretary
Vickie Kieffer, Committee Assistant

WELFARE – CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM – BA 3238
BUDGET PAGE WELFARE-36

Mr. Gilliland stated that page 14 of the exhibit depicted the impact of federal stimulus funds ([Exhibit C](#)). Currently the DWSS received incentive funding of approximately \$5 million for both the state and the counties. Mr. Gilliland reported that the exhibit contained an incorrect date for expenditure of incentive funds. The funds must be expended by September 30, 2010, rather than September 30, 2011.

Mr. Gilliland indicated that between today and September 30, 2010, the state and counties had approximately \$10 million in stimulus funds and \$5 million in incentive funds that could be spent toward the implementation of the elements that would improve the Child Support Enforcement Program. He emphasized the amount would be \$15 million: \$14 million at the county level and just under \$1 million at the state level. Mr. Gilliland believed that spending the money effectively over the next 18 months to address the recommendations listed on page 13 of [Exhibit C](#) would be far more important than the elements included in the Technology Investment Request (TIR). He stated that he would choose the recommendations from the MAXIMUS audit as being of the highest priority.

Mr. Gilliland believed that the state could not wait, and a state/county task force should be created immediately to address the recommendations and to devise a plan for the funding. Mr. Gilliland said if the Legislature convened two years from now and the recommendations had not been addressed, the state would have missed a significant opportunity. He emphasized that now was the time to act.

Mr. Gilliland hoped that the information was sufficient to address Assemblywoman Buckley's concerns, and that it provided some insight into his thought process regarding the Child Support Enforcement Program.

Assemblywoman Buckley asked whether Mr. Gilliland believed that the state should utilize the stimulus funding to once and for all create a computer system that would allow the state and the counties to effectively administer the child support program. She asked for clarification regarding the development and implementation of such a plan.

Mr. Gilliland said he believed that the state should create a task force now and that a computer system would be one element of the plan, along with the recommendations listed on page 13 of [Exhibit C](#), which provided the road map

regarding the issues that needed to be addressed. Mr. Gilliland thought that the task force should be established within the upcoming two months. If the state did not have a plan in place regarding how to effectively spend the money within the next two months, the opportunity would be lost. Mr. Gilliland stated that through the stimulus funding and the incentive funds, the state had an opportunity to take action that would significantly improve the Child Support Enforcement Program for the children and citizens of Nevada. As a by-product, the improvements in the program would also improve Nevada's position in the national ranking.

Assemblywoman Buckley said that obviously since the funding would be sent to the state, the Legislature would be anxiously awaiting a report from Mr. Gilliland. She noted that there would be a bipartisan committee following the stimulus funding, and that committee would request a copy of the plan.

Assemblywoman Buckley stated that her concern was that the MAXIMUS audit recommendations had been made two years previously, and Nevada was still last in the nation in the area of child support enforcement. While she noted that some recommendations required additional funding, she pointed out that if a funding request was not submitted to the Legislature, it would be unable to act. Assemblywoman Buckley advised that a request for computer technology that simply stated the cost would be between \$40 million and \$120 million was not realistic, specific, or capable of implementation.

Assemblywoman Buckley indicated that she had been waiting two years for a report from the DWSS regarding the audit recommendations. The excuse used during the 2007 Legislative Session was that the audit recommendations had just been received and there had not been sufficient time to analyze the information. Assemblywoman Buckley noted that two years later, in 2009, the DWSS did not seem any further along, and the fact that Nevada's system was the worst in the nation was very frustrating for custodial parents and their children.

Mr. Gilliland agreed, stating that the DWSS had been in "analysis mode" far too long, it was time to go into action mode, and he intended to create the task force. He asked whether the Legislature would like to place a representative on the task force as it moved forward in addressing the recommendations. It was Mr. Gilliland's thought that the task force would be comprised of representatives from the counties and the state and, if so desired, a legislative representative.

Assemblywoman Buckley did not think the Legislature should place a representative on the task force. It was difficult for legislators to both review and implement plans, but Assemblywoman Buckley pledged that both she and the Legislature would work very closely with the task force and the DWSS. Assemblywoman Buckley indicated that she would be available to offer assistance at any time.

Mr. Gilliland said he would appreciate the assistance and he planned to act now. When the Legislature convened in 2011, he hoped the nature of the questions regarding the Child Support Enforcement Program would be quite different from those asked today.

Chair Leslie asked Mr. Gilliland about the time frame for establishment of the task force. Mr. Gilliland stated that he expected to take action within the next 30 to 60 days, and he believed an action plan would be available shortly thereafter. If the state did not have an action plan in place within the next 90 to 120 days, it would miss the window to expend the funds effectively. Mr. Gilliland reported that he had not yet contacted the various counties, but it was his intention to move quickly in that area.

Chair Leslie indicated that the Legislature would ask Mr. Gilliland to report to the bipartisan committee that would oversee the stimulus funding. Mr. Gilliland stated that he would be happy to report to that committee.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Carol Thomsen
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Assemblywoman Sheila Leslie, Chair

DATE: _____

Senator Bob Coffin, Chair

DATE: _____