Nevada Legislature Oral History Project

LYNN C. HETTRICK

Republican

Assemblyman, 1992-2006

JUNE 12, 2008
CARSON CITY, NEVADA

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LEGISLATIVE BUILDING
CARSON CITY, NEVADA

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PROJECT INTRODUCTION

The 2007 Nevada Legislature approved an appropriation for a project of conducting oral histories with former state legislators, and in the summer following the conclusion of the session, the Research Division of the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB) conducted a competitive bid process to identify and obtain a contractor to carry out the project. A committee consisting of LCB and other state personnel with expertise in Nevada history and politics evaluated and ranked the proposals received. In January 2008, a contract was signed between LCB and Get Consensus, LLC, for an 18-month program.

Administered by Donald O. Williams, Research Director, and coordinated by Amber Joiner, Senior Research Analyst, the Nevada Legislature Oral History Project consists of video- and audio-taped interviews, which have been transcribed, edited for readability, and indexed. An initial list of suggested interview subjects had been presented to the Senate Committee on Finance when it considered Senate Bill 373, which proposed an appropriation for the creation of an oral history of the Nevada Legislature. Using that as the starting point, LCB staff considered several factors—such as age, length of legislative tenure, contributions to the State of Nevada, and whether a formal oral history of the individual had been published or was underway—when identifying the former legislators who would be interviewed. The final list provided to the contractor revealed a careful balance of legislative house, political party, and geographic distribution among the interviewees.

After LCB staff acquired the written permission of each subject, the contractor would proceed with scheduling the interview at a time and place convenient for the former legislator. Each interview was simultaneously filmed and audiotaped. The audio recording was transcribed verbatim and then edited by the contractor for readability. Each interviewed legislator was provided the opportunity to review his or her edited document, and any misstatements or errors in the videotape were corrected in the text. The contractor produced three copies of each final product, which includes the text and a DVD of the interview film. Copies were presented to LCB's Research Library and the State Library in Carson City; the subject legislator also received a copy of his or her interview. The repository of record for all digital film and audio files is LCB's Research Library.

Together, these interviews make a significant contribution to the annals of Nevada politics and provide incomparable context to the state's legislative history. The official legislative record outlines the chronology for actions taken by Nevada's lawmaking body; these oral histories vividly portray the background and circumstances in which such actions occurred. Invaluable for understanding Nevada's politics in the latter half of the twentieth century, these interviews present interesting explanations, entertaining stories, and thoughtful observations that might otherwise have been lost.

Lynn C. Hettrick
June 12, 2008

LYNN C. HETTRICK

Lynn Clark Hettrick's first visit to the Nevada Legislature came after his election to the Assembly in 1992. Although he had no previous political experience, the Douglas County Assemblyman quickly rose to lead the Assembly Republicans. In only his second session, he served as Co-Speaker when the Assembly was divided evenly between the Republicans and Democrats in 1995. He was Assembly Minority Leader from 1997 until the end of his tenure in 2006, which encompassed seven regular and six special sessions. During most of those sessions, he served on the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means and the Assembly Committee on Commerce and Labor. Between sessions, he served on and chaired numerous interim study committees.

Mr. Hettrick was interviewed at the Speaker's Rostrum in the Assembly Chambers in the Legislative Building in Carson City on June 12, 2008, at 1 p.m. During this interview, which lasted about 70 minutes, Mr. Hettrick answered a variety of questions about many topics, such as the reasons he sought public office, how the Assembly and its committees function, important issues of the time, and the effects of his legislative service on his family. In particular, he details the duties of a Speaker and of a Minority Floor Leader. Fondly remembering many of the legislators with whom he served, he recalls some of the major issues during his tenure, including redistricting and workers' compensation reform. His own experience with an industrial accident in which he lost his right arm gave him a unique understanding of that particular topic. Mr. Hettrick also talks about working with Co-Speaker Joe Dini (D-Lyon) during the divided session of 1995 and their shared goals for that session. Additionally, Mr. Hettrick explains the cohesiveness of the Republican Caucus during the difficult tax battles of 2003.

In this interview, Mr. Hettrick describes the constant campaigning required by two-year terms for offices that are not adequately compensated and notes the detrimental effects this can have on families. He and his wife, Arla Hettrick, have four children and several grandchildren. Mr. Hettrick extols the educational aspect of serving as a legislator and reminisces about his work on interim committees and national organizations. During his legislative tenure, Mr. Hettrick also chaired the Council of State Governments at both the regional and national levels. From that perspective, he notes that Nevada has a Legislature of which its residents can be proud, noting that with a sense of proper decorum and a strong supporting staff, the Nevada Legislature consists of people who work hard on difficult issues for very little reward. Mr. Hettrick is clearly impressed with the quality of the state's policymaking body during his tenure.

He explains that he chose not to run again after 14 years of service because he had grown tired of partisan politics and feared that he was no longer as effective as he had once been. It was time, he says, for someone else who believed, as he had at the beginning of his tenure, that he could change the world. At the 2008 commencement ceremony for the University of Nevada, Reno, Mr. Hettrick, the Californian who became a Nevadan in 1971, was honored as a Distinguished Nevadan.

Dana R. Bennett
May 2009

Dana Bennett: Good afternoon, Mr. Hettrick.

Lynn Hettrick: Good afternoon. It's a pleasure to be here.

Bennett: I'm glad you're here. Thanks for joining us. Let's think back to the very first day that you walked in as a legislator into these Chambers. It's January 20, 1992. What did you find when you arrived?

Hettrick: Of course, it looked much like it does now, but there was a lot of excitement and activity and milling around. I don't think I'd ever visited here prior to the actual election—maybe to walk in the door and look, but that was about it. So to walk in and see activity everywhere, flowers on all the desks, it was exciting. It was gratifying in a lot of ways. I worked hard on the election, so it was a lot of fun. Yeah, I remember that.

Bennett: Let's back up a little bit. Why did you run for office in the first place?

Hettrick: Ah, it's interesting. I really didn't have much interest. I was semi-retired. People came to me and asked me to run for county commissioner, and I said I just wasn't interested. About that time, the then-Assemblyman for Douglas County, Lou Bergevin—very well known, highly respected man—decided he wasn't going to run. He'd been ill in the previous session and decided he wasn't going to run

Louis W. Bergevin (R-Douglas) served in the Assembly from 1978 to 1992 where he was Minority Leader, 1987-1989. He passed away in 1998.

again. People came back to me and said, "Why don't you run for this?" and I said, "Well, that's more interesting; but I still don't think I'm interested in politics." A group of five asked me to meet them for lunch and talk about it. I met the group, sat and talked to them for about an hour and got all done, and I said, "Okay, I've talked to you. Now you tell me: Do you think I should run?" Four of the five said yes. The fifth one was a lady who has since become a very good friend, and she said, "No way. You couldn't win on a bet. There's no way you could win in this county. You haven't got a prayer. Forget it—you shouldn't run." I went home and told my wife that it made me so angry when she said that [laughter] that I'm going to run. My wife laughed and said, "You're crazy!" I said, "No, I'm going to run. I'm going to show her." She turned out to be one of my biggest supporters. It was very interesting. I almost think it was a set-up.

Bennett: Was that the first time you had run for public office?

Hettrick: Yes.

Bennett: What surprised you about the campaign process?

Hettrick: I guess only that I hadn't done it, and I don't think people really understand the amount of work that's involved. Douglas County is a big

county in which to try to knock on a lot of doors, which I did lots and lots of times. It's very spread out. You have to really plan and think about what you're doing. When you're in an Assembly district, you almost have to walk. When you get to a Senate district, some of those are so massive that it's impossible to walk. But in the Assembly, you almost have to walk, and so I walked a lot. I think that was it—just the physical work of doing it. It was a lot more than people think.

Bennett: Was it a tough campaign?

Hettrick: I had an opponent the first time who was very active in the political process before I decided to get involved, and, yeah, I think the primary was difficult. Douglas County is about 65 percent registered Republicans, so if you win the primary, you end up winning the election. So through the primary, yes, it was a difficult election. But I won the primary and went on from there. It was fairly easy.

Bennett: What were your expectations when you got to the Legislature?

Hettrick: [laughter] I think I was like everybody else. You think you're going to come in here and change the world. You're going to come in and influence all these people, and you're going to get things done that nobody else has ever done, and nobody else can do since. You find out

very quickly that 63 people are involved, and you have to get a majority of those votes in two different houses *and* get the Governor to agree with you. So you learn very quickly that it really is a process of compromise. I thought, like so many do, that I was going to set the world on fire, and you find out quickly that reality doesn't quite fit that same picture. It was fun! I did accomplish a lot of things over the time that I was here, but you just find out it's not as easy as you think it's going to be.

Bennett: When you think back on it, what was the toughest issue that you worked on?

Hettrick: I think the one that I feel probably had the biggest impact on the State of Nevada was the workers comp issue. Ultimately, I think we did the right thing. When I came into the Legislature, workers comp was 400 million dollars in the hole, and it was losing a million dollars a day. When you're in a little state like Nevada, those are staggering numbers. There was no choice. It had to be dealt with, and it had to be dealt with very quickly. The first committee assignment I got was to go on to Labor and Management, which dealt with that. We made a lot of changes the first year—the broad-brush kind of changes. Then in 1995, when I was the Co-Speaker, I remember many meetings in my office over and over again, trying to work out the details on the final parts of that. Then when

Governor Guinn came in, we ultimately got the system far enough along that we got it to privatize and got rid of the liability for the State of Nevada. So I thought that was probably the biggest single issue that I dealt with.

Kenny C. Guinn (R) was Governor from 1999 to 2007.

Bennett: Tell me a little bit more about some of the details. How did the negotiation process start, and what sorts of elements were involved?

Hettrick: It was a case of not having any choices. We were going to *have* to do something to cut down on the number of claims, the amount of claims, and those kinds of things. As much as we would like to have kept things the way they were, we just couldn't afford to do it. A lot of the negotiation was everyone acknowledging there was no choice. We were going to have to change things. But then we were trying to work it out in the best possible manner, so that somebody who really was hurt or injured and needed that support from the workers comp system was not going to be significantly impacted. We worked really hard on fraud. Fraud was a big issue. Those were the types of things that we worked on.

Labor was well represented at virtually every meeting; every time we had any kind of a discussion, they were there. Obviously, they fought for what they thought was important, but they, too, knew that it had to change. They

played an active role in making positive changes, which is what needed to be done. I think one side pushed for probably a little more to make sure we were going to get there, and the other side tried to save as much as they could and make it work for everybody. Part of my involvement in that was because I had lost my arm in a working accident and was a recipient of workers comp benefits. I understood the need. When I spoke about understanding the need of workers and, at the same time, the need of the State and the system to be able to function and survive, I think people listened a little more to that simply because I wasn't coming from one place or the other. I was a participant and had seen how it worked. It was a very interesting time and a lot of negotiation. I can remember some very heated arguments, and I can remember some very calm "we're going to have to do this or we're going to have to do that" kind of things that we sat and worked out.

Bennett: Do you remember the point in time when an agreement had been reached, or was it an ongoing process?

Hettrick: I think you hit it more on the head right there, Dana. We sat down and looked at each section to determine what needs to get fixed to make it workable. We needed to preserve enough to make it work for the worker, but at the same time, we couldn't continue. These costs were

just so outrageous that we've got to do something. What can we do to balance this so it's fair? It was more a step-by-step process. It wasn't one big, put-it-all-into-a-package kind of thing. As I said, it went on into the next session where we really kind of polished it up. We watched it work for that year, and we started seeing it turning around, slow but sure, during that year. It was a long way from resolved, but I think we could see the way the trends were going. They were able to give us enough detail and facts that we were able to judge what was happening. So, yes, it was an ongoing process. I think actually we probably worked on it for three sessions to get it done.

Hettrick was on the interim Legislative Committee on Workers' Compensation from 1995 to 2000 and served as Chair from 1997 to 1998.

Bennett: By your second session, you were elected Co-Speaker, which was fairly early in a legislative career. Tell me about the tied session of 1995.

Hettrick: Yes. It was kind of a surprise. We ended up in a tie in my second session, and we started talking about what we were going to do. Of course, that was a *fascinating* process, as you can well imagine, because the Republicans had been in the minority for a long time. As we sat in caucus right after the election, realizing we were 21 and the Democrats were 21, some of the Republicans were saying that we've been out of power so long, there's no way we're going to do anything. There were all kinds of suggestions, like flipping a coin to see who's

going to be in charge. It was incredible. The discussion just went back and forth, and back and forth, and session was getting closer and closer. In fact, LCB [Legislative Counsel Bureau] was telling us that we've got to decide. Staff needed to be able to print name tags and office stickers for the committee chairs. They had to be able to do the stationary and everything else. It really got down to where it was just either/or, so we finally sat down and agreed that we were going to split everything. Everything—from Speaker to committee chairs—was going to have two. Everything. Of course, to do anything requires the signature of every committee chair, so it took two. To do anything from the Speaker's rostrum, it took the Speaker's signature, so it took two. It really was fascinating, and of course, initially, everybody predicted that this is going to be a disaster. It was just going to be a bomb, and nothing will be accomplished, and it will be a total waste.

Joe Dini and I determined that we had an opportunity to either show that we can do this right and do it for Nevada and do what we ought to do, or we could make this a disaster, as the papers said. We wrote a joint letter and sent it to all of the legislators in the Assembly. We said, "We have an opportunity to prove we can do it, and we need to work together. We

Joseph E. Dini, Jr., (D-Yerington) served in the Assembly from 1966 to 2002. He was Speaker a record eight regular sessions and named Speaker Emeritus in 2001.

can walk out of here looking like fools, or we can walk out of here having done a good job." This is one of the things during my legislative career that I'm most proud of. If you talk to people who were involved in that session and had been involved in many others, I think most people agree that that was probably as good, fair, even, and well-balanced a session as we've had in many years.

Bennett: How did it work on a day-to-day basis? How did you and Joe Dini split up the duties as Speaker?

Hettrick: First, Joe Dini is a prince of a man. I think highly of him. Joe was easy to work with. Despite being in my second session—I was such a greenhorn, especially when it came to running committees and running the floor. Joe can stand up here behind this rostrum and just rattle it all off. He knows it all. He's done it so many times that he's a master. We split it day-to-day. One day, he would preside, and the next day, I would preside. It was very difficult for me, I have to tell you. Not because it's so hard to do per se but because of what I was comparing myself to day-to-day: one person who just knows it so well and does it so easy, and then me stepping up here and trying to make sure I don't make a fool of myself and accomplish the State's business and those kinds of

things. It was very interesting. It was a lot of fun.

Joe is great to work with despite the fact that he clearly understood so much better than I did what needed to be done and how it had to be done. He never made me feel like I was a fifth wheel or not a part of the process. We worked together; we agreed on things in advance; or we worked out what we disagreed on. We both had our responsibility, and we did it. The day-to-day was an interesting thing because it stopped any games. By the rules in Nevada, you can reconsider things the next business day and things like that. Ultimately, no games were played that I'm aware of. But I don't think either side had set out to do that, either. As we were planning for it, though, we realized that we needed to at least protect against that and make sure we didn't do it. So we did the day-to-day split, and people realized that the next day votes could be reconsidered, so they sat back and thought about how they voted and what they voted on. I thought it was well done. Like I say, one of the things I'm more proud of is the time spent during the split.

Bennett: Tell me a little bit about the duties of a Speaker when you're both outside the Chambers and then in here at the rostrum with all of these buttons.

Hettrick: In terms of the physical duties, standing up here gets quite interesting. You're trying to follow the bills. You also get to vote on the bills, obviously, as you are up here and trying to run what's happening. You've got a computer screen around you that shows who has lit up a light out there and wants to speak and the order in which they might speak. Of course, there are a lot more nuances than most people realize in terms of how you call on people and when you call on people to speak. Obviously, when a bill has got somebody who's for it, you generally call on someone who's for it first. I always called on someone who's for it first. Then you try to split up and fairly distribute the balance of any testimony from the floor. You have to worry about keeping decorum and those kinds of things on the floor and what comments are appropriate.

I visited a lot of houses across the country. I was heavily involved in the Council of State Governments, so I got to visit a lot of houses across the United States. I was always proud of the decorum that we kept in here—the way we spoke to people, the activities that went on on the floor, and where people were allowed to be. I was proud of that. I thought this was a well-run Assembly Chambers.

Of course, then as you get down to the end of a session, it becomes a scheduling night-

mare. You're trying to get bills back and forth from the Senate; you're trying to get them over here and get them heard; you have reprint time and all kinds of things that you have to deal with; and it becomes a scheduling nightmare just trying to work it back and forth. So you really spent a great deal of time in your office talking to staff about what needs to be done next, which bills did they have to see, how quickly we can print, and which ones can get back to us before we go back on the floor. There's a lot more behind the scenes than people see. The decorum of the house pretty well rules what happens here and generally isn't violated, so you don't have a lot to do in that regard. But the scheduling, and working with committees still meeting at the very end of the session and the joint committees that try to resolve differences on bills and the like, can get to be very interesting. The first session or two that I was here, we had no deadline, and we ran, I believe, 169 days one session and 160-some another. Then the 120-day deadline took effect. The first year, that was difficult. It was tough because when you got to the end, you had to have that work done, or it wasn't going to happen. It was just not going to be. Scheduling really became a nightmare when that first came in. Then, I think, everybody kind of got used to it, and it got better.

Bennett: When you and Mr. Dini were Co-Speakers, did you meet together with committee chairs, or did you do your work separately?

Hettrick: Both. It depended on what was going on. Clearly, there was a caucus side where you met with your members and asked about the questions, the positions, and how everybody felt about this bill or that bill. You did that as partisan politics. Then there were the joint meetings where you met with the chairs and told them that we've got to get this out or that out. Typical of the process again, a lot of trading went on—a lot of "Well, okay, we'll work with you on that bill if you'll work with us on this bill," or "The Senate wants that bill and we want this bill; what can we do?" A lot of that went on in meetings with co-chairs.

It was amazing how the co-chair process went. We had some co-chairs that you would have just never believed would have gotten along and who ended up being best friends. It was surprising, really, what happened. We also had some arguments. I remember getting called to break up a fight upstairs [laughter] and having to run upstairs, but it wasn't really a fight. It was a verbal tussle that could have escalated, but it hadn't gotten to that point. I think, overall, it was a very good feel, a very good result. I don't remember any petty things where people tried to aggravate

others or did things just to make them mad or anything like that. What I remember was a real effort in cooperation to try to get things done because we realized the issues that were involved.

Bennett: Did you and Mr. Dini look at the chairs ahead of time and say, "Well, these two people will get along"? Or did you each just produce a list?

Hettrick: It was pretty much that. Again, we each had 21. I don't remember exactly how many committees we had that year, but probably at least 12 or 15. So by the time you had somebody who was the Speaker Pro Tem and you had a Majority Floor Leader, virtually all of the rest of the people who were here were chairmen. [chuckles] They were all a co-chair somewhere and then served on two other committees. So we really didn't have a lot of choice in shuffleing committees around. That's part of why we had some committee co-chairs where people thought it was going to be a disaster [chuckles], but they ended up being very good friends. So it was fun. It was interesting.

The Assembly had 12 committees in 1995.

Sandra J. Tiffany (R-Clark) and Jan Evans (D-Washoe) were Speakers Pro Tempore. Peter G. Ernaut (R-Washoe) and Richard D. Perkins (D-Clark) were the Floor Leaders.

Bennett: When you got to the end of that session, what surprised you the most when you looked back on it?

Hettrick: I wouldn't say it surprised me that it went well because I think everyone was determined, so I wouldn't say that. From my standpoint, more

than anything, it surprised me how quickly it went. At the start, it felt like it was going to go on forever because it just felt like it was *so* different than how we had done business in the past, even though I'd only been here one session. It was so different, and it felt like it was just going to drag on. Of course, it was a total learning curve for me. I had not directed committee chairmen. I'd never chaired a committee. I had no prior knowledge whatsoever. I just stepped into it and away we went. So I think that it was over so quickly was what surprised me as much as anything.

Bennett: Did you look to anyone in particular for advice in the middle of that learning curve?

Hettrick: I think Mr. Dini and I probably talked more than anything, surprisingly enough. As I said before, I have great respect for him. He's a very calm and very straightforward man. If he gave you his word, his word was as good as gold, and you could trust him. So if I went and talked to him, he'd say, "Well, do this or do that." I can remember going to him one time to see if I could get his vote for a bill that I wanted passed. He said, "I hate that bill." I told him that I already had enough votes to pass it. [chuckles] And he said, "Okay, well, if you've got the votes, I guess you've got the votes. There's nothing I can do about it." I don't remember if it was my first year or when we

were in the tie, but as either the Speaker or the Co-Speaker, Mr. Dini could have killed the bill any time he wanted to. He could have stopped any bill he wanted to, if he didn't like it. But he said, "You've got the votes, you got the votes." And that was it. And he was good to his word. He was pretty much the only person I could go to. The Republicans didn't have any previous Speakers who were still here. We didn't have any experience. We'd been in such a small minority for a long time that I think it was a shock to everyone that we got to 21, and we didn't really have experience. We just kind of grabbed the ball and ran with it.

Bennett: So then in the next session, you were Minority Leader. [**Hettrick:** Yes.] How did that compare with being Co-Speaker?

Hettrick: Obviously, it's a total difference. The one nice thing about it was Joe Dini remained the Speaker. We had developed a great relationship, so it was easy to go talk to Joe and convey to him what our thoughts were and what the feelings were and the like. The Minority Leader's job is very different. Of course, you don't run the floor. You're basically in communication with the Speaker. The majority party likes to know whether there's tremendous opposition against a bill, or if there are going to be suggested or requested amendments—those kinds of things. They like to know those things.

They don't like to be blind-sided. They certainly don't want to be made to look foolish on the floor because somebody comes up with something they don't know is coming. So a great deal of it is communication.

Probably 90 percent of all the bills that ever come out of this place are pretty innocuous. Most people agree on them. A lot of people can't understand, when they look at the process, why 80 percent of the votes were unanimous. How could we agree on all these partisan political things? Most of the things that you do here are fixing mistakes on bills that were made before, and the fixing is generally pretty well agreed to. It's not partisan politics. It's about trying to get things fixed so they work in the real world, what the public has to deal with. For those few partisan bills that you see, the Minority Leader in the Assembly becomes kind of a conduit to the Senate, which was Republican and had been all the time that I was here. So you become kind of a conduit to say, "The Republican Senate wants this bill, and you want that bill. Perhaps I can help work with you to maybe trade those two bills, or we can get some modified version of each, or whatever." So it's more of a communication thing when you become the Minority Leader.

You see significant turnover. Despite everybody thinking we need term limits, the

reality is that the turnover in the Assembly is quite high, and very few people make it to term limits. They just don't make it to twelve years of service in the Assembly for a lot of reasons. So we always had a lot of new people. Whether you're the Speaker or the Minority Leader, a lot of the job is educating the new people, helping them understand what's going on, trying to help them do the communication required to pass a bill, or helping them with amendments or whatever they have. A lot of it is an education process as well.

Bennett: What was the toughest issue that you had to work on as Minority Leader?

Hettrick: Redistricting wasn't fun. [chuckles] That was not fun. We worked on redistricting the whole session. Of course, through the LCB, the minority had staff and computers and the capability to run programs and set up districts and the like. We did that for the whole session. We worked on various things and offered them routinely. It got down toward the end, and it was clear that the minority in the Assembly was not getting much recognition for the plans that were being offered. [chuckles] We worked really hard with the Senate and spent hours and hours and thought we had some agreement, some support. At the very last minute, the Senate and the Assembly leaderships of the two ruling parties made the decision that each

Hettrick served during the redistricting session of 1991.

majority in each house would do w--hatever plan they wanted and in whatever fashion they wanted, and there would be no input from the minority. That was *very* dissatisfying, to say the least. The effort and time that were put in and then the feeling that we were just abandoned at the end was very disheartening for a lot of people. It was certainly not a fun time. That was probably as difficult an issue as any.

I think second would be the tax increase that was considered in the 2003 session. We kind of became the infamous "Mean 15." Fifteen of us—I was the leader of that group—opposed the tax increase. We voted for various aspects of the budget where we were able to vote for the parts that we thought were appropriate and meaningful, but we voted against those things that we didn't think were appropriate and held fast against the tax increase. But at the last minute with a couple of days to go, one vote swung, and it ended up being able to get out but not after a *lot* of problems. As you know, we ended up with Supreme Court hearings. It was quite interesting. But that was a very interesting session in that you had 15 of us basically holding up everything. That was the contention. Those 15 people were very tight-knit and believed they were doing the right thing. I think that most of them to this day believe it. Of course, the following session,

we came in here with a huge surplus, which basically showed that we didn't need the money; we didn't need the tax increase. So we very much felt vindicated about saying that we can vote for the budget and don't need this tax increase. We were willing to support some increase but not as much as ultimately got passed. In retrospect, we felt like we really did the right thing.

The "Mean 15" title kind of came from the fact that we were accused of not funding schools. Of course, nothing could be further from the truth. You couldn't *not* fund schools. The schools were actually funded long past when the budget was due. The claim was, I think, that a school actually got shut down in southern Nevada, claiming they had no money. In reality, they had money for at least another 60 days, and the budget was passed long before that. So it wasn't an issue. But the title "Mean 15" came from that. We've always laughed: we preferred "Lean 15" for "Mean 15." [laughter]

Bennett: How did that group keep its cohesion through the session? That really was remarkable.

Hettrick: It was really not very hard to do. The one thing that that I prided myself on within our caucus was that we all sat and talked. We all agreed on our position, whatever it was. You'd take whatever position you wanted. As you know, we

had people in our caucus who sat in the meeting every day who were also voting for the tax, who thought we needed the tax increase. But everyone was entitled to have their own opinion and hold to it if they chose to or whatever. The only requirement we had was that if someone was going to change their mind, they had to come tell us before they told anyone else. They couldn't blind-side us. The 15 made up their minds, and we stuck together because we believed that we were doing the right thing. They had made a commitment, and they stayed with it.

Bennett: Tell me some about your colleagues. Who were some of the most effective legislators that you served with?

Hettrick: Oh, I have to say Jack Close—highly respected; a good man. I always thought highly of Jack Close. John Marvel is another one who, I think, was respected by all. He's a tough, old Winnemucca cowboy; you can't help but like John Marvel. He's just a fine man. You can disagree with him politically all you want, but you can't help but like John Marvel. John Carpenter is the same way. He's an Elko cowboy who wears his cowboy hat and his cowboy boots into the Building. They're fine, upstanding people. I can't say there was anybody that I can think of that was somebody I didn't like or thought they didn't belong here. Garn Mabey is

Jack D. Close, Sr., (R-Clark) served in the Assembly from 1994 to 1998.

John W. Marvel (R-Battle Mountain) served in the Assembly from 1978 to 2008. He was Minority Leader in 1993.

John C. Carpenter (R-Elko) has served in the Assembly since 1986.

R. Garn Mabey, Jr., (R-Clark) served in the Assembly from 2002 to 2008.

as fine a human being as you'll ever meet. You could just go right down the list. I think most all of them were good folks.

Certainly, there's nothing magical about being in this place. They're all just regular human beings. They all have their foibles, and they all make their mistakes. That's true of all, from top to bottom—I don't care who you are in this place. I don't think you can go through a session without walking away and saying, "Golly, why did I say *that.* I just wish I'd never done that [chuckles], or why did I participate in *that* thing? I should have known better." You just can't. You're just human. The sheer volume of what goes on here—1,800 bills introduced or requested to be drafted; 1,300 or 1,400 bills that ultimately get passed in some fashion—there's no *way* you can be an expert in everything. You've got to study the language and all the rest, but there's no *way* you can read every word of every bill. You've got to count on other people to help you and to guide you some about whether a bill has an issue. So you depend a lot on the people around you. If you don't do that and you don't listen, you'll get caught.

I can remember a bill passed in my first session, and I was reading it like crazy, trying to get through it before we came to the floor. It was late in the session, and I couldn't find any-

thing in it that was an issue; it passed and I voted for it. Boy, when it went into effect in October, I found out that it had a buoy tax on Lake Tahoe, which is in my district! Oh, man, did I catch it—voting for this tax! [chuckles] I didn't know it was in there. I totally missed it. It took me two sessions to get rid of that tax. I finally did, but nobody came to me and said, "Hey, did you know there's a buoy tax on Lake Tahoe? It's in your district." Or if they did, I missed it. Anyway, you just learn that you've got to depend on your colleagues and listen to what they have to say because they've got to be your eyes and ears on a lot of it.

A.B. 430 (1993) allowed the State Land Registrar to impose various fees, including a buoy fee at Lake Tahoe.

Bennett: A big part of the process are the lobbyists. Tell me about the interaction with lobbyists.

Hettrick: For the most part, I think the interaction is good. You simply cannot be an expert on everything. I really see this body acting as a board of directors. You have a group who comes to you and says they need this or that, and then you have another group who says they don't want any changes, or "if you're going to change that, you need to change this, too."

I think the name "lobbyists" ought to be changed to "advocates" because that's why they're doing. They're advocating a position or a certain change in the law for whatever reason. I think "lobbyist" has a poor connotation as

does "politician." So I guess we understand where it comes from. [chuckles] But the lobbyists are absolutely necessary if you're going to learn anything about an issue and if you're going to have input that lets you make a reasonable decision. You have to have something on which to base a decision, so the lobbyists are absolutely essential. The good ones are known to be honest and straightforward. They will come to you and tell you their position—why they believe they're right and why they think you should do this. They will also tell you what the opposing advocate will say. They'll tell you both sides, and they'll let you weigh that and think about it, so you've got some basis. Again, I think you must have that basis to make a decision. Otherwise, you're trying to operate in a vacuum. Unless it's something you happen to know something about, or a good deal about, you need that input. So I think they're a very necessary part of the process.

I've seen some things that I thought were inappropriate—not illegal, but inappropriate. I've seen some things that made me very angry. A legislator looking out into the audience, looking at a lobbyist to see which way to go or what to do, I thought was totally wrong. I don't guess that's much different than talking to them in the office and then making up your mind, but when something had changed and

they didn't know—instead of saying, "I don't want to vote on this now" or, "I want to wait and find out," or, "I want to get some more information"—they just looked out in the audience to a lobbyist, watched for a thumb up or thumb down, and voted that way. I really felt that that was inappropriate. But it's a part of the process. It's certainly not illegal. It's like everything else where there's not always time to stop and talk about it again in the next committee meeting. Sometimes you can't do that. So, again, I think they are a clear, necessary part of the process. It's an imperfect process. There are imperfect people involved on both sides. That's just the way it is. Overall, it's a pretty good process.

Bennett: Who were some of the more effective lobbyists during your tenure?

Hettrick: I'm not going to name names, but I'm just going to tell you that the big names clearly were effective. Why were they effective? First, they worked for big companies. They generally represented lots of companies. They were highly respected because they were effective, and that's how they got those kinds of jobs and those positions. So the big names were well known and generally well respected. I would say, for the most part, they were very straightforward and honest. That's how they got to where they were. Some of the smaller

lobbyists, those with smaller groups, were just as honest, just as straightforward, and just as effective given their position or what they worked for, but they were not seen in the same light as the big names. It's just the way it is. That was true within the legislators. Obviously, when you have a group of 42, there are some who are seen as having some power or influence on others. Clearly, committee chairs fall into that, for the most part. They have some abilities to control legislation and the like that others don't. So it's true of legislators as well as lobbyists that there are different levels of power and different levels of respect, trust, that kind of thing.

Bennett: What was the interaction like with the Senate?

Hettrick: From my standpoint of being in the minority all the time, the Senate with the Republicans in the majority had little reason to deal with a Republican Assembly. I'm not saying that in a negative way per se. It's reality. They had to get bills passed by the majority in the Assembly. The majority was the Democrat Party. They had no choice but to deal with the Democrats. They assumed that since a bill came out of the Republican Senate that the Republican Assembly members would vote for it, and probably 95 percent of the time or more, they were right. Clearly, if it came out of that house, and it was a Republican-controlled house, then

probably most of the Republicans in the Assembly didn't have a problem with it. I think it was unfortunate that the assumption was made because I think there could have been a lot better communication and probably a better feeling of trust and cooperation, and some of those things that could have been fostered. But the reality is back to what it is. You have to deal with the majority party no matter what. There's only so much time in a day and so many times you can meet on a given bill or whatever. So it's reality. I think it could be better, but I don't think it was unusual in any way beyond that.

Bennett: You worked with a couple of different Governors while you were in the Legislature—Governors Bob Miller and Kenny Guinn. Tell me about those interactions.

Robert J. (Bob) Miller (D) was Governor from 1991 to 1999.

Hettrick: Interesting. I had not known Governor Miller before I came into office. The election that created the tied session was when Governor Miller was elected to his last term.

A funny story. My wife and I were invited to the Governor's Balls, both north and south, and we went to the Governor's Ball in Las Vegas. We were up on the podium at the start of the function, and they did the Pledge of Allegiance and the National Anthem. Of course, I'm short a right arm so when we do the

salute, I do it with my left hand. I didn't know it at the time, but a camera was panning down us and showing us on the big screen out to the audience. After the function was over, probably a week or two later, I bumped into Governor Miller walking down the hall, and he says, "I've got tell you a funny story." The Governor told me that a guy walked up to him down there at the ball and asked what the deal was with Hettrick. The Governor asked him what he meant, and he says, "He did the pledge and stuff with his left hand over his heart. What's that about?" [chuckles] The Governor said, "Well, he only has a left hand." The Governor thought it was hilarious. So did I. Of course, the guy had no idea. It was funny. I got along very well with Governor Miller. I went over and met with him multiple times. He was a pleasant man. I always thought highly of him. I was not enough of a partisan politician at the time, I guess, to worry so much about the partisan aspects of it. If I had a bill that I needed and I wanted him to know about it, I went over there. He met with me, and he was very straightforward.

I had a very good personal relationship with Governor Guinn as well. I like Governor Guinn—a nice man—and always thought highly of him. We obviously disagreed on the tax increase. He was a supporter; I was an

opponent, which probably wasn't real good for our relationship [chuckles] in regard to how well we got along. He was always more than pleasant to me and very polite and kind and courteous. On a business basis, we obviously disagreed, but I got along with him well, too. We went frequently to lunches at the Governor's Mansion and met with him in his office in the Capitol Building on a regular basis during sessions. As I said, I personally think very highly of the man. We disagreed on an issue or two, but certainly not anything of significance.

Bennett: Was there much difference between the ways that they worked with the Legislature?

Hettrick: I don't think I'm a real good judge of that to be honest with you, Dana. I didn't see enough of Governor Miller to know in the time I was here because I was enough of novice—a greenhorn—that I really didn't know what was going on. I was learning as I went. Most of the difference that I did see was because of party affiliation. Obviously, Governor Guinn was a Republican as was I, so we had a lot more contact with the Governor and ability to get to people in the Governor's Office, those kinds of things. We had a lot more ability to get to the Governor for help or comment or whatever when Governor Guinn was there. But I certainly didn't see that Governor Miller was slighting us in any way. It just was that we

didn't communicate with him at the same level. That's all.

Bennett: Tell me about the interaction with staff.

Hettrick: Staff here is incredible. Just incredible—the hours they put in and, unfortunately, the lack of recognition they get. I have to say they are treated poorly by some legislators. I just don't understand that. There are some people here who think that somehow they were anointed or appointed to the right hand of God, I guess, because they got elected. I don't know what it is, but they become very pushy and unappreciative. It's sad to see that. But for the most, the legislators in this building realize that nothing here would happen [chuckles] if it wasn't for staff. The hours they put in and the work they do and stuff they have to put up with to do it—incredible. So yes, staff is awesome—a great group of people who do a wonderful job here.

Government takes a lot of flak for not doing a lot of things the way the public perhaps thinks it should be done, but government, by the very nature of the beast, is not a very effective thing. It's not a profit-making center. Most all profit-making centers have moved into the private sector because there's money to be made, and that's a good thing. It should be there. But what it means is that what's left is not a profit-making center. It has very little

reward or very little return for doing a good job. So my experience with government employees is that, for the most part, they're just like everybody else. They work hard. They mean well. They try to do a good job. They earn their money. They're put upon a lot because they're in government, and they really shouldn't be. Government is inefficient by the very nature of the beast. It's part of what comes with the job, I guess.

Bennett: What do you think would surprise most Nevadans about the Legislature?

Hettrick: That's an interesting question. I don't think most of them understand that the people here really don't get paid very much—$7,800 for two years of service and maybe a little bit more for committee work. You say that to somebody in a group and usually the response is that it's too much. They think it's funny in a way, but they've got to realize that it's difficult to participate in these Chambers and to be a part of this process, especially if people are from Las Vegas. They have to travel up here and essentially spend at least 120 days here. There are a lot of things—committee meetings, travel, participation in national organizations—that are all part of the job of being a legislator. People spend a *lot* of time, and it's costly. It truly is. Every session, I argued about it more than anybody did. I brought bills and co-sponsored bills,

trying to get legislators paid more even if it was five years later or when everyone that was in this building was gone, so we could pay new people more, and get more good people to serve. A whole lot of people who really ought to serve, who have good ideas and could be a benefit to this process, will never serve here because of the cost. They can't afford to do it. They look at it and ask why they should give up their income during that same time to go serve. I think that they really don't realize the time commitment—a lot of personal commitment that must be made, depending on your campaigns and positions and chairmanships and a lot of things like it. There can be a lot of heartache and grief that goes on here, too. It's hard on families. We see a lot of that. I don't think most Nevadans realize that. They look at it, and they think all politicians get paid too much or all have wonderful perks. The Legislature certainly doesn't have wonderful perks. The public just has, I think, an impression that the Nevada Legislature is much like the federal government, which has a far different situation than we do. So I think that what would probably be the biggest surprise is that people really don't know what goes on here.

I can remember knocking on doors when I was campaigning, saying that I was running for the Assembly, and they would ask

how I could stand going back to Washington all the time. They have no idea. They have *no* idea. I'm not faulting the public. People have their own lives to run. Day-to-day, they don't worry about politics or what's going on here. The Legislature doesn't meet on a continuing basis, so it's kind of up on the radar screen and the next thing you know, it's gone again for two years. So I'm certainly not faulting the public. It's just a fact that people don't understand what the Legislature is and how it functions. I think that they probably would really be surprised if they came in and watched the work, the effort, and the time that goes into this. I think they'd be surprised.

Bennett: Tell me about some of the things that you did during the interim.

Hettrick: Oh, gosh. Of course, you're on committees. You're on lots of committees. When you are Minority Leader, you get to choose the committees you serve on, so I always tried to pick ones that I thought would be interesting and that I could have some impact on. They ranged from soup to nuts. I served as the Chair of the Tahoe Oversight Committee, trying to make sure that fire regulations and the like at Tahoe were meaningful and, at the same time, fought over the tax structure there. The various counties that have jurisdiction within the Tahoe basin have *very* different tax structures that

During the 2003-2004 interim, Hettrick chaired the Legislative Committee for the Review and Oversight of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency and the Marlette Lake Water System.

caused all kinds of grief clear to the Supreme Court. I was involved in workers comp when we worked on it in the interim. We did studies on ways to make government more efficient and the like.

I was heavily involved with the Council of State Governments, which is a national organization that tries to improve the quality of legislators, raise the quality of the legislative process, and does a lot of teaching on ethics to try to make people understand what they ought to do. There was also a lot of interaction with other legislators; there's no use reinventing the wheel. If somebody in Vermont has come up with a good idea to solve a problem or whatever, then we tried to pass that around and get it to everybody else as a workable solution. The language would be already written, and other states knew it worked because it has been there for two years or four years or whatever. I really enjoyed that organization. I found it to be very beneficial and helpful to legislators. The national Council of State Governments had a training school that took something like 35 people a year. So they couldn't do very many, but they just kept working and working, bringing in 35 every year. The Western Region of the Council of State Governments set up our own training school. Tremendous results! The legislators who went to it loved it, and it turned

out that something like 40 percent of the graduates of the legislative school were in leadership positions within their respective houses in the western United States. So I think it was effective. I think it was a good thing. I really enjoyed doing that in the interim.

When you're in the Assembly, of course, you're always raising money and always running during the interim. Every two years, you're up for election, so the campaigning never stopped. You went to a million functions—every Republican Women's Club meeting, every Chamber of Commerce meeting, a lot of county commission meetings. You just go to everything in sight trying to stay informed and keep your face out in front of the public—very, very time-consuming. Fun in a lot of ways. A few perks are involved, but the perks aren't what people think. It's not money or cars or those kinds of things. The perks are more that you get to go places that some people don't. You get to visit Yucca Mountain. You get to go on an aircraft carrier or submarine someplace that people normally aren't let on because of security and things like that. You get to do things that are unique, that are fun to go do, such as visiting the new straw when it was built into Lake Mead to supply water for Las Vegas and go through some of the processing plants and things like that. Really interest-

Yucca Mountain in Nevada has been the proposed site of the nation's nuclear waste repository since 1987.

ing things that were very helpful to the learning process, to understand what was going on and why, to see it and get a feel for what you were trying to do or what needed to be accomplished. Those were interesting things that we did in the interim. It was fun. Some of it. [laughter]

Bennett: What were some of the things that were not so much fun?

Hettrick: The fact that you were just expected to go to a lot of functions, a lot of things. They're good people who mean well and all the rest, but you just end up going to *so many* functions. It just gets to where you're saying, "Oh, not again. Not again. *Another one?* Not again. [laughter] I'm tired, and I'd like to go home and just sit down." At first, it's really fun, and then it starts getting to where you look back and you say, "Wow! I miss not being able to go home and sit down with my grandkids" or that kind of thing. You just don't realize it at first. It's fun; it's new; it's exciting when you first do it. But the demands on your time are, I think, the biggest negative.

Bennett: How did your legislative service affect your family?

Hettrick: I think they were the same way. It was exciting, at first. You asked about the first day. We had all the family here, and there were people

everywhere. My grandkids were here, and they were sitting all over in the audience. Everybody was all excited about it. By the time we got down to the last term before I decided not to run again, I'd tell my grandkids that there was a big function going on and Grandpa's going to get some award, and they weren't as excited anymore. [chuckles] It just wore on them, too. They'd done so many functions and been to so many things. It just kind of got down to where I wouldn't bother them by inviting them because they'd spent so much time doing it. So time was, again, the big thing. It was just time.

Bennett: How did you decide which bills you would introduce?

Hettrick: For the most part, people would call and make suggestions, and you'd look at a bill. Early on in the career, you'd tend to look at a bill and think that you need to do it because it's your constituent, then you find out very quickly that a lot of those bills aren't going to go anywhere for a myriad of reasons. Those generally aren't bills that are going to get very far. Then you start sitting back and thinking about your ten bills and if the idea would make a difference.

I put a bill in multiple times—and it still needs to be done—to fund the judges' pension plan in this state. In this state, we fund judges' pensions on a cash-flow basis. We have not

Hettrick chaired the Interim Study of a Pension Plan for Certain Justices and Judges (A.B. 698), 1999-2000.

taken the money on an annual basis and banked it and allowed that money to generate its own revenue from interest income or earnings. If we had started investing the money when I first put the bill in, we could have saved about 200 million dollars. All we had to do to save 200 million was to put in 20 million out of the budget surplus we had—a huge surplus, hundreds of millions. I tried to get a 20-million-dollar deposit put into the judges' pension plan to save this State 200 million, but I couldn't get it on. People wanted to spend the money. They don't want to put five million in or 20 million in that will save money in the future because the future's not today. They want to be able to go home and say, "Look what I did for you. Look at the wonderful thing I got. I bought this or I got that funded" or whatever, instead of saying, "I saved your grandkids money." So I think that's unfortunate, but it's a fact. I tried to find bills that looked like that—that could save money if we did certain things. I had bills that funded suicide prevention. Nevada has a relatively high suicide rate, and we were having a terrible time getting adequate funding and education for professionals in the field on suicide prevention. I had bills in to fund things like that. That's the kind of bill that I looked for, if I could find it. You don't find many of those. It's hard to find bills like that, but those were the

ones that probably gave me as much satisfaction as any.

I had an interesting bill with a couple who went to Nigeria or Ethiopia or someplace and adopted two orphans. It took them months; they were stuck in whatever country it was for months, trying to get the kids out of there. They finally managed to get out, but both adoptive parents ended up losing 30 to 40 pounds each. There was no food, and the kids were all starving. It was an amazing thing. They brought the kids back here, tried to put them into school, and found that the school system in the state of Nevada has a requirement that you have to have a legal birth certificate. They don't have any birth certificates. There was no way. We tried every way under the sun to get birth certificates. You couldn't get it done. Very long story short, there was a whole lot of hard work and effort on multiple peoples' parts, and we finally got these kids enrolled in school. We ended up passing a bill saying that the State had to provide birth certificates or appropriate paperwork for children who didn't have one so they could go to school. The family members came in and sat at my desk when the bill was passed on the floor. It was very gratifying. Things like that are *really* gratifying. Those are the kinds of things that I looked for or tried to find that I thought made sense.

A.B. 12 (2001) revises the provisions governing the issuance of supplementary birth certificates by the State Registrar of Vital Statistics.

Bennett: When you look back at your personal list of bills, are there any that you wish you hadn't introduced?

Hettrick: Oh, I'm sure there are multiple ones that I wish I hadn't, but I'd have to go back and actually go through the list. I haven't done that. But I'm sure now, in retrospect, I wish I hadn't on some them just because I can now see that they weren't going to go anywhere. I spent a lot of time and effort and some heartache, thinking perhaps that we were going to do some good, and just couldn't do it. I suppose there were a few, but I can't think of one now that I wish I hadn't done. Mostly, it would be the ones where I just burned a lot of time and effort and personal emotional commitment trying to get something done I thought was right, and then it just didn't go anywhere. I probably would have been better off spending my time trying to work on something that had a chance to go somewhere rather than burning that much energy.

Bennett: What was the most fun issue that you worked on?

Hettrick: Oh, gosh, there were some funny ones. I wish I'd known you were going to ask the question, and I'd have gone back and thought about it. There were some hilarious things that happened—things where you just couldn't help

but laugh. Again, I can't think of a specific one, but I know we had a lot of fun. We'd always have a lot of fun in caucus. Of course, caucus meetings are private. You can say pretty much anything you want, and a lot of funny things happened. For the most part, the people here have a good sense of humor. You have to have pretty thick skin; you get used to having things poked at you [chuckles] pretty regular. So, yeah, we had a lot of fun.

I look out there right now, and I can see Mr. Anderson's sign over there. Mr. Anderson and I were initiated into E Clampus Vitus together. They have some very interesting rituals that they do for their [chuckles] initiation that Mr. Anderson and I laugh about to this day when we see each other. So there were just a lot of funny things that happened. That was part of the fun of being here. For the most part, these were very good people who were working very hard, and when we had fun, we really had fun. When you work hard, you work hard, and when you have fun, you have fun as well.

Bernard (Bernie) Anderson (D-Washoe) has served in the Assembly since 1990.

Bennett: Why did you decide not to run again?

Hettrick: I felt that I'd reached the point where I wasn't as effective. I hate to say that because I've prided myself on being effective, but I was tiring of the part of the process that doesn't function the way you'd like to think it does. A

part of this process is partisan politics, and it has nothing to do with doing what's best for the State of Nevada or the citizens of Nevada. It's partisan politics. And that's reality. It's what makes the world in this building tick, but it's also the part of it that's not fun. It's very emotionally draining because you work so hard on the redistricting issue, the budget issue, and various other issues, like the judges' pension issue. They seem like no-brainers that should be done for the good of the State of Nevada, but the problem was with whose name was on it. You can't have a Republican victory, you know; you can't. It applies to the Democrats in the Senate or wherever. I'm not singling out a party; I'm just talking about the reality of what goes on in this building. So the partisan politics begin to wear on you. You get tired of the fact that you put in so much effort and so much emotional energy in trying to get things done because you think they're right, and when they don't happen, it's just very dissatisfying. You sit and ask yourself why you're doing this job that [chuckles], doesn't pay very well with long hours. People act like you're a criminal or a corrupt individual, and you're not. You're just trying to do your job. I'd look at it and think that I'd really rather be with my grandkids at the Lake today, and here we are in this building fighting over something that should be a no-

brainer. After a while, I decided that we need fresh blood, to get somebody in here who is excited and has that motivation and believes they can change the world as well. You need that outlook to come in here, I think, and start the process and want to be totally involved. So I decided that it was a good time to quit. It was a good time for me, and there were people interested in running in my district who I thought were good people who were truly motivated and excited about doing it. It just was the right time.

Bennett: So when you think back over your tenure, how had the institution changed?

Hettrick: It's unfortunate, I think, in politics that it's becoming more and more partisan. That's what I saw more than anything. I think Joe Dini was really the last of the old school who was very much, as I explained earlier, somebody who said, "If you've got the votes, if you can convince more than half, the 50 percent plus 1, to vote for it, then more power to you. Go for it." I see that changing, and I'm not faulting individuals again or any party or anything else, it's just reality. How unfortunate it seems that it's just becoming more and more partisan, and that's what I saw, was there was a lot more partisanship. It was more about winning an individual battle than winning for the State of Nevada. So that's unfortunate because we

really could have had some win-wins for everybody, but things didn't happen because it became a partisan issue and it just didn't happen. That's the thing, I think, that I disliked or was most uncomfortable with. You would hope that when it came down to an ultimate decision, it wouldn't matter who gets their name on it or who doesn't get their name on it—it's the best thing for the State of Nevada and we ought to do it. Too many times it didn't go that way. So I was uncomfortable in that regard. I don't want to make it sound like I'm negative to the Legislature or the process. It's the process. It's the way the system works. It can be very difficult; it can be very ugly; it can be all those things; and still by far it's the best system of any I know of anywhere in the world. It's just the way the system works.

Bennett: When you look back over your tenure, what's your fondest memory?

Hettrick: The people—primarily the staff. A lot of great people who I would never have met or wouldn't have had an opportunity to get to know. Some people became good friends, truly good friends, like Bob Beers. Senator Bob Beers is just a fine man. I think highly of Bob Beers. Senator Barbara Cegavske. Both of them served with me in the Assembly. I think the world of both of them. They're great people. Probably the biggest plus is the people. Some

Bob Beers (R-Clark) served in the Assembly from 1998 to 2004 and in the Senate from 2004 to 2008.

Barbara K. Cegavske (R-Clark) served in the Assembly from 1996 to 2002 and began serving in the Senate in 2002.

of the people in here were just incredible people who truly made you feel privileged to be a part of the group.

Bennett: Thank you very much for spending time with us today.

Hettrick: It was a pleasure. I enjoyed it.

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Get Consensus
GROUP FACILITATION
COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING
ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

ABOUT THE PROJECT TEAM

Get Consensus, LLC, is owned by Dale Erquiaga who serves as the project's manager and conducted some of the interviews. Dale is a native Nevadan with an extensive background in Nevada politics, having served as Director of the Nevada Department of Cultural Affairs and Chief Deputy Secretary of State. With both Nevada and Arizona clients, Get Consensus is based in Phoenix.

Dana Bennett is the project's leader and has conducted most of the interviews. Currently a PhD candidate in public history at Arizona State University with a particular interest in the women who served in the Nevada Legislature between 1919 and 1960, she has also conducted oral histories with former Arizona legislators. Prior to returning to school, she was part of the Nevada legislative process for many years.

Gwen Clancy is the project's award-winning videographer. Based in Reno, she hosts and produces the documentary series, "Exploring Nevada," which is seen on local TV throughout the state.

Jean Stoess transcribed and indexed the interviews. A long-time Reno resident, Jean is familiar with Nevada politics in both elected and appointed capacities and has indexed several Nevada history works.