



**NEVADA LEGISLATURE  
NEVADA VISION STAKEHOLDER GROUP**  
**(Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 37, File No. 102, *Statutes of Nevada 2009*)**

**SUMMARY MINUTES AND ACTION REPORT**

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The third meeting of the Nevada Legislature's Nevada Vision Stakeholder Group was held on February 11, 2010, at 9 a.m. in Room 4401 of the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 2134 of the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada. A copy of this set of "Summary Minutes and Action Report," including the "Meeting Notice and Agenda" ([Exhibit A](#)) and other substantive exhibits, is available on the Nevada Legislature's website at <http://www.leg.state.nv.us/interim/75th2009/committee/>. In addition, copies of the audio record may be purchased through the Legislative Counsel Bureau's Publications Office (e-mail: [publications@lcb.state.nv.us](mailto:publications@lcb.state.nv.us); telephone: 775/684-6835).

**GROUP MEMBERS PRESENT IN LAS VEGAS:**

Robert E. Lang, Ph.D., Brookings Mountain West and Department of Sociology,  
University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Chair  
Peter C. Bernhard, Cleveland Clinic Nevada  
Doug Busselman, Nevada Farm Bureau Federation  
Rene Cantu, Jr., Ph.D., Latin Chamber of Commerce Foundation  
Alan Feldman, MGM Mirage, Inc.  
Marsha Irvin, Andre Agassi College Preparatory Academy  
Janelle Kraft Pearce, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, Retired  
Boyd Martin, Boyd Martin Construction and Associated General Contractors,  
Las Vegas Chapter  
John Packham, Ph.D., University of Nevada School of Medicine  
Thomas A. Perrigo, AICP, City of Las Vegas  
Susan Rhodes, LASW, National Association of Social Workers, Nevada Chapter  
Brian Rippet, Nevada State Education Association  
Keith Smith, Boyd Gaming Corporation  
Donald D. Snyder, The Smith Center for the Performing Arts  
Denise Tanata Ashby, Nevada Institute for Children's Research and Policy,  
University of Nevada, Las Vegas  
Cedric D. Williams, North Las Vegas Fire Department

Sylvia Young, FACHE, Sunrise Hospital and Medical Center

**GROUP MEMBERS PRESENT IN CARSON CITY:**

Douglas D. Dirks, Employers Holdings, Inc.

Paul Dugan, Washoe County School District, Retired

Robert Lee Potter, American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees

Terry J. Reynolds, The Reynolds Company

Katy Simon, Washoe County

**GROUP MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Joseph E. Dini, Jr., Nevada Assembly Speaker Emeritus

Dan Goulet, United Way of Southern Nevada

Devin Reiss, Nevada Association of Realtors

Jacob L. Snow, Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada

**LEGISLATORS PRESENT IN LAS VEGAS:**

Assembly Speaker Barbara E. Buckley

**LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL BUREAU STAFF PRESENT IN LAS VEGAS:**

David Ziegler, Principal Research Analyst, Research Division

**LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL BUREAU STAFF PRESENT IN CARSON CITY:**

Donald O. Williams, Research Director, Research Division

Melinda M. Martini, Senior Research Analyst, Research Division

C. J. Smith, Secretary, Research Division

## INTRODUCTION AND OPENING REMARKS

- Robert E. Lang, Chair, called the meeting to order and announced there would be three breakout sessions for today's meeting of the Nevada Vision Stakeholder Group (NVSG). He announced that Steve Cochrane and Mark McMullen from Moody's Analytics, Inc., would be facilitating the two breakout sessions in Las Vegas. Chair Lang added that Mark Muro, from Washington, D.C., and The Brookings Institution authored the report titled *Blueprint for American Prosperity—Metropolitan Las Vegas* ([Exhibit B](#)), and would begin with a presentation to the NVSG.

## PRESENTATION ON METROPOLITAN DEVELOPMENT, TRENDS, CHALLENGES, AND OPPORTUNITIES IN THE INTERMOUNTAIN WEST, WITH REFERENCE TO PUBLICATIONS TITLED *MOUNTAIN MEGAS* AND *MOUNTAIN MONITOR*, BROOKINGS MOUNTAIN WEST

- Mark Muro, Fellow and Policy Director, Metropolitan Policy Program, The Brookings Institution, and Washington, D.C., Director, Brookings Mountain West, outlined his presentation and commented on the importance of the west's economic development. Mr. Muro said that the State of Nevada, and other governments, recognize the need to remake the fiscal system for every generation to flourish in a new environment. He added that changes in the United States industry structures, spending patterns, and economic behaviors set up conditions for historic national and regional resets where the nature of the economy shifts. Mr. Muro said there may not be a return to normal due to what preceded the last recession. What matters now, however, is how Nevada responds to this crisis.

Mr. Muro shared why Brookings is engaged in Nevada and discussed Nevada's challenges and opportunities ([Exhibit B](#)). He described the growth dynamics of the State until 2007 and said the Las Vegas metropolitan area's population has decreased, but that the population will likely double by 2040. In Mr. Muro's view, Nevada is at ground zero of a world economic crisis. He said that no other large metropolitan area suffered house price declines or foreclosures greater than Las Vegas, and he said there are similar situations in Reno and Carson City. He noted a growing consensus the NVSG needs to consider: export more goods and professional services and trade less on consumerism. Mr. Muro said that consumption is decreasing nationally and savings are rising, which is potentially problematic for Nevada because of the State's orientation toward consumption activities.

Continuing, Mr. Muro submitted a Brookings Institution report titled *Blueprint for American Prosperity—Metropolitan Las Vegas* ([Exhibit B](#)). He suggested challenges for Nevada include productive growth that boosts innovation and generates quality jobs. Mr. Muro said that inclusivity is a crucial economic value, and stated that regions that have a strong middle class are better able to address training and education needs. Mr. Muro further stated that sustainability reduces resource consumption, protects the environment, and is fiscally efficient. He invited the NVSG to consider basic assets:

infrastructure, transportation, the ability to exploit highly trained human capital, and sustainability that reduces carbon emissions.

- Donald D. Snyder, member, requested Mr. Muro define regional government.
- Mr. Muro clarified that he said regional governance, which might include informal networks; for example, substantial trade associations or informal linkages. Mr. Muro said that Salt Lake City has a local, formal government structure and a very powerful informal consensus around Envision Utah that achieves continuity, especially in infrastructure.

Continuing, Mr. Muro discussed infrastructure, innovation, and sustainability issues. He stated Nevada remains underserved by transportation links and noted that Las Vegas and Phoenix are the nation's two largest metropolitan areas not joined by an interstate. He said McCarran International Airport is an outstanding asset in creating a world-class city in Nevada.

Mr. Muro described innovation, invention, and exploiting of new products and processes as being crucial to the State's economic future; however, little scientific and technical research and development is realized in Nevada. Mr. Muro said the State has strengths in labor productivity and in its natural assets.

Mr. Muro said Nevada faces significant challenges regarding sustainability, including the State's water supply. Mr. Muro said that Nevada has a strong, dense urban job corps, which is an important starting point for shaping an efficient, dynamic metropolis in Nevada. Lastly, he said that Las Vegas's carbon footprint is below the national average, which is a mark of efficiency. Mr. Muro proposed Nevada determine what investments need to be made and what efficiencies can be seized even as the State tries to stabilize.

- Chair Lang said that several years ago, Denver reinvented itself and that Denver could be especially instructive for Las Vegas. The Chair noted that Denver emerged with more resilience and complexity in its economy.
- Alan Feldman, member, mentioned the topic of exports. He asked whether tourism is considered an export.
- Mr. Muro responded that tourism is an export and that the gaming complex is highly valued as an international export. He said the production of goods is a crucial mainstay for economic competitiveness and is not counterintuitive for Nevada.
- Mr. Snyder concurred that Nevada's primary industry is a vibrant export industry and is a good base for the State. He stressed the importance of finding ways to enhance and strengthen tourism with less reliance on a consumption-based economy.

- Mr. Muro endorsed diversification for the State's economy and stated Nevada needs to follow its strengths. He said alternative energy, given the State's geothermal areas and abundance of sun, its proximity to California for consumption of energy, and the State's relatively favorable map for transmission, are facts for possible complementary development.
- Doug Busselman, alternate member, questioned the context of the planning system. He pointed out that in *Mountain Megalopolis*, by the Brookings Institution, Metropolitan Policy Program (2008), there is significant emphasis on metropolitan areas. Mr. Busselman wondered how the NVSG might complete its statewide assignment even though Nevada is dominated by Las Vegas.
- Mr. Muro suggested the Group envision a State direction that understands and values the centrality of the metropolitan economy. He acknowledged Reno and Carson City as also metropolitan and important, with an appreciation that those cities are interdependent with rural Nevada. He recommended a frank recognition of the metropolitan importance and an account of how a prosperous, rural Nevada contributes and ties to the metropolitan future.
- Mr. Snyder said the NVSG is meeting to discuss Nevada's quality of life and inquired why the economy is being discussed.
- Mr. Muro said that a standard of living is directly driven by productivity and, absent a vibrant economy, the State will be unable to make investments or provide services that a diverse population needs.
- Katy Simon, member, requested a response from Mr. Muro regarding the highest leverage for positively impacting the key indicators of performance.
- Mr. Muro said investment in human capital is critical. He said the better-educated regions were not hit as hard during this recession. Mr. Muro added that certain cities offer a different profile which provides resilience for their economy. He said infrastructure is also crucial and Nevada has a backward infrastructure in terms of surface transportation and rail.
- Mr. Snyder affirmed the importance of transportation and innerconnectedness. He said the distance between Las Vegas and southern California, while a short-term strength, could also be a long-term weakness. Mr. Snyder said more long-haul connections might be better for the State's primary economy.
- Mr. Muro cited the development of resilience, capacity, and specialization in transportation options as vital. He suggested Nevada efficiently use the assets it has and see what alternatives can be added, thereby creating choices. Mr. Muro cited high-speed rail as a legitimate alternative for Nevada because of its 200- to 500-mile optimum range.

- Chair Lang said people must come to Las Vegas to consume the city's export so that the city's infrastructure is important. Las Vegas is an entry point for currency because of its conversion from Euros and Yen to dollars. With two million residents, the Chair said Las Vegas is a world city, and world cities need to engage the world economy.

**DISCUSSION OF LONG-TERM VISION STATEMENTS FOR THE STATE OF NEVADA AND SELECTION OF A VISION STATEMENT BY THE NEVADA VISION STAKEHOLDER GROUP (NVSG)**

- Steven Cochrane, Managing Director of Moody's Analytics, Inc., introduced Mark McMullen, Director of Consulting, with Moody's Analytics, Inc. Mr. Cochrane said his specialization is in regional economics, and Mr. McMullen's specialty is state and local government, fiscal analysis, and linking education to economic development. It is Mr. Cochrane's understanding that the NVSG will meet in small, informal groups to brainstorm ideas. He then asked the Group to offer key points for completion of a vision statement. Mr. McMullen provided examples from the states of Minnesota ([Exhibit C](#)) and Oregon ([Exhibit D](#)).
- Mr. Snyder said the State needs a broadly-based, sustainable economy which leads to and enhances quality of life.
- Dr. Rene Cantu, Jr., member, proposed the NVSG draft an inclusive, equitable plan for leveraging Nevada's resources to improve the quality of life for everyone in the State.
- Mr. Cochrane noted Mr. Muro's comments on comparative advantage as a key concept for regional economies. He stated Nevada has unique resources and questioned the members on Nevada's comparative advantage for the future.
- Cedric D. Williams, member, suggested the following points: Nevada will be a world-class leader in government; in fiscal responsibility; and in stability through education, innovation, and brainstorming. He emphasized encouraging public input to create a government more resilient and economically sustainable, which will create, maintain, and enhance quality of life.
- Brian Rippet, member, suggested the following concepts for inclusion in the Group's vision statement: educated, healthy, and connected to urban and rural, throughout the nation and the world.
- Robert Lee Potter, member, suggested a name for the vision statement, "Home Means Nevada." He supported an increase in economic opportunity and improving the quality of life for all Nevadans by developing tax policies that will promote investor confidence, enhance property values, and stimulate redevelopment. Mr. Potter advocated the health, safety, and education of Nevadans by seeking all opportunities for

federal funding, increasing the number of federally funded positions across all areas of State government, and creating assessment districts that generate funds to efficiently support local, essential services, and other public needs.

- Susan Rhodes, member, included care and compassion for Nevada's children and seniors.
- Ms. Simon added that a poetic vision statement is an attraction. She suggested a preamble that describes the State: The people of Nevada enjoy a magnificent natural landscape, a fiercely independent spirit, a strong sense of compassion and community, combined with a hard-working determination to succeed. She said that Oregon's principles provide an excellent framework for Nevada, and requested the statement include that every child have the opportunity to attain the highest level of educational excellence; that the State's business climate encourage innovation and broad-based, long-term economic vitality; that all people in Nevada be able to meet basic health, food, shelter, culture, and connectedness needs; that Nevadans are safe in their homes and communities; and that governance is efficient, effective, and accountable ([Exhibit E](#)).
- Peter C. Bernhard, member, suggested including a measurement on how the goals are achieved and asked how the key points would be implemented to match or exceed the opportunities in other states.
- Mr. Feldman read his proposed vision statement: "Home Means Nevada: By 2030 the people who live here will put down roots and be proud to call Nevada their home. Nevada will be a State in which education, employment, leisure, and business opportunities flourish for each individual, with an economy that is stable and sustainable in good times and bad, in which neighborhoods and open spaces alike are clean, safe, and welcoming, whose visitors are eager to return and whose citizens are prospering, healthy, and optimistic about the future" ([Exhibit F](#)).
- Ms. Kraft Pearce called attention to Nevada's diversity, not just ethnicity, but diversity of industries and interests.
- Boyd Martin, member, remarked on the diversity in education. Master's degrees, doctorate degrees, and bachelor's degrees are often discussed. He said education of workers who are highly trained, whether in technology or construction, can be beyond what is available at a university.
- Sylvia Young, member, concurred with Mr. Feldman's comments regarding a sense of optimism and offered that contribution in combination with Ms. Simon's remarks about fierce independence. She asked whether there is a gap in not exploiting and optimizing the recreational opportunities in Nevada.

- Mr. McMullen said that outdoor activities are a large part of a State's economy, and stressed that Nevada should exploit its comparative advantage. He said that optimism and independence are western values.
- Mr. Snyder proposed using Ms. Simon's statement as a reference point for adding or deleting ideas and objectives.
- Mr. Perrigo asked whether research has been done on states other than Minnesota and Oregon, and if so, could that research be shared with the NVSG.
- Mr. Cochrane said that few states have developed vision statements. He finds that county or municipal governments cultivate 20-year fiscal or land-use planning. Mr. Cochrane said at that level the vision is focused and concrete because of working in close proximity to a well-known area.
- Mr. McMullen suggested the NVSG keep in mind the returns on this activity may be stronger in Nevada than in other places. He said what led to the Oregon study was Oregon realized that its technology-centered industries were no longer a growth industry, so Oregon had to reinvent itself from a longer-term economic perspective.
- Mr. Busselman asked how Oregon's vision translated to meaningful accomplishment.
- Mr. McMullen said that Oregon identified six subject areas with 5- to 10-year goals tied to performance measures. Mr. McMullen recommended Nevada do the same so that in future years the measures can be reassessed ([Exhibit D](#)).
- Mr. Snyder expressed concern that previous studies of this type are sitting on shelves collecting dust. He urged the NVSG to: (1) look at the importance of making fundamental changes in this environment; (2) incorporate performance measures that are continually monitored for results; and (3) find a way to keep Nevada working toward economic improvement.
- Mr. McMullen indicated that the project's impetus is the volatility of the revenue streams, not only from incoming tax revenue but from different local and benchmark funds, and to what extent these fluctuate with economic activity. He stated that Moody's approach is to base its outlook on the tax instruments, levied and unlevied, to see to what extent they are tied to economic variables.

Discussion ensued between Mr. Snyder and Mr. McMullen regarding Nevada's Spending and Government Efficiency (SAGE) Commission's report and whether the report is being evaluated by Moody's Analytics. Mr. Snyder said the SAGE Commission provided some broad-based, balanced recommendations concerning Nevada's expense structure that should be explored.

- Mr. Cochrane said it is his understanding that the Group's consensus is to use Ms. Simon's draft as a foundation to expand the important concepts suggested by the members. He asked whether there are basic concepts not included in Ms. Simon's statement.
- Mr. Busselman expressed a need to have Nevada's business climate include a private-sector market orientation. He recommended an addition to the vision statement emphasizing the private sector having the opportunity to be profitable.
- Mr. Cochrane asked for comments on how to include profitability in the statement, and Ms. Young suggested adding entrepreneurship.
- Mr. Potter requested a change from the word "encourage" to the words "stimulate innovation, investor confidence, and value for business." He suggested replacements for the words "long-term, economic vitality" might be "long-term, economic opportunities and vitality."
- Terry J. Reynolds, member, said that the NVSG has identified areas it is going to examine, including education, health care, the economy, the environment, safety, and stability. He suggested the NVSG establish a set of principles for these topics. Mr. Reynolds pointed out that Oregon established a set of principles that the state will follow to develop legislation on how it will conduct itself in state, governmental, and business climates.
- Mr. Cochrane summarized that the NVSG, as a whole, will focus on a broad vision statement. During the coming months and when meeting in smaller groups, the members will consider individual factors that could emerge as bullet points following the general vision.
- Mr. Reynolds agreed that in setting a vision and giving direction back to the Legislature, solid principles must be in place instead of broad statements, with specificity and benchmarks within those principles.
- Dr. Cantu said that the vision statement must be broad and as the NVSG moves forward, the Group will have room for more specifics and benchmarks.
- Mr. Snyder said that focusing on the vision statement helps to identify benchmarks for the NVSG, and stated that Nevada is optimistic and has a can-do spirit.

## **DISCUSSION AND IDENTIFICATION OF NEVADA'S STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS ("SWOT") AND 5-, 10-, AND 20-YEAR GOALS RELATING TO EDUCATION**

- Dave Ziegler, Principal Research Analyst, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau, outlined the two topics for discussion: (1) the SWOT analysis (Strengths,

Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats); and (2) goals relating to education. He explained the logistics of the small groups in Las Vegas and Carson City, and advised that when the groups have completed their discussions, each group designee will report to the NVSG as a whole ([Exhibit G](#) and [Exhibit H](#)).

- Mr. Cochrane inquired whether there was a time limit, and Chair Lang answered approximately one hour.

*GROUP 1 (Room 4401, Las Vegas):* Members and Alternates Peter C Bernhard, Doug Busselman, Alan Feldman, Boyd Martin, Dr. John Packham, Thomas A. Perrigo, Susan Rhodes, Donald D. Snyder, and Denise Tanata Ashby.

Mark McMullen, moderator, Moody's Analytics, Inc., explained the SWOT analysis regarding education. Group 1 focused its comments on the following key points:

- Students' learning, labor force improvement, and work force quality.
- Focus on students being educated, not those educating the students.
- Early preparation of Nevadans to be competitive in the marketplace and in life with the knowledge and skills necessary to function in today's world.
- A marked increase in performance and performance evaluation.
- A broad definition of education to include opportunities that exist for students to discover a wide spectrum of educational offerings.
- Basic, fundamental learning as core skills to achieve life skills.

**Strengths:**

- Well-built facilities and facility management.
- Strength of Nevada's can-do attitude needs to be translated into education.
- Well capitalized to support needs of older schools.

A comment was made that the previously mentioned strength on capitalization is not true in Washoe County due to the number of older schools.

- Comparative affordability of higher education in Nevada.
- Philanthropy and private investment by Nevadans to advance education.

- Empowerment, magnet, and specialty schools for career and technical training for youth.
- Nevada's Millennium Scholarship adds to educational affordability.
- Teacher quality and dedication.
- Priority in public policy that education should be important.

### Weaknesses:

- Tremendous growth brings about lack of teacher longevity in some schools.
- Transiency of students moving from school to school.
- Bureaucracy of the education system in delivering meaningful education to students.
- Failure to educate Nevada's children.
- Operational funding is low and translates into poor performance.
- Less parental involvement in lower-achieving classrooms.
- Less parental involvement due to Nevada's 24/7 lifestyle.
- Lack of accountability of individuals and schools.
- Low educational ranking due to lack of bachelor and advanced degrees.
- Responsibility placed solely on schools to educate children.
- Lack of competition and opportunity for parents to choose a child's school.
- Inability to discipline teachers who are not maintaining standards.

### Opportunities:

- Forge stronger relationships between the business community and schools to encourage and accommodate parental involvement.
- Technical schools being developed as magnet schools to train at the high school level for sustainable projects.
- Vocational educational development.

- Technology and virtual classrooms to deliver education throughout the State.
- Prepare for new economy.
- Build on successes, such as, empowerment schools.
- The Lincy Institute and Brookings Mountain West.
- The will to build community engagement and connect communities, schools, and philanthropic support.
- Affordable housing for new residents.

Threats:

- Student diversity and disparity of achievement.
- Ongoing cuts in funding.
- Lack of consensus in moving forward.
- Contempt of the public sector.
- Lack of civic participation and a move away from schools as a community center.
- Employment and retention of qualified educators.

There was general discussion of measurable goals with metrics: greater student achievement and educational attainment; greater educational opportunities with flexibility that meets improved standards; marked improvement in national test scores; substantially increase educational attainment through high school graduation and associate degree rates; substantially enhance educational achievement as measured by test scores; achieve funding reliability; ensure opportunities for employment; celebrate success of students, teachers, schools; better link educational opportunities with demands and opportunities of the new economy; strengthen relationship between business community and education system through outreach.

*GROUP 2 (Room 4412—Las Vegas):* Members and Alternates Dr. Rene Cantu, Marsha Irvin, Janelle Kraft Pearce, Chair Robert E. Lang, Brian Rippet, Keith Smith, Cedric D. Williams, and Sylvia Young.

Steve Cochrane, moderator, gave an overview of the analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, and included background information specific to Nevada: population demographics and aging of the baby boom generation, sapping preexisting skills and experience from today's workforce.

### Strengths:

- Southwest states are appealing.
- Low cost of living.
- Attractive environment for teachers.
- Today's low housing prices.
- Salary level and benefits are fair.

### Weaknesses:

- Language barriers.
- In-migration and out-migration.
- Current funding mechanism in today's environment.
- Teacher shortage.
- Teacher retention.
- Poor outlook on all key benchmarks.
- Peril in losing potential students due to fewer graduate programs.

### Opportunities:

- Increase academic standing by preparing children for global world.
- In declining growth, focus on different areas needed for future academic standards.
- Continuous professional development for teaching staff.
- Diversity of a transient community.
- Profile (skill levels) of entrants into Nevada who are domestic migrants.
- Slow down in State's growth allows "catch-up."
- Cheaper borrowing costs relative to student loans.

- Do something unique and entrepreneurial to attract math, science, and bilingual teachers.
- State college.
- Reciprocity with teacher licensing.
- Teach for America program.
- Reform education through merit pay or pay for performance.
- Further expansion of charter and empowerment schools allowing increased innovation.

There was agreement among the members to separate higher education from K-12 for the SWOT analysis.

#### Threats:

- Current funding mechanism as Nevada goes forward.
- Right teachers to educate Nevada's diverse population, including multilingual students.
- Nevada's compensation package and cost-of-living relative to other states.

There was discussion of metrics by Mr. Cochrane and the members regarding K-12 attracting and retaining teachers; teacher training; language barriers; Nevada's drop-out rate; student population growth; adjusted graduation and completion rate; General Education Diploma rate; desire to retain and retrain teachers with expertise in math, science, and bilingual studies; merit pay; differentiated diplomas; parental choice for schooling; equitable per-pupil expenditure; unified school district; and a rigorous, world-class curriculum.

The members discussed the risks Nevada faces with funding higher education in relation to other states; if Nevada's two universities do not offer a particular graduate specialty, the State, potentially, loses a new resident. Arizona State University could be a model for Nevada on how to proceed in partnering business with universities. It was suggested the NVSG could benefit from an explanation on how funding works.

*GROUP 3 (Room 2134—Carson City): Members Terry J. Reynolds, moderator, Douglas D. Dirks, Paul Dugan, Robert Lee Potter, and Katy Simon.*

#### Opportunities:

- Continuation of community involvement.

- Opportunity for all Nevada students to succeed by equalizing investment in children throughout the State.
- Develop research curriculum at schools of higher learning throughout the State, including charter schools.
- Ethnic diversity of student bodies.
- Expand opportunities through career academies and community colleges.
- Growth of the State through migration from other states.
- Focus on teacher-to-student ratio, not class size, to connect pupils and teachers through e-mail, for instance.
- Flexibility and accessibility, virtual academies, and online learning.
- Actively seek federal funding.
- Universal support and expectation for higher educational attainment, whether in technical training or other fields.
- Student textbooks assembled on compact discs.

Ms. Simon requested comments from the audience on Nevada's strengths and weaknesses pertaining to education.

Jan Gilbert, Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada (PLAN), Reno, commented on the mixture of students in charter schools and Nevada's Millennium Scholarship as it has contributed to higher education.

#### Weaknesses:

- Challenges regarding facilities provided in the schools.

Patrick T. Sanderson, formerly with the Laborer's Union, Local 872, Retired, expressed his pride in teachers and the education system. He suggested the Group look back to what caused Nevada's education system to decline. Was it money or student growth?

- Economics and rapid growth are factors in determining how students perform.
- Class size could become a major issue.
- Language issues.

Jan Gilbert, PLAN, said that as a former teacher, class size makes a difference.

- Technology.

Threats:

- Continued funding cuts for kindergarten through grade 16.
- Labor shortage if teaching is no longer an attractive career.
- Student and faculty safety.
- Deterioration of school infrastructure and the possible use of bond money for future needs.
- Competition for funding with infrastructure needs.
- Declining population.
- Lack of student opportunity.
- Not enough knowledge-based jobs of interest to students who will stay in Nevada.

Goals for 5-, 10-, and 20-Year Horizon:

- Educational attainment ranking Nevada in top quartile of states for population over 25 years of age.
- Increase graduation rate at all educational levels.
- Use same formula in determining graduation rates.
- Use “Education” handout from Moody’s Analytics, Inc., ([Exhibit G](#)), as the basis for setting goals in student-teacher ratio, public school spending, and dollars spent per student.
- Change educational system to support current economy by increasing investment in technology and its utilization by students and teachers.
- Partner with private sector in terms of resources and talent.
- Preparation for innovation in research and development careers and knowledge work.
- Increase Scholastic Aptitude Tests and National Assessment of Educational Progress scores.

- Stimulate life-long learning.

Jan Gilbert, PLAN, suggested a goal to increase per-pupil expenditures.

Mr. Reynolds commented on his involvement with private schools and his skepticism on per-pupil expenditures. He added that the public school system may be different. Nevada may spend fewer dollars per pupil, but in his experience, economic factors contribute to the success of student education.

- Develop an educational profile to determine what the State's students should look like and be able to do after graduating high school.
- Pre-K children coming into the educational system should be prepared to learn.
- Increase communications and connectivity among K-12, community colleges, and the university system in the urban and rural areas of the State.
- Expand emphasis on research at the university level, promote economic innovation, and transform Nevada into a forward-looking State.
- Grant funding for higher institutions so research can be conducted to bring money into the system.

Assembly Speaker Barbara E. Buckley, Clark County Assembly District No. 8, appearing in Las Vegas, thanked the NVSG members for their service.

#### **REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF FUTURE MEETING AGENDAS, CONFIGURATIONS, AND DATES**

- Chair Lang said the next meeting will include the discussions and suggestions gleaned from today's breakout sessions regarding education. He said the next topic is economic development and stated the Chair may request an expert from Nevada's Commission on Economic Development speak to the Group at its February 25, 2010, meeting.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Patrick Gibbons, Policy Analyst, Nevada Policy Research Institute, addressed the money the State's two universities spend per pupil. He said that Nevada's university graduation rates are less than 50 percent. Mr. Gibbons testified that State appropriations to higher education represent half of all Nevada revenues for Nevada's schools. He submitted that tuition costs increased 29 percent between 2000 to 2006 but student services increased 2.5 percent. Mr. Gibbons said that most funding for higher education is allotted to research or student amenities.

- Mr. Ziegler requested feedback on today's facilitation and room space and said he would report those comments to the Group.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Group, the meeting was adjourned at 12:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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C.J. Smith  
Research Secretary

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David Ziegler  
Principal Research Analyst

## **APPROVED BY:**

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Robert E. Lang, Ph.D., Chair

Date: May 14, 2010

## LIST OF EXHIBITS

**Exhibit A** is the “Meeting Notice and Agenda” provided by David Ziegler, Principal Research Analyst, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB).

**Exhibit B** is a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation titled “Blueprint for American Prosperity, Metropolitan Las Vegas,” presented by Mark Muro, Fellow and Policy Director, Metropolitan Policy Program, The Brookings Institution, and Washington. D.C., Director, Brookings Mountain West, dated February 11, 2010.

**Exhibit C** is a report titled *Minnesota Milestones—Measures that matter*, provided by Steven Cochrane, Managing Director, Moody’s Analytics, Inc., dated April 2002.

**Exhibit D** is a report titled *Governor’s Principles As Measured in the Oregon Benchmarks*, provided by Steven Cochrane, Managing Director, Moody’s Analytics, Inc., dated October 2008.

**Exhibit E** is a proposed vision statement presented by Katy Simon, Washoe County, Nevada Vision Stakeholder Group member.

**Exhibit F** is a proposed vision statement presented by Alan Feldman, MGM Mirage, Inc., Nevada Vision Stakeholder Group member, dated February 11, 2010.

**Exhibit G** is a document dated December 31, 2009, titled “Education,” submitted by David Ziegler, Principal Research Analyst, Research Division, LCB, consisting of selected data previously provided to the NVSG by Moody’s Analytics, Inc.

**Exhibit H** is a Fact Sheet titled “Facts About Elementary-Secondary Education,” dated February 2010, prepared by Melinda M. Martini, Senior Research Analyst, Research Division, LCB.

This set of “Summary Minutes and Action Report” is supplied as an informational service. Exhibits in electronic format may not be complete. Copies of the complete exhibits, other materials distributed at the meeting, and the audio record are on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau, Carson City, Nevada. You may contact the Library online at [www.leg.state.nv.us/lcb/research/library/feedbackmail.cfm](http://www.leg.state.nv.us/lcb/research/library/feedbackmail.cfm) or telephone: 775/684-6827.