

To the honorable Steve Sisolak, Governor of the State of Nevada, and Nevada Legislative Commission,

RE: Please find attached NSHE Classified Councils Resolution on Furloughs and a summary for public comment during today's Legislative commission meeting.

My name is Julia Bledsoe and I am serving as President of the Nevada System of Higher Education's Classified Council. NSHE Classified Council is composed of members of Executive Boards from each NSHE institution and collectively we strive to represent all NSHE-Classified employees.

Today the NSHE Classified Council wishes to read, as Public comment, the attached statement to the Nevada Legislative Commission. The statement reflects the unified voice of classified staff across NSHE as well as the Nevada Police Union, in a collaborative effort to support the state's mission of economic recovery. We appreciate the recognition of the important role of classified staff throughout the State of Nevada.

The NSHE Classified Council wishes to express its willingness to support the goal of a unified state workforce. NSHE Classified Council is committed to working positively and constructively with The Governor's Office, The State of Nevada, Office of Administration, and NSHE Administration at our respective institutions, to offer solutions and to help mitigate the negative impacts of the budget crisis on *all* employees in the State of Nevada. We strongly believe in having our voices heard and the value that will add in maintaining a positive climate within our respective work environments.

On behalf of NSHE-Classified Council,

In Unity,

Thank you,

Julia Bledsoe

Program Officer, Assessment and Planning

President, TMCC Classified Council

President, NSHE Classified Council

Truckee Meadows Community College



NSHE Classified Council Resolution
Nevada State Legislature
Special Legislative Session - June 2020

The Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) Classified Council requests that the following considerations be given when implementing cuts that will affect classified personnel statewide. The NSHE Classified Council, representing and in collaboration with Classified Councils of University of Nevada Reno, University of Nevada Las Vegas, Truckee Meadows Community College, College of Southern Nevada, Western Nevada College, Nevada State College, and Great Basin College, and in support and unity with all Classified Employees of the State of Nevada, and The Nevada Police Union, wish to recognize the gravity of the crisis faced by our state.

As such we also wish to express our concern about the budget matters facing Governor Sisolak's office and the Legislature. Maintaining a unified workforce that feels seen and heard is an equally important goal.

NSHE Classified Council wishes to acknowledge the severity of the State budget crisis. It is a rightful cause for concern, so too is the livelihood of all classified employees statewide. While we understand furloughs may be the only way forward, they will again be a hardship for classified employees who sacrificed the loss of income in the form of furloughs, frozen step increases, COLA, pay cuts, and permanent loss of longevity pay between 2010 and 2016. These losses are still felt today as we face yet another round of such losses.

Any loss and/or reduction in classified employees' direct monetary compensation should be negotiated through shared governance and/or collective bargaining, in accordance with NRS 288.150 to promote equality amongst its employees. NSHE Classified Council wishes to acknowledge and express appreciation for the equal application of furloughs across all State of Nevada employees, not just members of the classified staff.

As we move forward, we are especially focused on those "essential workers" in healthcare, public safety, and custodial. We ask that all "essential" classified employees responsible for the safety, health, and welfare of our citizens be spared participation in furloughs and layoffs as the need for their services will continue to be in greater demand and we cannot afford to reduce their effectiveness.

Classified employees in these categories, who are responsible for Public Health, Public Safety and the cleanliness and sanitation of our campuses and public spaces, will not experience a decrease in demand for their services; quite the opposite will be the case with increased need for their services.

Furthermore, many of these frontline essential workers fall into pay grades 25 and below, which are already near the poverty level. These classified employees have been, and will continue to be on the front lines of our workplaces. We ask that the Governor's task force and the Legislature strongly consider not imposing furloughs on these employees.

If furloughs must be imposed, consider a stepped or progressive model such as the one below, which impacts all classified at the lowest levels to a lesser degree and no furloughs for the aforementioned categories of essential

employees. We further acknowledge that this is a more complicated approach, requiring more effort on the part of Human Resources offices statewide. We strongly believe that a positive impact will be realized from classified employees who feel seen, heard, and valued statewide through the additional effort.

NSHE Classified Council respectfully requests your consideration of the following proposals for the remaining sectors of classified employees:

- We propose the following progressive annual furlough model:
 - Grades 10-20: 0 annual furlough days
 - Grades 21-25: 3 annual furlough days
 - Grades 26-30: 6 annual furlough days
 - Grades 31- and up: 9 and not more than 12 furlough days for any group.
- We request the decision includes language which ensures that the retirement benefits for state employees who furlough would not be affected by the furloughed amount.
- We request a sunset date for any implemented furloughs no later than the end of the 2021-2023 biennium.
- NSHE Classified Council requests that classified step increases continue to be awarded.
 - This will insure classified employees continue to be recognized and valued for their service. Freezing step increases would be demoralizing, particularly to those who experienced cuts in the previous economic downturn.
 - In the event of the state's inability to make the pay adjustment at the time of the classified step increase, the NSHE Classified Council proposes the adjustment be deferred until such time as the economic profile of the state improves and the funding is available to apply the monetary portion of step increases.
 - In cases of the retirement or separation of an employee in good standing, who is experiencing deferred classified step increases, we propose the increase be paid retroactively in one lump sum, upon separation.
- NSHE Classified Council recommends that proposed furloughs take into consideration the financial burden on all employees and their households. Consideration of increases in basic living expenses, like food, utilities and rent, and any PEBP rate increases, in addition to the lack of COLA increases, should be made.
- NSHE Classified Council requests the practice of downgrading vacancies not be utilized as a cost saving practice. The method of reduction of duties should be negotiated through shared governance and/or collective bargaining, and mutually agreed upon at every level.

The NSHE Classified Council would like to extend its sincere appreciation to the Nevada State Legislature for its consideration of this resolution.





NSHE Classified Council Resolution
Nevada State Legislature
Special Legislative Session - June 2020

The Nevada System of Higher Education Classified Council and The Nevada Police Union, wish to acknowledge the severity of the State budget crisis faced by our state, the Governor office and the Nevada Legislature.

It is a rightful cause for concern, so too is the livelihood of all classified employees statewide. While we understand furloughs may be the only way forward, they will again be a hardship for classified employees who sacrificed the loss of income in the form of furloughs, frozen step increases, COLA, pay cuts, and permanent loss of longevity pay between 2010 and 2016. These losses are still felt today as we face yet another round of such losses.

Any loss and/or reduction in classified employees' direct monetary compensation should be negotiated through shared governance and/or collective bargaining, in accordance with NRS 288.150 to promote equality amongst its employees.

As we move forward, we are especially focused on "essential workers". Classified employees in these categories are responsible for Public Health, Public Safety and the cleanliness and sanitation of our campuses and public spaces. We ask that these "essential" employees be spared participation in furloughs as the need for their services will continue to be in greater demand and we cannot afford to reduce their effectiveness.

If furloughs must be imposed, consider a stepped or progressive model such as the one in our full resolution, which impacts all classified at the lowest levels to a lesser degree and no furloughs for the aforementioned categories of essential employees

- We request any decision includes language which ensures that the retirement benefits for state employees who furlough would not be affected by the furloughed amount.
- We request a sunset date for any implemented furloughs no later than the end of the 2021-2023 biennium.
- We request that classified step increases continue to be awarded.
 - This will insure classified employees continue to be recognized and valued for their service. Freezing step increases would be demoralizing, particularly to those who experienced cuts in the previous economic downturn.

The NSHE Classified Council would like to extend its sincere appreciation to the Nevada State Legislature for its consideration of this resolution.



University of Nevada, Reno