



**NEVADA LEGISLATURE**  
**LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON PERSONS WITH**  
**DISABILITIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
*(Nevada Revised Statutes 218.53796)*

**SUMMARY MINUTES AND ACTION REPORT**

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The second meeting of the Nevada Legislature's Legislative Committee on Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee was held on Friday, May 19, 2006, at 9:30 a.m., in Room 4100 of the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 4401 of the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, 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 Web site at [www.leg.state.nv.us/73rd/Interim](http://www.leg.state.nv.us/73rd/Interim). In addition, copies of the audio record may be purchased through the Publications Office of the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB) (e-mail: [publications@lcb.state.nv.us](mailto:publications@lcb.state.nv.us); telephone: 775/684-6835).

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT IN CARSON CITY:**

Karen Taycher, Chairwoman  
Michael Coleman  
Kelley DeReimer  
Gloria Dopf  
Danell Fanning  
Cindy Frank  
David Gordon  
Betty Hammond  
Jacque Matteoni  
Jack Mayes  
Gary Olsen  
Sally Ramm  
Gayle Sherman

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT IN LAS VEGAS:**

Caroline Preston Bass  
Linda Raymond

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:**

Rhonda Feldman

**LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL BUREAU STAFF PRESENT:**

Michelle L. Van Geel, Senior Research Analyst, Research Division, LCB  
Yvonne M. Goodson, Senior Deputy Legislative Counsel, Legal Division, LCB  
Bob Guernsey, Principal Deputy Fiscal Analyst, Fiscal Analysis Division, LCB  
Sandra Gibbons, Senior Research Secretary, Research Division, LCB

## **OPENING REMARKS**

Chairwoman Taycher called the meeting to order. She welcomed all members and thanked them for volunteering their time. She specifically thanked the members for all their hard work on the work groups and the tremendous strides they have made.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE APRIL 11, 2006, MEETING**

This item will be included on the Advisory Committee's next agenda.

## **REPORT ON SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETER CERTIFICATION ISSUES RELATED TO STUDENTS WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING DISCUSSED AT THE APRIL 19, 2006, MEETING OF THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

- Caroline Preston Bass stated she reported to the Legislative Committee on Persons with Disabilities (NRS 218.53791) at its April 19, 2006, meeting. She informed the Committee that work groups were established and suggestions would be forthcoming. She stated that a question was brought up regarding why Nevada's school districts do not teach American Sign Language (ASL) in high schools. It was recommended that the Advisory Committee consider pursuing the addition of ASL for the Kindergarten through 12th grade setting.

Additionally, she noted that the Disabilities Committee discussed the following concerns: (1) school districts are hiring interpreters as signing aids to save money; (2) interpreters are not being reimbursed for professional development; (3) the lack of programs in the State of Nevada to train people to become teachers of deaf and hard of hearing; (4) pay scales for interpreters are low; and (5) deaf and hard of hearing students are not receiving an equal opportunity in education due to the below standard level of interpreters.

- Cindy Frank stated that ASL is now offered at Carson High School as a college class but the student must pay for it. She further stated that the Advisory Committee should encourage a manner in which to offer ASL as a second language in the high school curriculum.

## **DISCUSSION AND DEMONSTRATION OF AVAILABLE COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY TO INCREASE ACCESS TO EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

(As directed by Chairwoman Taycher, this agenda item was taken out of order.)

- Karen Yates, Captions Unlimited of Nevada, Inc., made a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation ([Exhibit B](#)), and stated she has been a court reporter for 34 years and for the last ten years she has provided Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART)

services, also known as “Realtime Captioning.” Communication Access Realtime Translation is an instant translation of the spoken word that can provide instantaneous translation at 200-plus words per minute. Ms. Yates stated that CART services are used by people who are: (1) late-deafened; (2) hard of hearing; (3) cochlear implant users; (4) deaf; and (5) using English as a second language. Ms. Yates noted that CART has been provided in classrooms, courtrooms, religious services, senior citizen meetings, conventions, and conferences. Some of the benefits include equal communication access, independence, ability to participate, and flexibility to make use of a printed record (see [Exhibit B](#)).

In conclusion, Ms. Yates stated that the demand for CART in Nevada is exploding. She further stated that she is working with other court reporters and CART providers to train others in this field.

- Mary Anne Christensen, Assistant Director, Disability Resource Center (DRC), University of Nevada, Reno, provided a demonstration of TypeWell Services, and Wendy Miley, Lead TypeWell Transcriptionist, transcribed the presentation. Ms. Christensen stated that TypeWell is a speech to text transcription system that provides real time communication access to students that need alternative or additional support. TypeWell differs from traditional captioning services in that it is meaning for meaning, not word for word. Ms. Christensen informed the Advisory Committee that auxiliary aids are used, such as: CART, Note Taking Services, and interpreters for the deaf (see [Exhibit C-1](#), [Exhibit C-2](#), and [Exhibit C-3](#)).

Additionally, Ms. Christensen noted that remote CART was utilized as an instructional option for students. The instructor or speaker has a cell phone with a microphone attached. The hearing impaired student is responsible for bringing a laptop and cell phone to class, which enables the student to see the words on the laptop via the Internet.

Ms. Christensen, answering a question, stated that the DRC provides services, not just based on cost effectiveness; DRC evaluates what is needed for the student and if a student requests CART that is what he receives.

- Chairwoman Taycher reminded the work group leaders that they can utilize community participation and demonstrators as they prepare their recommendations.

## **PROGRESS REPORT OF WORK GROUP REVIEWING SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETER CERTIFICATION AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A TIER SYSTEM TO RANK SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS**

- Cindy Frank, Work Group Team Leader stated the group met five times and indicated that Danell Fanning will give the work group’s presentation ([Exhibit D](#)).
- Ms. Fanning stated the group reviewed Senate Bill 245 (Chapter 372, *Statutes of Nevada 2001*), the current Chapter 656A of *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS), and 10 to 12 different

states to see what they are doing for certification and the tiered system. In preparing the tiered system, the work group made sure that the difference between a community interpreter and an educational interpreter are separate. The proposed tiered system will address the needs of new and inexperienced interpreters, will create a standardized approach for novice interpreters, and will clarify the skill level of an interpreter. Ms. Fanning went into each of the different categories of the tier system (see [Exhibit D](#)).

- Chairwoman Taycher asked the work group if they have asked for recommendations from constituents, such as the courts, the school districts, and other persons that have expressed concern with the interpreter situation. She stated that it would be advantageous to have the support of the concerned constituent groups.
- Ms. Frank stated that Jacque Matteoni was on the work group and she is the Special Education Administrator for the Washoe County School District in northern Nevada.
- Ms. Matteoni stated there needs to be a system in place to provide training and mentoring for the beginning interpreters.
- Chairwoman Taycher thanked and congratulated the work group and reminded them to seek out constituent concerns.

#### **PROGRESS REPORT OF WORK GROUP REVIEWING THE POSSIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING AN OVERSIGHT AGENCY TO MONITOR AND ENFORCE LAWS RELATED TO SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS**

- Caroline Preston Bass, Work Group Team Leader, stated that the work group met through video relay several times and in person once. She stated that Ms. Fanning would present the work group's presentation ([Exhibit E](#)).
- Ms. Fanning stated that the work group met with Todd Butterworth, Chief of the Office of Disability Services, Department of Health and Human Services, and he suggested that the certification portions of Chapter 656A of NRS be moved to Chapter 426 of NRS. Ms. Fanning further stated that Mr. Butterworth indicated that his agency would take the responsibility of writing the regulations for the certification and the tiered system, would oversee the certification of interpreters, and would be willing to fund and establish a registry and a Web site. In conclusion, Ms. Fanning stated that Nevada must address what is currently a three-pronged problem—the need for training, retaining, and recruiting qualified interpreters (see [Exhibit E](#)).
- Responding to a question, Ms. Fanning stated that funding from Mr. Butterworth's agency is limited and involves being attached to a telecommunications bill from the Public Utilities Commission of Nevada (PUCN). Mr. Butterworth will have it in his proposal.

- Ms. Hammond reiterated there is currently funding available and that there is a Communication Access Counsel which is set through Chapter 426 of NRS. The scope of the Counsel will need to be redefined and expanded, which would include an oversight board. She stated that there have been informal discussions with the PUCN on funding issues and noted that other stakeholders and agencies may provide grants.
- Chairwoman Taycher thanked the work group for their work, and stated that she is encouraged with the recommendations.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Ms. Frank informed the Advisory Committee that Jim Rogers, Chancellor, Nevada System of Higher Education contacted the Western Nevada Community College and informed them that a four-year degree program will be presented to the Board of Regents by fall 2006.
- Mr. Mayes stated that Scott Youngs, Nevada's Americans with Disabilities Act Coordinator, Research and Educational Planning Center, is leaving Nevada and will be working for the United States Department of Justice in the American Bar Association Division, in Washington, D.C.
- Chairwoman Taycher reminded each work group that the recommendations should be finalized by June 6, 2006. She requested that the work groups provide written recommendations to Michelle L. Van Geel, Senior Research Analyst, Research Division, LCB, by June 1, 2006. She reminded the work groups to seek input from concerned constituents to ensure recommendations move forward.

## **DISCUSSION OF FUTURE MEETING DATE AND TIME**

- Chairwoman Taycher noted that the next meeting of the Advisory Committee will be held in Las Vegas on June 6, 2006, at 9 a.m.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Advisory Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 12:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Sandra Gibbons  
Senior Research Secretary

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Michelle L. Van Geel  
Senior Research Analyst

APPROVED BY:

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Karen Taycher, Chairwoman

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## LIST OF EXHIBITS

[Exhibit A](#) is the “Meeting Notice and Agenda” provided by Michelle L. Van Geel, Senior Research Analyst, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau.

[Exhibit B](#) is a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation provided by Karen Yates, Captions Unlimited of Nevada, Inc.

[Exhibit C-1](#) is the written testimony of Mary Anne Christensen, Assistant Director, Disability Resource Center (DRC), University of Nevada, Reno (UNR).

[Exhibit C-2](#) is a pamphlet titled “Disability Resource Center: University of Nevada, Reno” provided by Mary Anne Christensen, Assistant Director, DRC, UNR.

[Exhibit C-3](#) is a pamphlet titled “Assistive Technology, Disability Resource Center” provided by Mary Anne Christensen, Assistant Director, DRC, UNR.

[Exhibit D](#) is the written recommendations of the Legislative Committee on Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee’s Work Group on Certification and Establishment of a Tier System submitted by Cindy Frank, Work Group Team Leader.

[Exhibit E](#) is the written recommendations of the Legislative Committee on Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee’s Work Group on Oversight and Licensure submitted by Caroline Preston Bass, Work Group Team Leader.

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.