



NEVADA LEGISLATURE
LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH CARE
SUBCOMMITTEE TO STUDY HEALTH INSURANCE
EXPANSION OPTIONS
(Nevada Revised Statutes 439B.200)

SUMMARY MINUTES AND ACTION REPORT

The fourth and final meeting of the Legislative Committee on Health Care Subcommittee to Study Health Insurance Expansion Options was held on Wednesday, July 14, 2004, at 1 p.m. in Room 4412 of the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 3138 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 Web site at www.leg.state.nv.us/72nd/Interim. 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; telephone: 775/684-6835).

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT IN LAS VEGAS:

Assemblywoman Barbara E. Buckley, Chairwoman
Senator Dennis Nolan
Senator Raymond D. Rawson
Senator Dina Titus
Assemblyman Joe Hardy
Assemblywoman Ellen M. Koivisto
Mr. Rory Reid

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBER PRESENT IN CARSON CITY:

Assemblywoman Sheila Leslie

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL BUREAU STAFF PRESENT:

Vance A. Hughey, Chief Principal Research Analyst, Research Division
Leslie K. Hamner, Principal Deputy Legislative Counsel, Legal Division
Maryann Elorreaga, Senior Research Secretary, Research Division

OPENING REMARKS

Assemblywoman Barbara E. Buckley, Chairwoman, called the meeting to order. She noted the report to be presented by EP&P Consulting, Inc. was the result of several meetings with the Subcommittee and the Subcommittee's Technical Working Group (TWG).

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 7, 2004, MEETING OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE TO STUDY HEALTH INSURANCE EXPANSION OPTIONS

- The Subcommittee **APPROVED THE FOLLOWING ACTION:**

ASSEMBLYWOMAN KOIVISTO MOVED FOR APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 7, 2004, MEETING HELD IN LAS VEGAS. ASSEMBLYMAN HARDY SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

DISCUSSION OF COVERAGE GROUPS, BENEFIT PACKAGES, SERVICE DELIVERY MECHANISMS, AND FINANCING OPTIONS THAT MAY BE INCLUDED IN A HEALTH INSURANCE EXPANSION PROPOSAL

- Peter Burns, Corporate Manager, EP&P Consulting, Inc., presented "Summary of Option 7D Background, the Proposal, Issues and Other Elements" ([Exhibit B](#)). Mr. Burns said "Option 7D" is a proposed program wherein the funding responsibilities for a Health Insurance Accountability and Flexibility (HIFA) waiver would be shared by the existing Indigent Accident Fund (IAF) and Supplemental Fund (SF) revenue sources and the State of Nevada. The components of the proposed HIFA waiver include:
 1. Expansion of Medicaid coverage for pregnant women up to 185 percent of the federal poverty level (FPL). (Current coverage in Nevada is 133 percent of FPL.)
 2. A small employer insurance program which provides premium assistance to employees and their spouses with household incomes of less than 200 percent of the FPL. The cost of coverage to be shared by the employee, employer, and state and federal governments.
 3. A medically needy program (as yet undeveloped). It is recommended the program comply with the requirements of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and cover, to the greatest extent possible, populations currently covered by the IAF and SF.

- Mike Alastuey, Chairman, TWG, thanked EP&P Consulting, Inc. for contributing to the development of “Option 7D” and thanked Chairwoman Buckley for appointing him, and the other members, to the TWG. He said the TWG had been assigned the task of developing a program which will add more federal funds to Nevada’s health care system, making health care insurance more available. He noted the proposed HIFA waiver is a work in progress with a lot of details to be determined. Mr. Alastuey said the TWG had attempted to identify risk factors for the financial stakeholders in the program and had suggested ways to help mitigate those risks.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

- Bobbie Gang, Nevada Women’s Lobby, presented “Testimony in Support of Expanded Medicaid Coverage for Pregnant Women” ([Exhibit C](#)) and stated her group strongly recommended approval of the proposed HIFA waiver. She said they were particularly supportive of the expansion of Medicaid coverage for pregnant women, noting adequate perinatal health care can result in lower overall health care costs.
- Christina Dugan, Director of Government Affairs, Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce, said her organization was pleased with the waiver proposal. They supported an increase of benefits to pregnant women; the proposed funding sources; and the insurance premium subsidy program, which would allow participation by a variety of health insurance providers. Ms. Dugan expressed concern over the required six-month waiting period for employees to become eligible for coverage.
- Jenney Sartin, Executive Director, Huntridge Teen Clinic, said she was speaking as a representative of a small business with fewer than 50 employees. Ms. Sartin said she was strongly supportive of the premium subsidy program portion of the proposed HIFA waiver.
- Paula Berkley, Paula Berkley and Associates, submitted two July 14, 2004, memoranda to Chairwoman Barbara E. Buckley from the Nevada Public Health Foundation ([Exhibit D](#)), and the Nevada Network Against Domestic Violence ([Exhibit E](#)). Ms. Berkley stated both organizations supported the proposed HIFA waiver, especially the expansion of health care for pregnant women, noting prevention is the primary goal of public health.
- Julia Ratti, Executive Director, Human Services Network, testified in support of the proposed HIFA waiver. She said her organization particularly supported raising the eligibility income level to 185 percent of the FPL for pregnant women. Ms. Ratti pointed out providing preventative care could reduce overall health care costs.
- Jan Gilbert, Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada, read from her written testimony ([Exhibit F](#)), expressing support for the proposed HIFA waiver. She said expanding health care coverage to pregnant women in households earning up to

185 percent of the FPL and providing health insurance premium subsidies to low income employees in small businesses will benefit Nevada's communities.

- The subcommittee **APPROVED THE FOLLOWING ACTION:**

SENATOR RAWSON MOVED TO PROCEED WITH A BILL DRAFT REQUEST FOR THE EXPANSION OF HEALTH INSURANCE. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY ASSEMBLYWOMAN KOIVISTO AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

- Senator Rawson suggested joint house sponsorship of the bill.
- Chairwoman Buckley noted Nevada's uninsured rate is the fifth highest in the nation; fourth highest for adults. She said proceeding with the HIFA waiver is a step forward in providing needed health insurance for many citizens of Nevada. She then expressed her appreciation for the TWG and EP&P consulting the quality of the work the members of the TWG and the consultants had produced.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Subcommittee, the meeting was adjourned at 3 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maryann Elorreaga
Senior Research Secretary

Vance A. Hughey
Chief Principal Research Analyst

APPROVED BY:

Assemblywoman Barbara E. Buckley, Chairwoman

Date: _____

LIST OF EXHIBITS

[Exhibit A](#) is the “Meeting Notice and Agenda.”

[Exhibit B](#) is a document titled “Summary of Option 7D Background, the Proposal, Issues and Other Elements,” submitted by Peter Burns, Corporate Manager, EP&P Consulting, Inc.

[Exhibit C](#) is a document titled “Testimony in Support of Expanded Medicaid Coverage for Pregnant Women,” submitted by Bobbie Gang, Nevada Women’s Lobby.

[Exhibit D](#) is a July 14, 2004, memorandum from Paula Berkley, on behalf of the Nevada Public Health Foundation, to Chairwoman Barbara E. Buckley, Legislative Committee on Health Care Subcommittee to Study Health Insurance Expansion Options, regarding health care for pregnant women.

[Exhibit E](#) is a July 14, 2004, memorandum from Paula Berkley, on behalf of the Nevada Network Against Domestic Violence, to Chairwoman Barbara E. Buckley, Legislative Committee on Health Care Subcommittee to Study Health Insurance Expansion Options, regarding health care for pregnant women.

[Exhibit F](#) is a document titled “Testimony to the Legislative Committee on Health Care Subcommittee to Study Health Insurance Expansion Options,” submitted by Jan Gilbert, Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada.

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 or telephone: 775/684-6827.