MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 25, 2020
MEETING OF THE
INTERIM FINANCE COMMITTEE

Chair Maggie Carlton called a special meeting of the Interim Finance Committee (IFC) to order at 9:03 a.m. on September 25, 2020, via videoconference. Pursuant to Sections 2 through 9, inclusive, of Chapter 2, *Statutes of Nevada 2020*, 32nd Special Session, pages 9 through 11, there was no physical location for this meeting.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:
Assemblywoman Maggie Carlton, Chair
Senator Joyce Woodhouse, Vice Chair
Senator Chris Brooks
Senator Yvanna Cancela
Senator Moises Denis
Senator Pete Goicoechea
Senator Ben Kieckhefer
Senator David Parks
Senator James Settelmeyer
Assemblywoman Shea Backus
Assemblywoman Teresa Benitez-Thompson
Assemblyman Jason Frierson
Assemblywoman Sandra Jauregui
Assemblyman Al Kramer
Assemblywoman Daniele Monroe-Moreno
Assemblywoman Connie Munk
Assemblywoman Dina Neal
Assemblywoman Heidi Swank
Assemblywoman Robin Titus
Assemblywoman Jill Tolles for Assemblyman Hambrick
Assemblyman Jim Wheeler

COMMITTEE MEMBERS EXCUSED:
Assemblyman John Hambrick
Assemblywoman Ellen Spiegel

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL BUREAU STAFF PRESENT:
Brenda Erdoes, Director, Legislative Counsel Bureau
Cindy Jones, Fiscal Analyst, Assembly
Mark Krmpotic, Fiscal Analyst, Senate
Sarah Coffman, Principal Deputy Fiscal Analyst
Alex Haartz, Principal Deputy Fiscal Analyst
Bryan Fernley, Legislative Counsel
Eileen O'Grady, Chief Deputy Legislative Counsel
Cheryl Harvey, Fiscal Analysis Division Secretary
Carla Ulrych, Fiscal Analysis Division Secretary

EXHIBITS:
Exhibit A: Meeting Packet
Exhibit B: Cindy Jones Resolution

A. ROLL CALL.

Cindy Jones, Assembly Fiscal Analyst, Fiscal Analysis Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB), called the roll; all members were present except Assemblyman Hambrick and Assemblywoman Spiegel, who were excused.

B. PUBLIC COMMENT.

Pursuant to Sections 2 through 9, inclusive, of Chapter 2, *Statutes of Nevada 2020*, 32nd Special Session, pages 9 through 11, there was no physical location for this meeting. The meeting was broadcast on the Nevada Legislative website at www.leg.state.nv.us. Public comment was accepted live via telephone. Written comments were also accepted by e-mail, facsimile, and mail before, during, and after the meeting.

Chair Carlton stated that due to time constraints, public comment was limited to two minutes per speaker. She said she would allow up to 45 minutes of public comment. An additional opportunity for public comment would be made available at the end the meeting.

William Stanley, representing the Southern Nevada Building Trades Union (SNBTU), offered testimony in support of Agenda Item D-3. He said the SNBTU specifically supported the study on the supply chain. Fortunately, the construction industry had remained essential during the COVID-19 pandemic and most members had retained their jobs. However, there had been many supply chain issues, especially getting supplies into the city and onto jobsites. Mr. Stanley said understanding the deadlock was critical to economic recovery on the other side of the pandemic. Additionally, the other studies proposed in Agenda Item D-3 could be critical to understanding recovery in Southern Nevada and the state as a whole.

C. WORK PROGRAM REVISIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH NRS 353.220(5)(b) – REQUIRED EXPEDITIOUS ACTION WITHIN 15 DAYS. INFORMATIONAL ONLY.

Cindy Jones, Assembly Fiscal Analyst, Fiscal Analysis Division, LCB, explained that Agenda Items C-1, C-2 and C-3 were expeditious work programs under *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS) 353.220(5)(b) and the items had already been deemed approved. Fiscal staff had not identified any concerns with the work programs.

1. Department of Health and Human Services – Aging and Disability Services – Desert Regional Center – FY 2020

Transfer of $2,938,557 from the Reserve category to the Reserve for Reversion category to correct account coding in Work Program #C52159. Requires Interim Finance approval since the amount transferred to the Reserve for Reversion category exceeds $75,000. **Work Program #C52711**

There was no discussion on this item.

2. Department of Health and Human Services – Public and Behavioral Health – Emergency Medical Services – FY 2020

Addition of $34,891 in Licenses and Fees and $25,790 in Certification Fees to augment revenues and allow the program to close the State Fiscal Year 2020 budget. Requires Interim Finance approval since the amount added to the Reserve for Reversion category exceeds $30,000. **Work Program #C51907**

There was no discussion on this item.

3. Department of Health and Human Services – Public and Behavioral Health – Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services – FY 2020

Transfer of $2,281,503 from the Reserve category to the Reserve for Reversion category to correct account coding in Work Program #C52156. Requires Interim Finance approval since the amount added to the Reserve for Reversion category exceeds $75,000. **Work Program #C52736**

There was no discussion on this item.

D. WORK PROGRAM REVISIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH NRS 353.220(5)(b) – REQUIRES EXPEDITIOUS ACTION WITHIN 15 DAYS.

Chair Carlton noted that a roll call vote would be taken for each agenda item.

Cindy Jones, Assembly Fiscal Analyst, Fiscal Analysis Division, LCB, stated that no issues had been identified with Agenda Item D-1; however, the remainder of the items under Agenda Item D would be held for additional testimony.

Senator Brooks requested additional testimony on Agenda Item D-1, Office of the Secretary of State.

1. Office of the Secretary of State – Secretary of State – FY 2021

Addition of $52,114 in Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, Coronavirus Relief Funds, to prepare for and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Requires Interim Finance approval since the cumulative amount added to the Coronavirus Relief Funds - Temps category exceeds 10% of the legislatively approved amount for that category. **Work Program #C52917**

Senator Brooks stated he was looking at the funding for the Office of the Secretary of State (SOS) as it related to the November 3, 2020, General Election and the revised voting process due to the pandemic. He wanted to ensure the SOS had the capacity to deal with the new election process, especially with the recent change in SOS personnel. Senator Brooks asked who the SOS point of contact would be if there was an issue at the local level that required immediate attention.

Mark Wlaschin, Deputy Secretary of State for Operations, SOS, replied that the SOS was confident that between SOS staff and the work done at the county levels,

there was adequate capacity to address routine statutory requirements as well as changes resulting from Assembly Bill (A.B.) 4 (32st Special Session).

Mr. Wlaschin stated that part of the agency's request identified a need for two additional temporary employees to help address the exponential growth in questions from voters. In addition to questions related to A.B. 4, voters were also seeking clarification about things they had heard in the media and how those matters applied to Nevada.

Continuing, Mr. Wlaschin stated that prior to the submittal of the work program, there were internal discussions and decisions about how to adjust staffing to address the agency's requirements. For example, the SOS shifted six personnel to assist the Elections Division with customer service calls.

Mr. Wlaschin addressed Senator Brooks' question regarding a point of contact. He said Secretary of State Cegavske had not yet selected a replacement for Deputy Secretary of State for Elections Wayne Thorley. He stated there was redundancy within the SOS; therefore, that position had not been alone in providing support to the counties. He indicated that Secretary of State Cegavske would formally announce her decision and would also notify the counties and the IFC when an appointment had been made.

Senator Brooks thanked Secretary of State Cegavske and the SOS staff for their efforts during this trying time. He said he appreciated their professionalism and efficiency through the new process.

Senator Cancela asked the agency to discuss the details of the backlog referenced in Work Program #C52917.

Mr. Wlaschin responded that the request was actually three separate requests in one consisting of three different backlogs. Of the five positions requested in the work program, two positions would support the Elections Division, two positions would support the Securities Division, and one position would support the Nevada Lockbox and Domestic Partnerships program. He stated that each of those entities had its own backlog.

Mr. Wlaschin stated that in the case of the Elections Division backlog, the volume of phone calls and emails had skyrocketed from about 50 per day to between 1,000 and 1,500 per day. He said the increase resulted from confusion regarding the upcoming election. Mr. Wlaschin stated that the backlog in the Elections Division warranted individual and separate attention from the others.

Continuing, Mr. Wlaschin explained that the backlog within the Securities Division related to compliance audit investigators and caseload. As part of the requested budgetary reductions earlier in 2020, multiple positions were frozen and vacant. He noted that three of those positions were associated with the Securities Division; consequently, there was not enough personnel to manage the caseload.

Mr. Wlaschin said the Nevada Lockbox and Domestic Partnerships program supported approximately 43,000 registrants. He explained that the staff who had been responsible for supporting the program left the agency in January 2020. Consequently, that support became a collateral duty for various other personnel within the agency. He added that one of the temporary positions would support the program, allowing requests to be facilitated in a more timely manner.

Senator Cancela asked where voters were being directed with questions regarding A.B. 4. She also asked for guidance on the types of questions and trends being experienced by the agency. She believed that as community leaders, legislators could help address some of the issues the SOS was experiencing.

Mr. Wlaschin replied that some calls related to questions regarding the implications of A.B. 4 and whether there were permanent changes to the law. He added that individuals requesting resources were directed to the SOS website (https://www.nvsos.gov/sos/elections) to ensure they were directed to a trusted source. He noted that an election-related document titled *Facts vs Myths* was available on the website. The document addressed many concerns related to the election and clarified confusing language used by the national news media.

Regarding trends, Mr. Wlaschin reiterated there was considerable confusion surrounding the 2020 General Election. Due to the abundance of information provided through social media and other sources, it was necessary to explain the law, A.B. 4, and other election-related details. Mr. Wlaschin noted that a primary concern was whether in-person voting would be allowed. He said voters were informed that in-person voting would be available during the election and were directed to their county clerk or registrar to verify polling locations. He said, overall, callers were provided clarification as well as reassurance that they would be able to safely and securely cast their ballots.

Senator Cancela wanted to ensure that the two temporary workers would help relieve the inundation of questions that that SOS was receiving and would be properly trained to answer those questions. She asked if the SOS was confident that the two positions would make a noticeable difference. Senator Cancela noted that call volume would likely increase as ballots were received by voters. She asked if the SOS had a contingency plan if the two positions were not enough to address the workload. She asked how the Committee could be assured voters would receive accurate and up-to-date information.

Mr. Wlaschin explained that the two positions were a continuation of efforts to reinforce the Elections Division. He said the SOS began by looking internally. The agency was able to balance the workloads of two individuals and transfer those staff to the Elections Division. However, even with the addition of those two staff, the Elections Division was unable to manage the large volume of calls and emails; therefore, two additional staff were added, which increased the total personnel to six.

Mr. Wlaschin stated that by moving staff internally, it enabled the Elections Division to practice training. Consequently, “cheat sheets,” such as a list of the most frequently asked questions, had been developed. Elections Division staff could reach out to other SOS staff with technical questions, such as questions related to the NRS.

Mr. Wlaschin said the SOS believed that the two additional staff would meet the agency’s requirements and enable staff to answer questions. In addition to telephone and email, the SOS used social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter for outreach efforts. Mr. Wlaschin said if the addition of the contract staff was not sufficient to meet the agency’s requirements, the SOS would conduct an analysis to determine the next steps.

Senator Cancela asked the agency to provide the cheat sheets to the Committee so that members could provide constituents with accurate information. Mr. Wlaschin agreed.

SENATOR BROOKS MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM D-1.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN TITUS SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

2. Governor's Office of Economic Development – FY 2021

Addition of $20,000,000 of Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, Coronavirus Relief Funds transferred from the CARES Act 2020 Account to establish a Nevada COVID-19 Emergency Small Business Recovery Grant Program. Requires Interim Finance approval since the amount added to the Emergency Small Business Recovery Grants category exceeds $75,000. **Work Program #C52720**

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson asked how the Commercial Rental Assistance Grant (CRAG) program for businesses affected by the pandemic was faring. She understood the same vendor would be used for the COVID-19 Emergency Small Business Recovery grant program (also referred to as the Pandemic Emergency Technical Support [PETS] program). She thought the demand and response related to the CRAG program might give an indication of the response to the PETS program.

Michael Brown, Executive Director, Governor’s Office of Economic Development (GOED), responded that the CRAG program was developed jointly between GOED, the Office of the State Treasurer, and the Department of Business and Industry (B&I). The development of the program began in June 2020, based on a model initially developed in Utah and shared with a network of economic development directors around the nation. He said the program concept was two-pronged. It was intended to benefit small businesses as well as stabilize small business landlords. Mr. Brown stated that the CRAG program closed on Monday, September 21, 2020, with more than 800 applications. He said the State Treasurer estimated a

commitment of approximately $8.5 million. Mr. Brown noted that the State of Utah allocated $40.0 million for its program, and applications totaled approximately half that amount at $20.0 million, which was why $20.0 million was requested for Nevada's program. He noted that approximately half of that amount had been committed.

Mr. Brown said the CRAG program was a complicated program; therefore, the program team had explored how the PETS program could be simplified. He said the PETS program would provide direct assistance to individual businesses and would not require participation by landlords. Mr. Brown noted that the Department of Tourism and Cultural Affairs (DTCA) was included in the development of the program.

Mr. Brown said some members of the Legislature thought the eligibility categories for the commercial program were too narrow; therefore, eligibility for the new program would be broader. He said GOED and B&I had developed an outreach plan. Mr. Brown noted he would personally lead the rural portion of the plan. In addition, the agencies were seeking to partner with local chambers of commerce for the PETS program. He noted that staff at GOED and the Treasurer's Office had spent considerable time assisting businesses in completing the paperwork for the CRAG program. Partnering with chambers of commerce for the PETS program would provide additional support for businesses.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson understood that 800 applications had been received for the CRAG program, which equated to approximately $8.5 million in assistance. She noted there would be a balance of unspent funds for the program. Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson said it was important to support small businesses and provide resources while also considering the areas of greatest demand. She thought there needed to be a balance between residential and commercial rental assistance to adequately meet the demand.

Zach Conine, State Treasurer, responded that the CRAG program was initially funded with $20.0 million, which included administrative costs that were negotiated down to approximately 6% of the process. He stated that administrative costs included application review, outside of the review being done by state employees, and the process of issuing checks to vendors. He said that process was determined to be too complicated to accomplish quickly on the state side.

Treasurer Conine said the CRAG program initially received 1,465 pre-applications, which requested initial information regarding eligibility that was subsequently sent to the vendor. Of the 1,465 pre-applications, 130 were denied and 1,335 were approved. The primary reasons for the denials included:

- Lacking the necessary business license.
- Not being in business for at least six months prior to March 2020.
- Not meeting the minimum loss in revenue threshold of 30%.

Treasurer Conine stated that most of the applications denied in the second round fell into the first two categories.

Continuing, Treasurer Conine said applicants that were approved were able to move on to the full application. Of the 1,335 approved applicants, 831 fully submitted the required documents. Required documentation included revenue backup as well as a stipulation from the landlord agreeing to accept the funds and not to evict for 90 days from the end of the process.

Treasurer Conine noted that the reasons for denials in the second round of the application process included employing more than 50 individuals and inability to substantiate financial losses.

Treasurer Conine stated that two things had been learned through the CRAG program and other economic assistance programs in the United States: 1) prioritizing who would receive funds first was necessary; however, requirements should not be so strict that businesses were discouraged from applying, and 2) a simpler application process encouraged more businesses to apply for the program. He stated that he and Mr. Brown had personally assisted businesses with the application process, and GOED and Treasurer's Office staff had responded to thousands of emails about the program. Treasurer Conine said every effort was made to encourage businesses to apply for the CRAG program, but it had proven to be more difficult than expected, which was likely due to the application process.

Treasurer Conine discussed the scope of the full economic development proposals before the Committee. He stated that originally those proposals totaled approximately $70.0 million – $20.0 million for the CRAG program as well an additional $50.0 million in proposed projects, which were included in the presentation at the September 11, 2020, meeting of the IFC's Subcommittee to Review and Advise on Coronavirus Federal Aid. He noted those projects were included on today's IFC agenda. In addition, there was approximately $37.0 million worth of projects that would not come before the IFC. Treasurer Conine clarified that $70.0 million in economic development projects was originally intended; however, the agency was only bringing forward about $32.5 million worth of projects, leaving $37.0 million to support other priorities of the Governor and the Legislature. He said the Treasurer's Office would advocate for the funds to be directed to affordable housing; however, he understood there were many other needs related to response and recovery.

Treasurer Conine said from an economic development standpoint, given the amount of money distributed through the CRAG program, and assuming the full $20.0 million would be distributed through the PETS program and that Agenda Items D-3 and D-4 would be approved by the Committee, $37.5 million that was originally designated for economic development efforts would remain unallocated. He explained that the reasons for the unspent funds was because the CRAG program did not get fully subscribed and several programs were not implemented due to the lack of time to vet them. Treasurer Conine thought

rental assistance and other programs were more important than those projects, which were more speculative. He said the proposals before the Committee were critical for response, recovery and resiliency.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson asked if the remaining $11.5 million from the CRAG program would be applied toward the $20.0 million that was requested in Work Program #C52720.

Treasurer Conine responded that he was unsure how that would be managed from a work program perspective. From a functional standpoint, it was all part of the CARES Act funding.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson understood it was all part of the CARES Act funding. She restated her question regarding whether the unused portion from the CRAG program would be applied toward the $20.0 million requested in the work program.

Mr. Brown replied that he did not have authority to make a decision about the unspent funds from the CRAG program. He assumed that would be a decision by the Governor's Finance Office (GFO) or the Legislature. He explained that a "soft date" of October 15, 2020, was applied to the CRAG program. Any funds that were not committed or expended as of that date would be returned to the GFO and made available for other state priorities. He said the PETS program, which was before the Committee today, had a soft date of October 30, 2020.

Senator Parks stated that the pandemic had significantly impacted nonprofit organizations providing behavioral health services. He urged GOED to give those organizations equal consideration when awarding grants.

Mr. Brown made note of Senator Parks' request. He said the focus of the PETS program, which GOED was responsible for administering, was economic relief rather than economic development. The agency was responsible for managing the program among multiple agencies and partners in state government at the request of the Governor. He stated that GOED would conduct outreach in those nonprofit areas.

Treasurer Conine added that behavioral health entities were eligible to apply for grant funding through the CRAG program and the PETS program. He said those entities would be included in outreach efforts. He noted that one of the proposed studies under Agenda Item D-3 was intended to reinforce and evaluate better methods of supporting behavioral health in Nevada.

Chair Carlton asked if the PETS program was primarily intended for rental assistance or if the funds could be used to fill funding gaps created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Treasurer Conine responded that the grant funds were intended to be flexible. He said the funds could be used for rent, retention of employees, retrofitting, personal

protective equipment (PPE) or supplies. The goal of the program was to be extremely flexible for all types of businesses.

Senator Woodhouse added to Senator Park's comments. She stated that many small businesses were struggling and were heavily impacted by the pandemic. She urged GOED and the Treasurer's Office to assist arts and cultural nonprofit organizations, which were also struggling exceedingly. When those organizations were experiencing hardship, it directly impacted the citizens of Nevada.

Mr. Brown noted that the DTCA was contacted at the beginning of the planning process. He said art and cultural events, such as Cowboy Poetry in Elko, the symphony in Las Vegas, and cultural programs in Reno, had suffered greatly during the pandemic, and therefore, arts and cultural entities were a priority of the PETS program.

Mr. Brown said the first part of business recovery focused on commercial landlord assistance through the CRAG program. The second part of business recovery focused on direct assistance to businesses and nonprofit organizations.

Assemblywoman Neal noted that businesses that were closed by executive order were eligible for the program; however, one of the qualifications was that businesses must be in good standing with no liens or judgements. She asked if data was available concerning businesses that were closed for six months by executive order and whether they were impaired by potential liens or judgements on their property. She asked if GOED was working with those businesses.

Assemblywoman Neal also noted that nonprofit organizations, chambers of commerce, and arts and culture organizations were not under the gross revenue or the employee requirements. She asked what criteria was used for those entities.

Treasurer Conine replied the lien language was specifically related to state liens, such as non-payment of property taxes. He said the Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRFs) could not be utilized for revenue replacement, which meant the grant funds could not be used for purposes such as property taxes. Treasurer Conine noted there were a few instances in the CRAG program where a business was behind on their property taxes or business license. He said the program team worked with those businesses to help them become current so that grant funds could be released. He clarified that other liens, such as a lien for non-payment of rent, did not disqualify a business from grant assistance. Treasurer Conine said the program team or the vendor provided one-on-one assistance to businesses.

Mr. Brown stated that the partnerships with the chambers of commerce were necessary to connect to micro businesses and small businesses, because GOED did not have enough staff to coach hundreds of businesses through the application process. He said chambers of commerce would assist businesses in completing the application to obtain much needed financial assistance.

Mr. Brown noted that several arts and cultural entities had experienced substantial revenue declines. He said GOED had received input from the DTCA regarding how to structure grant awards for arts and cultural organizations. He noted that the criteria was different, because arts and cultural organizations were distinct from other types of businesses such as restaurants.

Assemblywoman Swank stated that for programs such as the Payroll Protection Program (PPP) and other CARES Act programs, assistance was only available as it related to a certain time period. She asked what the time period was for the new program.

Treasurer Conine replied that payroll assistance was structured based on the widest amount allowable under the CRF guidance. The time period was from March 1, 2020, to the present.

Chair Carlton noted that the CRF had to be spent by December 30, 2020. Mr. Conine confirmed that was correct.

Referring to page 37 in the meeting packet, Assemblywoman Tolles noted that prioritization of funding included disadvantaged business enterprises, arts and culture organizations, chambers of commerce, other businesses and other nonprofit organizations (Exhibit A). She asked if there had been discussion about giving top priority to businesses that were fully closed or limited to 50% capacity. She stated she had surveyed other states that had similar programs and noted a good portion of those states had specific programs for restaurants and bars. Assemblywoman Tolles thought that entities that were fully closed or limited in capacity would be at the top of the priority list.

Treasurer Conine agreed. He said one of the Governor's priorities in helping to design the program was to ensure that businesses closed due to the pandemic and executive order, such as bars, would receive top priority. He noted that a separate program for bars and restaurants had been considered, but one lesson that was learned during the pandemic was that programs took longer to develop, implement and finalize. Therefore, a decision was made to prioritize those businesses within the PETS program rather than create a standalone program so the funds could be distributed as soon as possible.

Assemblywoman Tolles asked if businesses that were closed or limited to 50% capacity would receive top priority for funding.

Treasurer Conine explained that every type of business on the priority list would receive priority over businesses that were not on the list. He said the intention was to focus on businesses that were closed or limited in capacity.

Assemblywoman Tolles stated that many states required businesses to submit a report within six months on the use of funds.

Treasurer Conine replied that currently the plan was for businesses to submit a report on the intended use of the funds, and businesses would be periodically audited thereafter. However, he said an additional requirement could be added requiring businesses to provide a concise accountability report. He noted it was necessary to keep administrative costs down, especially after December 30, 2020, when the CRF would no longer be available.

Assemblywoman Tolles said she wanted to ensure that businesses were held accountable. She suggested the accountability information be provided to the Treasurer's Office, the Governor, and the IFC.

Senator Goicoechea noted grants to small businesses would be $10,000. He asked if the application could be completed online. Treasurer Conine confirmed that the application process could be done online.

Senator Goicoechea remarked that not all businesses belonged to a chamber of commerce. Some rural areas did not even have a chamber of commerce. In looking at what had occurred since March 2020, it would not be difficult for many businesses to show a loss of $10,000.

Mr. Brown agreed. He said the CRAG program had been a significant learning experience. He thought it was important to conduct outreach to small businesses concerning the PETS program. He noted that GOED and B&I had developed a marketing plan with a special focus on small businesses in the rural areas.

In response to a question from Senator Goicoechea, Mr. Brown replied that the program information would be available on the GOED website as well as the State Treasurer website. In addition, program information that could be shared with constituents would be sent to all legislators.

Senator Goicoechea thought the PETS program would receive a lot of applications. He said $10,000 might be the difference between make or break for some small businesses.

Chair Carlton noted that the program was scheduled to go live within three weeks of IFC approval. Treasurer Conine confirmed that was correct.

Chair Carlton stated that some businesses, such as nonprofit organizations, were asked to remain open while other businesses were ordered to close. Consequently, those businesses' resources disappeared because of the nature of the pandemic. She noted that some nonprofit organizations lost contributions because of the way they were funded.

Chair Carlton noted that she was an Executive Director for a nonprofit organization; however, the organization did not intend to apply for a PETS grant. Therefore, she did not think there was a conflict of interest by participating in the discussion.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson noted that GOED intended to spend approximately $30.0 million on the following:

- $8.9 million for the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE);
- $4.5 million for resiliency projects involving GOED, the Treasurer's Office, and the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation (DETR);
- $10.0 million to be held in reserves; and
- $6.55 million that was unplanned.

She asked Mr. Brown to provide additional details about the plans for those funds.

Mr. Brown replied that in July 2020, the Governor's Office asked for a plan on economic relief and resiliency. He was asked to poll all state departments about their contributions. GOED reached out to the DTCA, DETR, NSHE, B&I, the Office of Science, Innovation and Technology (OSIT), and the Treasurer's Office. He remarked that GOED only played a small part in the process.

Mr. Brown said of the $50.0 million in CRFs earmarked for economic development, workforce development and tourism, $10.0 million was set aside in case any of the programs were oversubscribed. He said if the PETS program was oversubscribed, GOED may need to request authority from the IFC to draw down another $10.0 million. He noted that the same process would have been used if the CRAG program had been oversubscribed. However, the program was undersubscribed; therefore, the remaining funds would be returned to the GFO.

Mr. Brown stated that the GFO was currently reviewing NSHE's projects.

Continuing, Mr. Brown said Treasurer Conine would be discussing a proposal under Agenda Item D-3, which was originally slated for $2.5 million; however, it had been reduced to approximately $1.0 million.

Finally, Mr. Brown said he canvassed GOED and DETR staff regarding resiliency: how workforce programs and the labor market could be strengthened. He noted those proposals were also on today's agenda. Mr. Brown reiterated that any unallocated funds would be returned to the GFO and the IFC to make decisions on the future use of those funds.

Chair Carlton thanked Treasurer Conine and Mr. Brown for the detailed information. She said the Committee understood the importance of the request.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN BENITEZ-THOMPSON MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM D-2.

SENATOR WOODHOUSE SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. Governor's Office of Economic Development – FY 2021

Addition of $1,050,000 in Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, Coronavirus Relief Funds to develop a comprehensive economic response plan for the immediate effects of the COVID-19 public health emergency. Requires Interim Finance approval since the amount added to the Coordinated Economic Response category exceeds $75,000. **Work Program #C52915**

Chair Carlton asked the agency to provide a brief overview of Agenda Item D-3. She stated that Work Program #C52915 was received after the submittal deadline and there appeared to be a lot of missing information. Because the item was received late Monday, Fiscal staff had less than a day to review the item. Chair Carlton said the Legislature had concerns about the use of studies, so it was important for the Committee to fully understand the agency's proposal.

Zach Conine, State Treasurer, apologized for the delay in submitting Work Program #C52915. He stated that it was a complicated work program. In addition, it was important that the Committee was provided with the most accurate cost. He explained that the cost was originally estimated at $2.5 million; however, the contracts were negotiated down to approximately $1.0 million, which represented more than 8.4 basis points, or 0.08%, of the total expenditure of CRFs.

Treasurer Conine said, to date, many proposals presented to the Committee had fallen into two of the three categories contemplated by the U.S. Department of the Treasury (Treasury) and Congress when the CARES Act was enacted. Those three categories included: response, recovery and resiliency. Examples of response efforts included the use of masks and PPE as well as contact tracing efforts. He noted that a considerable amount of CRFs had been directed at response efforts. Treasurer Conine stated that an example of recovery efforts was the PETS program, which the Committee approved under Agenda Item D-2.

Treasurer Conine said in looking at programs in other states and the programs that were intended by the language in the CARES Act, one of the pieces that had not been presented to the Committee was a resiliency plan. However, that would be addressed through Agenda Item D-3.

Treasurer Conine understood the Legislature's concerns about studies. Too often in Nevada, studies were done, but no change resulted. He said the studies before the Committee today were different for two reasons. First, a team of people were dedicated to ensuring the proposed studies were completed. Treasurer Conine said he did not recall ever presenting a study to the Committee in the past and did not expect to do it again unless he was sure changes would be implemented as a result of the study.

Treasurer Conine said the second reason the studies in Agenda Item D-3 were different from others was because CRF guidance required the studies be quickly and immediately conducted and actionable. After many conversations with the Treasury, the National Governors Association (NGA), the National Association of State Treasurers (NAST), the National Association of State Budget Officers

(NASBO), and dozens of State Treasurers, it was determined the studies were eligible and necessary. He stated that the reason the studies were necessary was because the state needed to develop a targeted and comprehensive plan that could be immediately implemented when Nevada came out of the pandemic. The plan was critical for getting people back to work and diversifying Nevada's economy. Treasurer Conine said economy recovery would not happen without change. He said some of the jobs lost during the pandemic would not return; therefore, Nevada needed to understand and fix the problems caused by the pandemic and retrain workers.

Treasurer Conine stated that six studies were included in Agenda Item D-3, and those studies were tied together by a study that would strengthen state systems and processes. The goal of that study was to develop a plan for the State Infrastructure Bank and other ways of attracting funding from outside the state that would not require taxpayer dollars and would create jobs. Treasurer Conine said he was pleased that Mr. Stanley testified during public comment, because Mr. Stanley understood the importance of infrastructure jobs.

The proposed studies included the following topics:

- Broadband, telecommunications and e-commerce;
- Supply chain infrastructure – analyze the impacts of COVID-19 on supply chain infrastructure to improve delivery services.
- Behavioral health care delivery systems – assess the capacity of Nevada's behavioral health care delivery systems to assist Nevadans in facing economic stressors, isolation effects, and other negative emotional impacts caused by the pandemic.
- Workforce and displaced workers – identify the impacts of the pandemic on Nevada's workforce and develop strategies to retrain displaced workers.
- Comprehensive report – a compilation of the data and recommendations from the five studies in a comprehensive plan that could be implemented alongside GOED or the recovery plan being conducted by Stanford Research Institute (SRI) to determine the next steps.

Treasurer Conine understood that some members of the Committee were frustrated with the use of incentives as a tool to attract businesses to the state. Currently, incentives were one of only a few tools available to attract businesses to Nevada; however, Agenda Item D-3 would help create other tools to attract businesses without using taxpayer dollars or funds intended for other purposes, such as schools.

Treasurer Conine understood and agreed with the Committee's concern about using funds for a study for future planning when Nevada had an immediate need.

Treasurer Conine briefly discussed the state's bond rating. He reported that on September 24, 2020, Moody's Analytics affirmed Nevada's very high credit rating. He indicated that the state's credit rating was affirmed because of the difficult

decisions made by Governor Sisolak and the Legislature to initiate budget cuts. He noted that many other states decided to wait for federal support rather than initiate budget cuts. Treasurer Conine said as a result of those difficult decisions, Nevada would have the ability to borrow funds in the upcoming general obligation note at the lowest possible rate. He said that was important because Nevada's hard work and dedication had not gone unnoticed.

Treasurer Conine did not think Agenda Item D-3 would be a difficult decision. He assured the Committee that the $1.0 million to fund the studies would not be wasted. He said he would not ask for money that could be used for housing or other critical needs if he did not think it would be necessary and useful in the future.

Treasurer Conine said originally there was $70.0 million worth of proposed economic development projects; however, that figure had been reduced to $32.5 million, which opened up $37.5 million for other important and necessary government functions. He said Agenda Item D-3 was the only request that would be submitted by GOED and the Treasurer's Office for resiliency efforts. He thought the proposal was deeply important.

Chair Carlton expressed concern about spending the CRFs on studies. She thought the funds were intended for other purposes. She asked if there was documentation confirming the funds could be used for studies.

Treasurer Conine replied that in conversations with GOED, the Treasury, the NGA, the NAST, and the NASBO, it was confirmed that studies were an allowable and effective use of the CRFs. He provided the following information from the CRF guidelines, which was most recently updated on September 2, 2020:

- Expenses associated with conducting recovery planning projects;
- Expenses for technical assistance to local authorities or other entities on mitigation of COVID-19 related threats to public health and safety;
- Expenses associated with upgrading critical public health infrastructure to increase the public health response to COVID-19;
- Expenses for establishing and operating public telemedicine for COVID-19 related treatment;
- Expenses to facilitate distance learning including technological improvements in connection with school closings to enable compliance with COVID-19 precautions; and
- Expenses to improve telework capabilities for public employees to ensure compliance with the COVID-19 public health precautions.

Chair Carlton stated that information should have been included in the work program documentation. With regard to the guidance read by Treasurer Conine, she asked if he had associated the studies with expenses.

Treasurer Conine confirmed that was correct. He said other states were using the same nexus for that type of work.

Treasurer Conine apologized that the backup documentation was not included. He thought it was submitted with the work program.

Chair Carlton recalled recent comments by Congresswoman Dina Titus indicating that the Governor's Office of Workforce Innovation (OWINN) would receive $13.8 million over three years to perform similar work to the items proposed in Agenda Item D-3. She stated that the proposed work related to OWINN, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1993, and the SEF funds. She asked why those funding sources were not being used instead of the CRFs.

Treasurer Conine stated that OWINN and other entities had been involved in the development of the request. He said the goal was to complement other work in the state. For example, the broadband study was in partnership with OSIT. He said OSIT had been working on the project for a long time and required additional information to complete its pandemic recovery plan.

In response to a question from Assemblywoman Neal, Mr. Brown replied that in the second week of the pandemic, Bob Potts, GOED, organized a weekly phone call every Thursday with all the state's economists. As a result of those meetings, an extensive body of knowledge was now available about the state's economy. He said there was a tendency in public life to put an aureole around difficult situations, which GOED had not done. GOED anticipated an L-shaped recovery of the potential alphabet series of recoveries.

Continuing, Mr. Brown stated that GOED had been advised by SRI that the first priority must be the restoration of public health systems and the confidence that was necessary for business and convention travelers to return to Las Vegas. He stated that public health response was the first and foremost priority. After July 2020, the focus turned to relief. As the year was nearing an end, the focus was on potential long-term resiliency matters.

Mr. Brown offered to arrange a briefing for Assemblywoman Neal to discuss the issue further.

Assemblywoman Neal expressed interest in a report on the subject. Mr. Brown said he would provide the Committee with the summary report that was recently presented to the GOED Board.

Mr. Brown commended Mr. Potts for his efforts. He said Mr. Potts began the weekly briefings by using the Small Business Administration's responses that were received to the initial round of disaster relief loans. He said Mr. Potts built out the model and assembled all the state's economists for weekly briefings. Consequently, GOED had a good understanding of the state's economic situation.

In response to a question from Assemblywoman Titus, Treasurer Conine replied that five separate industry-leading experts would conduct the proposed studies.

Three of those experts were based in Nevada. The others, which were not based in Nevada, included the premier infrastructure and behavioral health groups in the United States.

Treasurer Conine explained that upon the Committee's approval, the requests and the associated contracts would go before the Board of Examiners for review and approval. Immediately thereafter, draft reports would be developed and would be due at the beginning of November. He stated that the reports would be consolidated, finalized, and put to use prior to December 30, 2020.

Assemblywoman Titus asked if the final report would be available by December 30, 2020. Treasurer Conine said GOED expected to have the final report on November 30, 2020.

Assemblywoman Titus expressed concern that the proposed studies were a duplication of efforts. She recalled that multiple studies and analyses in areas such as broadband and behavioral health had been conducted in the state. Assemblywoman Titus said many departments had been assessing those areas for a long time and she asked if department heads had been consulted. She thought it was important to gain new information and not duplicate efforts.

Treasurer Conine responded that the studies were not a "make work" process. Rather, they would build upon the work that other agencies such as OSIT had already begun, and provide the connection to the pandemic and how the pandemic impacted that work. He said the pandemic had highlighted important needs in the state, such as broadband connectivity. Thus, the Treasurer's Office was seeking ways to fund those needs apart from additional taxes or bonding that had to be supported by property taxes or other means. He said the proposed State Infrastructure Bank could be a solution. Treasurer Conine said the studies would help determine how to address the needs in the state.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson echoed Assemblywoman Titus' comments. She said empirical evidence and studies about needs in the state already existed. For example, it was apparent that Nevada needed more broadband infrastructure. With regard to behavioral health, the issues were well documented and had been discussed at length. She noted that Federally Qualified Health Care Centers (FQHC) had expressed a desire to expand their footprint in order to address the public health care crisis, but they required funding.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson said she opposed a $100,000 study when there were plenty of requests that could be immediately implemented to expand behavioral health capacity in the state. She did not think another study was a good use of the funds.

Regarding displaced workers, Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson stated there were departments that had already been tracking that data for years. She said the Joint Subcommittee on Human Services reviewed many of those programs, especially the DETR workforce programs.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson reiterated that she did not think studies were necessary, because the needs in the state were already evident. She said the Legislature had been presented with dozens of projects that could not be afforded in the past. She said she would rather the funds be used for implementation of programs rather than unnecessary studies.

Treasurer Conine agreed with Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson's comments regarding the FQHCs. He said the Treasurer's Office worked with the Office of Senator Catherine Cortez Masto on the Treasury guidance and to determine whether the funds could be used for that purpose. He said it did not fall within the purview of GOED or the Treasurer's Office, but he supported it and thought it would be an eligible use.

Treasurer Conine explained that the studies would help the state identify how to pay for projects such as expanding the capacity of the FQHCs. He said the Treasurer's Office did not have control over the spend of the CRFs and prioritization of those funds. He said GOED and the Treasurer's Office were asked to establish projects focused on economic development. The studies were related to economic development and would help fix issues such as the behavioral health problem in the state by obtaining funding unrelated to tax dollars. Treasurer Conine agreed that the state was already aware of existing needs such as behavioral health and broadband connectivity. He said OSIT required additional broadband-related information that could be obtained through studies, as well as the funds to pay for those studies. He said the proposed studies would help fund and create long-term resiliency in the state. In addition, the studies would ensure that the state addressed the ramifications of the pandemic through those long-term resiliency efforts.

Treasurer Conine thought it would be good to use the remaining $37.0 million that was originally earmarked for economic development to support the FQHCs.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson asked why the dollars were under the purview of GOED and the Treasurer's Office. She asked why the funds were not under the purview of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). She asked if the provisions of the CARES Act prohibited the projects from falling under the purview of existing programs within agencies such as DHHS and DETR.

Treasurer Conine replied there was not a specific prohibition for use of the funds. He noted those agencies had been focused on response efforts, and GOED and the Treasurer's Office were tasked with recovery and resiliency efforts. He added that their offices were focused on the steps beyond the study and how those steps would be funded. The intent was to create jobs associated with the FQHCs, expansion of broadband, and the supply chain. He added their group was working with those agencies to avoid redundancy, which allowed the total cost to be reduced from $2.5 million to $1.05 million. He added that those functions were not typically under the purview of the Treasurer's Office. He looked forward to a time

when the discussions could return to bonding and college savings, but in the midst of a pandemic, everyone had to work together.

Mr. Brown stated that part of the process was a result of advice they had received from the SRI that they should identify opportunities to strengthen the core infrastructure of the state and to work across agencies. The ideas had been vetted by the advisors from the SRI. He said the requests were about long-term resiliency.

Chair Carlton stated the Legislature wanted to do everything it could to help create jobs. In her time with the Legislature, she had not seen many instances where studies had created jobs for anyone except those who conducted the studies.

Chair Carlton added that nothing had been discussed about implementation or the costs from any of the agencies or GOED to have the ability, after the studies, to incentivize more businesses to come to Nevada. She asked how the studies would create jobs.

Treasurer Conine replied that the creation of infrastructure jobs had to be funded. That had always been an issue. Although Nevada's bond rating remained high, the size of the state's tax base prevented the state from doing all those infrastructure projects. He said Mr. Stanley's earlier testimony pointed out that infrastructure jobs in Nevada are good, high paying union jobs and the type of work the state wanted to support. The studies would provide the tools and plan needed to raise funds from outside the state for the State Infrastructure Bank to finance projects without requiring tax incentives. He said that was the purpose of the studies and why they were different from other studies. The problems were already known – there was a need for more behavioral health centers as well as a need to provide funding for existing and new FQHCs, especially in communities where none existed. He said the state needed to find ways of obtaining additional federal funds for projects such as those. The studies were the vehicle to do that and would support the provisions of Assembly Bill 399 (2019 Legislative Session), namely the State Infrastructure Bank. Treasurer Conine said the studies would get the State Infrastructure Bank started and the state could use the resulting funds to create thousands of construction jobs in broadband installation, utility expansion and green energy. However, the state did not currently have funding to create those jobs. He said the tax base was the Legislature's responsibility, but the studies would help. That small investment could potentially create long-term economic resiliency in Nevada.

Chair Carlton asked how jobs would be created through the studies. She said she was concerned about approving the request without an implementation plan.

Assemblyman Frierson stated he wanted shorter, more concise answers on the bond issue. He asked for clarification on how the studies would create jobs and when those jobs would be evident.

Treasurer Conine responded that the question of timing was market dependent. The completion of the studies would quickly lead to the implementation of the

State Infrastructure Bank, which would allow projects to begin and create jobs by the end of calendar year (CY) 2021 or the beginning of CY 2022.

Treasurer Conine explained that to respond to how the work program would create jobs, one needed to return the Great Recession. The state had lost out on several projects because the projects were not shovel ready with a consolidated approach to where the funds should be directed. Different municipalities and counties applied for potential projects competing against each other for federal and other dollars. The goal of Work Program #C52915 was to bring all that together and create a structured and consolidated effort with input from municipalities and counties. He added there were federal funds and approximately $2.8 trillion capital on the sidelines waiting for things like infrastructure projects in which to invest.

Assemblyman Frierson asked what the proposals would do that could not be accomplished in their absence.

Treasurer Conine responded it would pay for the “how.” It was known that more behavioral health centers were needed, but there was not an implementation plan or method to raise funding and create the necessary jobs. It was known that more broadband was needed, but funding was not available to expand that resource. While some of the CARES Act funds could be used for immediate work, the proposal would create a plan for long-term resiliency in partnership with the existing and ongoing economic recovery plan presented by GOED. It would create a package of what was necessary and a method of implementation.

Mr. Brown added, the current crisis was the biggest fall in the U.S. economy since the Great Depression and the SRI had advised GOED to seek long-term solutions. The GOED Board prioritized implementation of the State Infrastructure Bank for bringing funding resources into Nevada.

Assemblyman Frierson stated he was not entirely sure what the funding would pay for to accomplish the goal. He asked if the funds would pay for broadband, positions, or staffing for a meeting amongst all the entities to develop a plan.

Treasurer Conine replied that the money would fund the studies as well as action steps such as establishing bylaws for the State Infrastructure Bank. He noted that the State Infrastructure Bank had existed conceptually since 2017 but had not been implemented. He said shovel-ready projects would be developed so that money could be raised to complete those projects. Treasurer Conine noted that none of the funds would be used for administrative purposes. He said the funds would be spent to create a roadmap.

Treasurer Conine said if the state wanted to move away from incentivizing entities, other tools were needed. Currently, the state had to pay companies to move to Nevada because the infrastructure was nonexistent.

Mr. Brown stated that one part of the planning process was to focus on infrastructure as part of economic development in the bigger picture. He said the

work program requests were the vehicle that started the process to attract private sector capital into the State Infrastructure Bank. He said the studies would provide investors the confidence they needed to invest.

Assemblyman Frierson asked if businesses had indicated they were more likely to come to Nevada if a study was in place to give direction and create a vision for expanding infrastructure.

Mr. Brown replied GOED had seen a need for enhanced infrastructure to bring the kinds of businesses to Nevada that would be necessary in the post-pandemic economy. Treasurer Conine concurred.

Chair Carlton noted because of the late receipt of the work program request and the need to share resources with another committee; in the future work program requests should include more vetted programs and be submitted with adequate time for staff to obtain answers to some of the questions.

Senator Brooks stated that he realized the state was in an unprecedented time and the focus had changed from economic development to economic recovery, and life literally depended on the outcome. He asked if GOED and the Treasurer's Office had grown in any substantial way during the economic crisis.

Mr. Brown responded that GOED had not grown and staff had not been added. He said GOED had redeployed staff at the front end to help with immediate relief measures and then the agency assisted with economic relief measures related to public health.

Treasurer Conine stated that the Treasurer's Office had two fewer staff than it had at the start of the pandemic.

Senator Brooks said in his day job and as a legislator he had talked to people all over the country, including legislators and economic development experts. For years, not just during the current crisis, people had said that Nevada used a piecemeal approach to economic measures. In answer to Assemblyman Frierson's question regarding whether private entities were willing to come to Nevada, the answer was yes. He stated that he had spoken with the Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council (FPISC), which was created under the Obama administration and strengthened under the Trump administration. The FPISC indicated there were trillions of dollars of investments that would come to Nevada if the state took a more coordinated approach to economic development and all other aspects of government.

Senator Brooks added that the work program proposals were timely and long overdue. He suggested the proposed budget was not large enough to bring the intellectual capacity needed to coordinate efforts among the agencies for diversity.

Mr. Brown stated that while GOED had not added staff, there had been an unprecedented level of coordination between the Treasurer's Office, B&I and GOED.

Assemblywoman Monroe-Moreno stated when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the state and the nation were not prepared. If the proposed studies would help prepare for the next pandemic, she understood why they were necessary. However, there were immediate needs related to behavioral health care. She asked if it would be better to use the funding for immediate needs as the state moved forward with broadband, workforce development and the supply chain to create a better blueprint.

Treasurer Conine replied that Agenda Items D-3 and D-4 represented 0.08% of the CRFs. He added that a majority of the funds should go out on the street where they were most needed. However, the $1.0 million would hopefully solve some of the longstanding infrastructure issues and better prepare the state for future needs.

Chair Carlton stated Agenda Item D-3 would be considered separately from Agenda Item D-4.

Assemblyman Wheeler understood the funds under discussion were CARES Act funds, which were intended for immediate relief; however, Mr. Brown indicated the funds would be used for long-term relief rather than immediate relief. He asked if the proposal met the federal requirements.

Bryan Fernley, Legal Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau, replied with respect to the timing, the funds must be used by December 30, 2020. He understood the funds would be used by that deadline.

Assemblyman Wheeler asked whether the funds must be spent on COVID-19 related needs. He did not think Agenda Item D-3 met that requirement.

Mr. Fernley replied that an authorized use of the CRFs was to address secondary effects of the pandemic. He said the Treasury guidelines indicated that addressing the economic effects of the pandemic was an authorized use of the funds. He added as long as there was a relationship between the spending and the economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was a permissible use.

Assemblyman Wheeler understood where the agencies were coming from, but he thought it as a stretch.

Chair Carlton said she had some concerns with Agenda Item D-3. One of her biggest concerns was that the item was received very late, which had resulted in a lengthy discussion. She said agencies should not submit work programs that were incomplete. It made it difficult for the Committee to process them, especially with limited time.

Assemblywoman Neal also expressed concerns with Agenda Item D-3. She understood the proposal was time sensitive, however; the IFC was also short on time.

Assemblywoman Neal concurred with Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson's comments about the need for action and shovel-ready projects. She said funding the studies would essentially be paying someone to tell Nevada how to spend its funds. She said she understood there were broadband issues in the state. That became evident when the schools were shut down and students had to rely on distance education. She said there were true connectivity issues in the state, which was an immediate need directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Assemblywoman Neal thought there were clear, immediate needs in the state; therefore, she did not support the request.

Senator Brooks stated that the time frame was critical to complete the study, receive and spend the funds and get to work raising private capital.

SENATOR BROOKS MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM D-3.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN JAUREGUI SECONDED THE MOTION.

Assemblyman Wheeler noted the Legal Division stated Agenda Item D-3 was a good use of CARES Act funds. With unemployment at 15.5%, he said he would rather see funds used to open new businesses in Nevada, but apparently that would not be possible without the proposal; therefore, he thought the Committee needed to look at the future and move on.

Senator Goicoechea stated that broadband was an issue in the state, especially in the rural areas. He thought it was important to enhance broadband connectivity.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson stated that she would not vote in favor of Agenda Item D-3. The information the Committee received indicated the proposal was essentially five studies followed by a sixth study that would examine the outcome of the other studies. There had also been discussion regarding the State Infrastructure Bank, but she saw no mention in the proposal of establishing the bank and garnering private investments. Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson thought the immediate need should be to spend the CRFs. If the idea was to establish an infrastructure bank, the Committee should have been provided with documentation, proposal and layout information.

Senator Woodhouse stated she appreciated the comments made by Chair Carlton regarding the vagueness of the proposal, also for the time allowed to answer the many questions regarding Agenda Item D-3. She said she would support the motion for the reasons brought forth in the discussion.

Senator Denis stated that many of the Committee's questions had required discussion. From his perspective, broadband was a very big issue. He said Agenda Item D-3 would finally allow the Legislature to identify how to pay for the

expansion of broadband. He concurred with Senator Brooks' comments regarding discussions he had heard throughout the country regarding Nevada's infrastructure efforts. Senator Denis said he would support the motion.

THE MOTION PASSED. (Chair Carlton, Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson, and Assemblywoman Neal opposed the motion.)

4. Governor's Office of Economic Development – FY 2021
Addition of $1,200,000 in Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, Coronavirus Relief Funds to develop a Nevada Labor Certification Plan and procure a Workforce Skills Matching Platform. Requires Interim Finance approval since the amount added to the Labor Certification Plan category exceeds $75,000. **Work Program #C52984**

Senator Denis asked if the workforce skills software was an off-the-shelf product and what was required for it to work in conjunction with the data already on file.

Robert Potts, Deputy Director, GOED, testified that he facilitated calls with economists going back to March 2020. He stated that the economic downturn was interesting because it was driven by policy decisions and a public health response. Economists looked to data to ensure that the decisions and policies that were made were kept between the ditches. He said, in the current situation, it was important to understand both the art and science of economics.

Mr. Potts stated he worked with many data platforms. The vendor for the proposal in Agenda Item D-4 had been working with GOED consistently for several years. He said the vendor used complex information but packaged it in an understandable format. He said currently there were two major issues – struggling small businesses and dislocated workers.

Mr. Potts stated his efforts included getting all workforce development and education partners working together consistently. He said he had discussed the proposal with the workforce boards, community colleges, NSHE, OWINN, OSIT and the Regional Development Authorities.

The other part of the work with those entities was to introduce them to the software tool. It was different than most other tools and had been in development for more than three years. The software looked at different data than what was traditionally utilized for labor markets. It looked at what employers stated the needed skills were on job posting sites, what workers listed as their skills on the resume side, and what program and training providers were noticing on the program side. It all related back to work skills. Mr. Potts noted that the word 'skills' was an overused term that meant different things to different people. The proposed software performed a text search of real-time data on employer, worker and training sites related to skills. For instance, a job posting might require a candidate who was forward thinking, outcome oriented, thoughtful, and able to work with a group. Those words were matched to resumes, programs and training providers. Mr. Potts said it moved the search process outside the traditional labor market

data. It complemented the traditional, but it was not tied to all the challenges faced in the extreme economic downturn and recovery period, with data that often lagged and had error terms associated with it, and it indicated who was hiring.

Mr. Potts explained that the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce implemented an economic and workforce development task force. One of the first questions asked was "who was hiring." The software could tell entities who was hiring and what they were looking for. Resumes could then be matched to job requirements and get individuals to work. Training providers could then help close the gap between employers who were hiring and dislocated workers. He said GOED had partnered with DETR and OWINN to put the plan in place.

Mr. Potts added, in the meantime, Agenda Item D-4 was an immediate recovery tool to identify who was hiring, what they were looking for, and the supply that was available to answer those questions.

Senator Denis asked if there would be an annual cost to renew the software.

Mr. Potts replied there was an annual cost of $500,000 and he had concerns with the cost as well. Part of what would be helpful was that the software could be integrated into the existing platforms. Even if the software were not renewed, it could initially be used to get people back to work during the recovery period. Then, GOED could work with the provider to build it out for career path and aspirations, and align it with economic development priorities, target sectors and building out training programs. Mr. Potts added the request was a chance to connect people to jobs during economic recovery.

Senator Denis understood the initial cost would be $500,000 and the annual cost would be $500,000, although there would still be benefits for having the software for only a year.

Mr. Potts agreed. He said it could assist approximately 180,000 dislocated workers in the state.

Senator Denis asked whether integration with the Nevada Career Explorer (NCE) program would come with a cost. Mr. Potts replied no, it was all partnership based.

Senator Denis thought the software would immediately address the impacts of the pandemic on the workforce. Mr. Potts agreed.

Chair Carlton opined the software could be a tool that could be quickly utilized and have definite impact on individuals seeking jobs.

Assemblywoman Neal asked what the lag time would be to obtain useable data. She also asked what discussions had surrounded aligning business development to match workers within the state. She noted some of the language mentioned placement in degree programs. She said, typically, individuals were directed to degree programs to buy time until an industry could come up to speed for hiring.

Assemblywoman Neal asked how new business development and support would be aligned with skills.

Mr. Potts said as soon as the contracts were signed, GOED could hit the ground running in a recovery mode by getting dislocated workers back to work with businesses that were hiring. Integration procedures would be worked through by partners such as the NCE. Regarding business development, whether helping with expansions or companies relocating to Nevada, that could be built into the back end to specify objectives of how to diversify the state's economy. It served as a recovery tool for dislocated workers and created a pilot program of how to think past how to make connections between great employers and qualified employees.

Referring to the $500,000 annual fee, Chair Carlton asked if that was only for the first round or if GOED would return to the IFC in the future to request additional funding.

Mr. Potts replied that the software was $500,000 for 12 months and would get the state through the recovery period. He said it was an amazing tool and many entities had agreed to incorporate the software to complement their existing systems. He was hopeful that by September 2021 there would be a vaccine with great efficacy and Nevada could move past the recovery phase. The software was a tool that added value in ways that were previously unavailable. Subsequently, a different funding mechanism might be found, but GOED might have to approach the IFC again. The intent was for all players in the state to pitch in through grants and economic development efforts. In the meantime, it would help the state get through the recovery period.

Chair Carlton understood there was no consideration of adding the item to the budget for the 2021-23 biennium. Another conversation would probably not occur until fall 2021 when the agency would have a better idea of the needs in the state. Mr. Potts stated that was correct.

Assemblywoman Tolles stated the request was vital and directly related to getting Nevadans back to work. Several other states including Arizona, Connecticut, Kansas, New Jersey, Tennessee, and Oklahoma had similar workface database programs. She asked if the request was for the same software used elsewhere.

Mr. Potts responded he could send a link to the Committee to try the system. On the front end of the system there was a dislocated worker who could enter their skills or scan their resume and the software would match with employers. He added the specific software was new. Nevada was at the cutting edge on this plan. The software had been deployed in 12 instances, mostly in local communities rather than a statewide application. The software license allowed access by every person in the state, not just certain entities. Nevada was at the forefront of aligning workforce development and education with numerous agencies to jobs of the future. The software would allow Nevada to break the barrier of traditional labor market data by tying all sides together.

Assemblywoman Tolles understood that the program was groundbreaking and unique compared to programs in other states. She said she would be interested to see a comparison between Nevada's program and other states' programs.

Assemblywoman Tolles recalled that the Legislature passed a scholarship database bill in conjunction with the Treasurer's Office to provide a link for people interested in training programs, workforce development programs and education scholarships. She asked if there would be a crossover nexus to help people retrain for a new career path.

Mr. Potts replied that many tools currently being used were similar to tools utilized in Arizona and Oklahoma. Tennessee was using information like what was being proposed in Agenda Item D-4. He said the software would identify educational gaps and what was necessary to close those gaps. The software could identify content of classes to what employers were seeking. It provided a comprehensive assessment beyond formal diplomas and certificates of achievement.

Assemblywoman Tolles asked if the software would link the needs of a student to grants and scholarships available, connecting educational needs with funding.

Mr. Potts replied the software could not currently do that, but as it was built out and customized for Nevada, those were the kinds of enhancements that could be requested from the vendor. He added that he would be happy to have conversations toward the goal of having a comprehensive and cohesive product.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson asked what the product would look like from the user end. For example, if someone lost their job at a big-box chain store and people were working with them to meet their basic needs but they were still job searching. She asked if they would get direction from their caseworker or community workers to identify a spot such as the NCE. Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson asked if the software would consolidate the various programs between the NCE, DETR, and EmployNV. She asked if it would only lead them to one entity for assistance.

Mr. Potts stated after discussions with those entities, the software could stand alone, but it would be integrated with the NCE and EmployNV as part of the interface. He said the user interface was so intuitive and easy to use that someone searching at home could find the necessary information. The interface would be customized specific to Nevada. He said the system identified 30,000 skills and all the matching would occur in the background.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson commented that currently, many individuals were using their phones for job searching and were having difficulties using the DETR website. She indicated that users searching for employment were redirected from the DETR website to other websites where they would be required to upload their resume.

Mr. Potts noted consolidation and synchronization was one of his concerns early in the process. He said there was disconnect between educators. The intention was to have a consolidated tool that could also be used individually.

Chair Carlton asked what timeframe was envisioned and what the programming costs would be.

Mr. Potts replied, once the contracts were signed, the program could be running by the middle of October 2020. Work could continue to build out the rest of it to tie into the various entities.

Chair Carlton asked if a request for proposal was forthcoming or if a vendor had already been selected. Mr. Potts replied only one vendor offered the software.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN BENITEZ-THOMSON MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM D-4.

SENATOR WOODHOUSE SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. Department of Tourism and Cultural Affairs – Tourism Development Fund – FY 2021

Addition of $4,623,981 in Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act funds, to prepare for and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Requires Interim Finance approval since the amount added to the CARES Act Grant category exceeds $75,000. **Work Program #21CA1522**

Brenda Scolari, Director, DTCA, stated the request for CARES Act funding was in response to the affect the pandemic had on tourism funding. The legislatively approved lodging tax revenue related to marketing for the Division of Tourism was slightly more than $15.0 million. Due to closures and reduced visitation, current projection was slightly more than $4.0 million.

Ms. Scolari noted the request for $4.6 million would fund tourism recovery programs and would double the ability of the DTCA to assist rural tourism communities with their own tourism recovery efforts.

Ms. Scolari added other items outlined in the request included pandemic-related revisions to TravelNevada.com and the visitors' guide. Both of those functions were the center of the visitation universe. Most visitors typically referred to one of those resources for trip planning. Extensive revisions were required to educate visitors about what was open, implemented health measures and experience expectations.

Ms. Scolari stated the agency had undertaken a campaign called *Discover Your Nevada* on TravelNevada.com and the visitors' guide because intelligence indicated visitors had a low comfort level in terms of traveling via airplane. The

intent was to encourage people to explore their own communities and stimulate the economy by encouraging Nevadans to explore their state. Extensive plans and a campaign were underway. She said ten branded road trips had been created with specific Nevada-related components. A website had been established that featured various communities and what visitor assets were available including deals and packages.

Ms. Scolari stated the DTCA also had a recovery grants program that was a special version of its normal marketing grant program. The normal program was suspended in spring 2020 due to lack of funding. She said the proposal was a similar program, but the guidelines had been revised to include all the necessary components set in place by the Treasury and within the compressed period of time. The execution of marketing programs would be required to be completed by December 30, 2020. The plans would be community- and area-specific marketing plans that could be co-opted with TravelNevada or they could demonstrate their own marketing recovery efforts.

Ms. Scolari explained the tourism economy had been disrupted in smaller communities not only due to the lack of lodging taxes, but also, through visitor spending related to the inability to sponsor events. Each of the programs outlined in the request were a way to assist tourism efforts and help fellow Nevadans enjoy the smaller communities in the state.

Chair Carlton asked how the $1.5 million was decided on for the *Discover Your Nevada* campaign. She asked if it was based on previous similar budgets.

Ms. Scolari responded various components of the program had already been delineated where the Commission on Tourism had already approved $300,000 for the first phase of *Discover Your Nevada* spending.

Mary Ellen Kawchack, Chief Deputy Administrator, Division of Tourism, DTCA, said the department had started at $300,000, but based on other media buys, the DTCA expanded it to include a phased approach with baseline, mid-reach, and higher levels to reach more people for broadcast, digital and other components.

Chair Carlton asked if those were the same vendors that had been used in the past and whether they were Nevada vendors.

Ms. Kawchack replied the design was to reach people in Nevada, thus many of the buys were within Nevada. However, for some aspects the department may use vendors that had been used in the past. She added it just expanded the typical DTCA procedures.

Chair Carlton surmised a request for proposal would not be used to attract companies in the state that might be able to provide the services. It appeared the DTCA would simply use vendors that had been used in the past.

Ms. Kawchack replied the DTCA was using a media buying company under the agency of record and she was doing direct buys on her own.

Chair Carlton asked for an explanation of how the request was different than the rural grants program that was approved by the 2019 Legislature. She asked what the expenditures were for and how this request was different.

Ms. Scolari responded the request was for the same amount, but the program was entirely different. The requirements and guidelines had to be within the CRF guardrails. Entities would be required to comply in the same way as TravelNevada. The program would only include marketing related to direct COVID-19 response, such as that they were open for business and safety measures that were in place. The goal was to encourage responsible travel and safe memorable experiences. The same would be expected of the DTCA's tourism partners.

Ms. Scolari added that partners would be expected to submit applications that were not part of prior budgets. She said this was not business as usual; it was marketing within a COVID-19 related restart. She stated the historic marketing program was a reimbursement process though expenditures would have to meet the COVID-19 requirements.

Chair Carlton asked how staff costs would be identified. She asked whether the costs would be split.

Ms. Scolari responded that staff costs included payroll for the final quarter of CY 2020 for public relations, marketing, and industry relations staff that would be executing the programs. The Division of Tourism had been hit hard, which resulted in a number of layoffs. Funding was not available to give some of the work to outside consultants. The majority of work was being done internally, so that payroll would assist in getting the work done effectively.

> SENATOR WOODHOUSE MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM D-5.
>
> ASSEMBLYWOMAN JAUREGUI SECONDED THE MOTION.

Assemblywoman Swank stated she would abstain from the vote because her employer engaged in the tourism industry in rural Nevada and may apply for the grant.

> THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY. (Assemblywoman Swank abstained from the vote.)

6. Department of Health and Human Services – Public and Behavioral Health – Health Care Facilities Regulation – FY 2021

Transfer of $311,482 from the Reserve category to the Temporary Management Services category to fund a temporary facility management services contract, and $43,297 from the Reserve category to the Cost Allocation category to fund a projected shortfall. Requires Interim Finance approval since the amount added to the Temporary Management Service category exceeds $75,000. **Work Program #C52880**

Chair Carlton relinquished the gavel to Vice Chair Woodhouse for Agenda Item D-6.

Margot Chappel, Deputy Division Administrator, DPBH, DHHS, stated the agency sought approval of a 15-day work program due to the urgent need to hire a management service company. On August 21, 2020, the division suspended the license for a residential facility for groups in Reno due to unsafe conditions. The DPBH contacted Quality Healthcare Asset Management to assist with temporary management of the facility and relocation of the residents. On August 27, 2020, the division received approval to proceed with an emergency contract with the company. She said initial costs would be paid for through the Health Care Facilities Regulation Administrative Penalties budget account 101-3217. The balance of the costs would be paid through the Health Care Facilities Regulation budget account 101-3216. Ms. Chappel said Work Program #C52880 requested to move funds from the reserve category to a newly established category for this specific purpose. The division intended to have the licensee reimburse budget accounts 101-3216 and 101-3217 for costs incurred; however, in the meantime, the division needed to pay the management company.

Assemblywoman Backus acknowledged funds were to be recovered from the existing facility. She asked what the likelihood was that the facility could repay the amount billed.

Ms. Chappel replied she could not speak for the facility, but the division had mechanisms in place to collect the funds through legal action and the Controller's Office. It was possible the facility had decided to close, and the property would be for sale. One option may be to place a lien on the property if the division was not repaid.

Assemblywoman Backus asked how many of the residents had been successfully placed in other facilities.

Ms. Chappel responded, there were originally 80 residents and her last information indicated 68 residents remained at the facility. She said the county, the Ombudsman's Office and the DPBH were working to find placements for the remaining residents. The intent was to have all residents placed by the middle of October 2020, if possible.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson asked if the incident had been the first time the state went into a facility where it discovered serious deficiencies and placed a temporary management company in charge.

Ms. Chappel replied the incident was the second time on record the same management company had been used. The first time was in 2016.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson stated it was a good process. It showed that in the past when there were concerns about a facility, the state could go in and protect those residents and address the deficiencies. Although those situations were troubling, it was reassuring to see the process could and did work. She noted residents of the facility were the poorest of the poor and could not afford to live anywhere else and could be exploited. The facility had begun accepting Home and Community-Based Waiver service grants. Because of the lack of housing, she recognized it would be difficult to place the 68 remaining residents.

Assemblywoman Titus stated for confirmation, the state was already obligated to inspect the facility. Ms. Chappel confirmed that was correct.

Assemblywoman Titus stated the closure took place on August 17, 2020, after a complaint. She asked when the facility had last been inspected prior to the closure. She asked if the DPBH had a backlog of inspections.

Ms. Chappel replied the Fiscal Analysis Division had been provided the schedule of inspections. The facility had been cited seven times in 2019 and had been visited and cited another six or seven times in CY 2020. When the division entered the facility in early September, most of the cited issues had not been resolved.

Assemblywoman Titus asked if the last inspection was in September 2019 and had not been inspected again until the closure due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ms. Chappel supplied the following details:

- March 27, 2020, inspectors made a periodic inspection and a complaint inspection, which was substantiated.
- May 2020 a complaint was received and substantiated and three citations were issued.
- July 2020 a grading re-survey was made and there were two low-level repeat citations based on early March.
- July 10, 2020, another complaint investigation was made and substantiated with a number of low-level citations.
- August 13, 2020, another complaint inspection was made and substantiated with an immediate jeopardy and numerous high-level citations. That was the first time the division went in.
- September 2020 the division took action during a wellness check to check on the residents.

Assemblywoman Titus stated it appeared awareness was evident, and the division was doing a good job keeping Nevadans safe in a difficult time. She stated in retrospect she wanted to ensure the state had not caused harm to residents when the division was aware that a problem existed.

Ms. Chappel replied the Deputy Attorney General for the agency was involved in every step and had followed due process with the provider. The provider was given an opportunity to comply and did not.

Assemblywoman Neal asked if it was the responsibility of the Ombudsman's Office to connect families or residents' advocates with legal services to address the issues or abuses that occurred.

Ms. Chappel replied she could not speak on behalf of the Ombudsman's Office. The Ombudsman's Office was working with Washoe County Senior Services and the temporary management company to do a complete assessment on every resident to find appropriate housing, and Washoe County Human Services Agency was confident it could find proper placement for every resident.

Vice Chair Woodhouse asked staff to follow up on Assemblywoman Neal's concern and respond to the Committee.

SENATOR DENIS MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM D-6.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN JAUREGUI SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

7. Department of Health and Human Services – Public and Behavioral Health – Immunization Program – FY 2021

Addition of $1,828,382 in federal Nevada COVID-19 Vaccine Response grant funds to assist Nevada with planning and distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine. Requires Interim Finance approval since the amount added to the COVID-19 Supplement category exceeds $75,000. **Work Program #C52948**

Chair Carlton resumed the gavel and opened the hearing on Agenda Item D-7.

Candice McDaniel, Health Bureau Chief, Child and Family Community Wellness, DPBH, DHHS, stated the work program was for use of new funds from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the amount of $1,828,382 to support Nevada's statewide planning distribution efforts for the COVID-19 vaccines. She said the funds must be expended prior to June 30, 2021. To receive the funds, each state was required to develop a COVID-19 vaccine response plan following the CDC guidelines. Ultimately, the CDC must be provided each state's plan and it must be approved before consideration as a formal document. The CDC required submission of the plan no later than October 16, 2020.

Ms. McDaniel added the CDC Advisory Committee on Immunization Processes (ACIP), the National Institutes for Health, and the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine worked at the federal level to determine populations on which to focus and ensure affordable options for the first doses of the COVID-19 vaccines as they became available.

The Nevada State Immunization Program followed the developments closely. There was also an internal planning document ready when the ACIP and the other groups previously mentioned made a recommendation for critical populations. The goal was to ensure that the state, counties, and health care providers were prepared to immunize every Nevadan. Currently, the focus was on enrolling vaccination providers into the COVID-19 vaccination program using the required CDC documentation. The providers would also be set up in Nevada WebIZ, the information system for the program, if they were not already established in the system.

Ms. McDaniel stated implementation would begin with a phased approach, because the initial vaccine supply would be minimal. The program would work directly with urban and rural hospitals, because those staff were the first priority when vaccine doses became available. Hospitals would order vaccines through Nevada WebIZ as they did for other publicly supplied vaccines. The order would be transmitted to the centralized distributor in Aurora, Colorado. In later phases, more vaccination providers would be brought on in rolling enrollments to ensure administration capacity for all Nevadans.

Chair Carlton asked Ms. McDaniel to elaborate on the communication strategy. She said it was important for the public to understand how the system would work. Questions had already been asked and there was significant misinformation.

Ms. McDaniel said there was a collaborative effort with Immunize Nevada to work on messaging and to ensure the division's community partners were well informed and provided support with a standard approach.

Shannon Bennett, Manager, Nevada State Immunization Program, stated that the program was focused on being as transparent as possible when new information was received.

Chair Carlton stated that many legislators had ways of reaching out to people that could help with communication efforts. They should be considered as a resource.

Assemblywoman Titus thanked Governor Sisolak for allowing vaccination administration by pharmacy technicians with the proper training. Access to the vaccine was critical. Nevada ranked close to the bottom in administration of flu vaccines. She asked how the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine would be more successful than flu vaccinations. Although the requested funds were CRFs and

would be required for use related to the pandemic, she asked if it could be paired with encouraging individuals to be vaccinated for the flu.

Ms. McDaniel replied the allocation was from the CDC and not the CRF. The division recognized the importance of flu vaccinations as well. Some of the messaging encouraged individuals to get a flu vaccination before Nevada Day. The agency was responsible for removing any barriers to vaccination access. It collaborated with as many interested parties as possible.

Assemblywoman Titus stated under Work Program #C52948, one criterion identified was frontline health care workers first. She noted the most vulnerable populations were not listed under the vaccination criteria. She asked what the priorities were with limited vaccines and whether the most vulnerable populations would be included. She noted there was a fear of the unknown in communities. However, the rate of infection, how many had been infected, how many had died, and the number of people who were at high risk were all known statistics. The most vulnerable populations, as already identified, must be prioritized after the first tier of frontline workers and military personnel.

Ms. McDaniel stated the CDC had published a playbook for COVID-19 vaccination containing the critical population aspect. She said every state was using the CDC playbook to prepare its plan. The agency's goal was to do its best for all Nevadans.

Assemblywoman Titus stated one difficulty she had observed in the past was the inability of nurses to access the WebIZ system. It would be critical for the system to be updated quickly with who received a vaccine to quickly identify an individual's status. She asked if WebIZ was being expanded to not only administrators but, pharmacy technicians and medical technicians. She asked if the WebIZ problems had been fixed.

Ms. McDaniel replied the CDC would be enhancing WebIZ with a mobile module. Apple iPads loaded with the module had been included for some outlying areas with poor internet access. Data could be input to the module and uploaded to the main system.

Assemblywoman Titus expressed her appreciation for the hard work of the agency to help save lives during the pandemic.

Chair Carlton stated her appreciation for Agenda Item D-7. It was better to be prepared no matter when the vaccines arrived. She also appreciated the push for flu vaccinations.

SENATOR WOODHOUSE MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM D-7.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN BENITEZ-THOMPSON SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Moving on to a non-agendized item, Chair Carlton read an IFC resolution commending Cindy Jones, Assembly Fiscal Analyst, Fiscal Analysis Division, LCB, for her lifetime of service to the State of Nevada and expressing best wishes for a wonderful and well-deserved retirement (Exhibit B).

Senator Woodhouse extended her sincere appreciation for Ms. Jones' work and support through many meetings and legislative sessions. "You are truly a hero and someone that we can always count upon. Retirement is often bittersweet. We will miss you. I will miss you, but we wish you the happiest retirement ever. Thank you, Cindy."

Assemblyman Frierson paraphrased from the resolution, "Ms. Jones loves Nevada, and it shows in everything she has done, how much she loves Nevada." He added that all the time and sacrifice for the state was not all for naught. While the Legislature had not always earned the dedication from Ms. Jones, they had hugely benefited from her work, service, and friendship. He stated, "I appreciate your service and your love for the state and for your friendship. Just know, no matter what, that we all do this to make it better and leave a little on the field for the next person to pick up." He said she had left a well-trained replacement to carry on.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson thanked Ms. Jones for the past five years of assistance, which she appreciated. Some of that help was in being brought up to speed as a new member, which created a comfort level to ask questions or in understanding formulas and acronyms. She expressed appreciation for the number of hours and work that staff performed that was often not known by the public.

Assemblywoman Titus stated it had been a true pleasure and she echoed many of the comments from her colleagues. She said Ms. Jones recognized all parts of the state. She noted the all-important word "trust" expressed in the proclamation. She stated, "you will be missed and remembered."

Senator Kieckhefer stated he had worked with Ms. Jones at the Employment Security Division within DETR. It seemed he was always asking her for something, and she had always been very gracious in sharing her knowledge and helping him do his job. The work she had done allowed legislators to do what they did. "Thank you for your service."

Assemblywoman Neal thanked Ms. Jones for her patience as a new member of the Committee and someone who was often tenacious. She added it took a teacher to have the ability to convey information to another person in a way they could understand.

Assemblywoman Jauregui stated that the 2019 Legislative Session was her first session on the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means. She echoed the sentiments of her colleagues. “You are a treasure to Nevada.” She hoped Ms. Jones hard-working days were over and she enjoyed her retirement.

Assemblywoman Monroe-Moreno stated in her first session, Ms. Jones was always willing to answer her questions. Once assigned to the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means, Ms. Jones went out of her way to ensure all her questions were answered. Trust is how she thought of Ms. Jones. Responses were truthful, with no partisan emphasis. She stated that Ms. Jones was a Nevada gem.

Senator Denis recalled Ms. Jones’ first IFC meeting, perhaps wondering what she had got into. She had far exceeded expectations. He thanked her and wished her a great retirement.

Assemblyman Wheeler thanked Ms. Jones for showing him and his caucus the way to navigate. He said Ms. Jones had made Douglas High School and the University of Nevada, Reno very proud. “Do not go into politics in your retirement, or wait a couple years if you do, and after I retire.”

Senator Goicoechea thanked Ms. Jones for everything, especially her patience. He encouraged her to enjoy retirement.

Senator Settelmeyer stated Ms. Jones had been a tremendous asset to the Legislature and a true Nevadan. He echoed the comments regarding her non-partisanship ways and trust. He added, until he became a member of the IFC, he had not realized how much time and effort staff put into making the meetings successful.

Assemblywoman Tolles added she was a substitute on the IFC, but after listening to previous comments and in the brief months that she had a chance to work with Ms. Jones, she was jealous that she did not get more time to work with her. She stated that Ms. Jones left an undeniable impact on the members of the Committee as well as the state.

Chair Carlton stated she had first met Ms. Jones by telephone when she was a freshman chairwoman of the Senate Committee on Commerce in 2009. Chair Carlton recalled that she had a great idea on how to conduct workforce innovation; however, after three conversations with Ms. Jones, Chair Carlton realized she had a lot to learn. It was then that Chair Carlton realized she could call on Ms. Jones for anything.

Chair Carlton stated that Ms. Jones was tactful and truthful, which was a valuable tool. She expressed her appreciation for Ms. Jones delaying her retirement to assist with the fiscal crisis during the pandemic. She wished Ms. Jones much happiness and encouraged her to enjoy her retirement. Chair Carlton said that thank you was not enough.

Ms. Jones commented she was surprised and taken aback by the presentation. It had been an honor to serve the Legislature and particularly the IFC. She began her state service as a part-time intern and never imagined this was how she would be ending her career. She wished everyone well and the wisdom to make great decisions on behalf of the citizens of the State of Nevada. She said she would make herself available for questions after leaving her position.

Ms. Jones added she was grateful to serve with a wonderful group of people in the Fiscal Analysis Division. She opined they were the utmost professionals and fiscal experts in the state. She thanked Mark Krmpotic, Senate Fiscal Analyst, Fiscal Analysis Division, LCB, for taking her under his wing. She stated that Sarah Coffman would be assuming the role of Assembly Fiscal Analyst and she had great confidence that Ms. Coffman would do well in that role.

E. PUBLIC COMMENT

Pursuant to Sections 2 through 9, inclusive, of Chapter 2, *Statutes of Nevada 2020*, 32nd Special Session, pages 9 through 11, there was no physical location for this meeting. The meeting was broadcast on the Nevada Legislative website at www.leg.state.nv.us. Public comment was accepted live via telephone. Written comments were also accepted by e-mail, facsimile, and mail before, during, and after the meeting.

There was no public comment.

F. ADJOURNMENT.

Chair Carlton adjourned the meeting at 12:39 p.m.

_____
Assemblywoman Maggie Carlton, Chair
Interim Finance Committee

_____
Brenda Erdoes, Director, Legislative Counsel Bureau,
and Secretary, Interim Finance Committee