



September 21, 2021

**Re: Support for Innovation Zones**<sup>1</sup>

Dear Chairwoman Benitez-Thompson and honorable members of the Joint Special Committee to Conduct a Study Concerning Innovation Zones:

The United States Transhumanist Party and the Nevada Transhumanist Party request the Committee’s favorable consideration of the concept of Innovation Zones.<sup>2</sup> While we have no direct involvement in the proposal currently before the Committee, we consider this proposal to dovetail with our organizations’ mission – putting science, health, and technology at the forefront of American politics. A special zone within Nevada, premised upon and dedicated to technological innovation, will help to achieve just that.

While this Committee will and should explore many of the details of the proposal, we would recommend that the honorable members of the Committee also keep the bigger picture in mind as they conduct their deliberations. The bigger picture shows us that the institutional status quo has failed. The widespread suffering and misery that were so prominently brought forth by the COVID-19 pandemic have a deeper root cause – the rigidity of most contemporary institutions and their inability to flexibly and decisively respond to even the most severe and egregious crises. Much of the deep sub-optimality of the pandemic era could have been avoided by heeding Marc Andreessen’s call, “It’s Time

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<sup>1</sup> I am proactively disclosing that, in an entirely unrelated capacity, I am employed by the State of Nevada; however, any written comments submitted on this bill are authored and provided delivered during my personal time. I am acting as a private citizen and not representing any agency of the State of Nevada with my comments. I am not using state equipment to provide any testimony or comments on this bill.

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<sup>2</sup> The Transhumanist Party is an alliance of over 3500 members who advocate for transcending the flaws and limitations of the human condition through technology and for putting science, health, and technology at the forefront of American politics. We advocate initiatives and reforms that will improve the human condition for as many people as possible, with as much beneficial impact as possible – and without regard for scoring political points or defeating “the other side”. The Transhumanist Party supports all emerging technologies that have the potential to improve the human condition – including but not limited to blockchain, smart contracts, autonomous vehicles, electric vehicles, economical solar power, safe nuclear power, hydroelectricity, geothermal power, applications for the sharing of durable goods, artificial intelligence, biotechnology, nanotechnology, robotics, rapid transit, 3D printing, vertical farming, virtual reality, augmented reality, and beneficial genetic modification of plants, animals, and human beings.

to Build.”<sup>3</sup> Moving forward, the proposal for Innovation Zones offers the opportunity to build in Nevada on an unprecedented scale – to create societies devoted to exactly the kinds of nimble, iterative, and readily deployable solutions that we will need to keep up with the ever-expanding range of crises that await us.

As an example, Nevada currently faces a dire housing crisis. Simply put, demand for housing has far outpaced supply, new residential construction has been woefully insufficient, prices have become exorbitant, and as a result even many middle-class individuals find decent housing to be out of reach, while an entire generation of people who are just starting out in their careers may already be resigning themselves to a lifetime of housing insecurity. The Innovation Zone proposal can help significantly to alleviate the housing shortage by means of the construction of numerous new residential units in Storey County. If tens of thousands of new units are eventually added to the housing stock, this will greatly expand the supply available to accommodate current demand. No matter who among the Northern Nevada population moves into the new housing units, most of them would free up their existing housing units for others to purchase, thereby contributing to a virtuous cycle of increasing housing availability and a much-needed return to more reasonable price levels.

Another great promise of the Innovation Zone concept – and a main reason why the autonomous jurisdiction status sought in this proposal is so crucial – is experimentation in participatory governance. This is an area quite close to the Transhumanist Party’s own *modus operandi*, as we conduct our internal deliberations and votes electronically using a ranked-preference approach. This has enabled us to systematically reflect our members’ preferences in matters as detailed as specific words or sentences within our platform and governing documents. However, we have found that conventional tools available for such purposes can still be quite limiting. Blockchain-based, automated systems that facilitate this kind of electronic voting are the next step in creating opportunities for citizens to conveniently participate in the governance of their communities, sharing their preferences in detailed and nuanced ways, and enabling broader recognition of the tremendous improvements to political systems everywhere that such technologies can make possible. Imagine every citizen being able to provide detailed, structured input on every policy issue under consideration. Instead of today’s political climate of hyper-polarization, alienation, and recrimination, citizens would be relieved to find a setting where many thousands of diverse perspectives can coexist and explore where they may align and might collaborate to make progress on specific issues.

It is possible, even likely, that the specific criteria and arrangements for the Innovation Zones may be affected in the coming months by a variety of factors. Some flexibility and adaptability as regards the particular aspects of the proposal may be reasonable, as long as the essence of the Innovation Zone concept is preserved. In the view of the United States

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<sup>3</sup> Marc Andreessen. “It’s Time to Build”. April 2020. Available at <https://a16z.com/2020/04/18/its-time-to-build/>

Transhumanist Party and the Nevada Transhumanist Party, the crucial outcome of this process should be that the ability to establish Innovation Zones in Nevada comes to exist in some form. It is crucial to allow the rapid construction, new infrastructure, and technological experimentation which would accelerate the economic recovery and raise standards of living in our state; we believe that this could be and should be done in a manner that respects the legitimate interests of all stakeholders. We urge the Committee members to keep the big picture in mind even if they find some specific aspects of the proposal to be concerning, as there will likely be ways to mitigate those particular concerns while allowing Innovation Zones to become possible in Nevada.

Finally, an important aspect of thinking about this proposal should be the recognition that it is not limited to one company in one particular location. Rather, the most transformational aspect of this proposal is precisely in the ability of any entity that can meet the criteria and follow the process outlined in the proposal to establish an Innovation Zone. This could lead to a flourishing of new technological discoveries and new interactions among existing technologies that would be difficult to completely anticipate in advance; however, it is from such synergies that the most significant progress often arises. While some critics of the Innovation Zone concept have focused on some concrete reservations about the specific business model involved with the first likely Innovation Zone, they overlook the far greater degree and variety of possible benefits if multiple entities were to eventually establish Innovation Zones in Nevada. While these benefits cannot be entirely anticipated in advance, they could nonetheless be realized and experienced in due time if the Innovation Zone concept receives the approval of the Legislature.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gennady Stolyarov II". The signature is written in a cursive style with a double underline under the name.

**Mr. Gennady Stolyarov II**

Chairman, [United States Transhumanist Party](#)

Chief Executive, [Nevada Transhumanist Party](#)

<https://transhumanist-party.org>