



NEVADA LEGISLATURE JOINT INTERIM STANDING COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

(Section 6 of [Assembly Bill 443](#), Chapter 392, *Statutes of Nevada 2021* at page 2505)

MINUTES

January 11, 2022

The first meeting of the Joint Interim Standing Committee on Government Affairs for the 2021–2022 Interim was held on Tuesday, January 11, 2022, at 9 a.m. Pursuant to [NRS 218A.820](#), there was no physical location for this meeting.

The agenda, minutes, meeting materials, and audio or video recording of the meeting are available on the Committee's meeting page. The audio or video recording may also be found at <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Video/>. Copies of the audio or video record can be obtained through the Publications Office of the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB) (publications@lcb.state.nv.us or 775/684-6835).

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Marilyn Dondero Loop, Chair
Assemblyman Edgar Flores, Vice Chair
Senator Pete Goicoechea
Senator Dina Neal
Assemblywoman Tracy Brown-May
Assemblywoman Jill Dickman
Assemblyman Andy Matthews
Assemblywoman Selena Torres

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL BUREAU STAFF PRESENT:

Jered M. McDonald, Senior Principal Policy Analyst, Research Division
Erin Andersen, Research Policy Assistant, Research Division
Steven Jamieson, Research Policy Assistant, Research Division
Heidi Chlarson, Senior Principal Deputy Legislative Counsel, Legal Division
Cathy Crocket, Principal Deputy Fiscal Analyst, Fiscal Analysis Division

Items taken out of sequence during the meeting have been placed in agenda order.

AGENDA ITEM I—OPENING REMARKS AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Dondero Loop called the meeting to order. She welcomed members, presenters, and the public to the first meeting of the Committee. She then reviewed virtual meeting and testimony guidelines.

Chair Dondero Loop:

I would like to introduce myself and then the members and staff of our Committee. My name is Marilyn Dondero Loop, and I will be the Chair for this Interim Committee this Interim Session. I was Chair of Government Affairs in the Senate in the 81st Session. I am an educator by trade but have been in the Legislature serving in the Assembly for three terms and now serving in the Senate for one term. I also serve as Co-Majority Whip and represent Clark County on the far west end of Senate District 8.

Committee members, would you please introduce yourselves and describe yourselves as you sit on this Committee. I will start with Vice Chair Assemblyman Flores.

Vice Chair Flores:

I thank you, Madam Chair. I am Assemblyman Edgar Flores. I represent Assembly District 28 in northeast Las Vegas, and I have had the pleasure of serving in the Assembly since 2014, when I was first elected. I have had the pleasure of serving on the Assembly Government Affairs Committee since 2015 until now. I look forward to working with all of you.

Chair Dondero Loop:

Thank you very much. We will go to Senator Goicoechea.

Senator Goicoechea:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I am Senator Pete Goicoechea representing Senate District 19, which starts at Idaho and ends at California. I represent all or part of six counties. I have been in the Legislature, started in the Assembly in 2003, and I have served ten sessions on Government Affairs. I chaired it in the 2015 Session and was Minority Leader in the 2011 Session in the Assembly. So long and short, I have been here too long and the white hairs are starting to show. But coming out of local government, Government Affairs has truly been where my heart is, so thank you, Madam Chair. I look forward to working with you.

Chair Dondero Loop:

Thank you, Senator, and we welcome your expertise, so thank you. Senator Neal.

Senator Neal:

Hi and good morning, Chair. I have served on Government Affairs since 2011, five terms on the Assembly side and now I am on the Senate Government Affairs Committee, so I guess I have been on Government Affairs forever. I chair Senate Revenue which has been about the equal amount of time. Glad to meet everybody.

Chair Dondero Loop:

Thank you so much, Senator. Assemblywoman Tracy Brown-May.

Assemblywoman Tracy Brown-May:

Good morning. This is my first term on Government Affairs. I was appointed to join the Nevada Assembly in February of 2021, representing Assembly District 42 in the heart of Las Vegas in Spring Valley. I am really excited to be here in this first interim for the opportunity and learning from all of you.

Chair Dondero Loop:

Thank you. Assemblywoman Dickman.

Assemblywoman Dickman:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Good morning to everyone. I represent Assembly District 31, which was mostly Sparks in the north valley of Reno. It has changed a little bit since redistricting. It goes up more into Spanish Springs now. I was first elected in 2014 and served one term, and then I missed two terms and came back for the last session, which was my first time on Government Affairs. I have learned a lot and I am enjoying it very much, and I look forward to working with you all.

Chair Dondero Loop:

Thank you so much and welcome. Assemblyman Matthews, please.

Assemblyman Matthews:

Thank you, Chair. Good morning, everyone. I am Andy Matthews. I represent Assembly District 37, which is the northwest part of Las Vegas, and this is my first term in the Assembly. I also served on the Committee for Government Affairs during the 2021 Session. I am looking forward to working with all of you. Thank you.

Chair Dondero Loop:

Thank you. Assemblywoman Selena Torres.

Assemblywoman Selena Torres:

Good morning. My name is Selena Torres, and I proudly represent Assembly District 3, which is in the heart of Las Vegas, Nevada, and kind of the western Las Vegas area. I am excited to return to the Interim Government Affairs Committee, and last session I sat on the Government Affairs Committee as vice chair.

Chair Dondero Loop:

Thank you very much. Now I will introduce the LCB staff who will be assisting us this interim. Our staff will include Jered McDonald who will be serving as our committee policy analyst. He will be helping us with background information and research into the issues that come before the Committee. Heidi Chlarson will be serving as our committee legal counsel. Our committee research policy assistants are Erin Andersen and Steven Jamieson, and they will prepare the meeting minutes and assist us with all variety of tasks that come before us. Kathy Crockett with the Fiscal Analysis Division of LCB will assist us with any fiscal matters.

Finally, of course, I would like to recognize our Broadcast and Production Services (BPS) staff who are critical to making these virtual meetings go smoothly, and we know we could not do it without them as well.

AGENDA ITEM II—PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Dondero Loop:

Our next agenda item is public comment. Public comment will be limited to three minutes per speaker. Staff will time each speaker during public comment to ensure everyone is given that fair opportunity to speak. You will be notified when you have 30 seconds remaining and when your time is up at the three minute mark. An additional opportunity to make public comment will be available at the end of the meeting. Broadcast and Production Services will interact with those making public comment to facilitate participation in the meeting, and so BPS staff, please add the first caller with public comment to the meeting.

BPS:

Thank you, Chair. To offer public comment on today's meeting please press *9 now or raise your hand in the Zoom client. Once more that is *9 or raise hand in the Zoom client to give public comment on today's meeting, thank you.

Chair, it appears there are no callers wishing to offer public comment at this time.

AGENDA ITEM III—PRESENTATION OF COMMITTEE BRIEF AND RECAP OF GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS LEGISLATION FROM THE 2021 SESSION

Chair Dondero Loop:

We will go to Agenda Item III, and this will be a presentation of the committee brief and recap of the Government Affairs legislation from last session. Mr. McDonald, when you are ready, please proceed.

Jered McDonald:

Thank you, Chair. This is Jered McDonald for the record, LCB, Research Division. I am just going to briefly go over the committee brief and provide a short recap of legislation from last session ([Agenda Item III A](#)) ([Agenda Item III B](#)). As I am sure you are all aware, since we do this every session and interim, the committee brief provides information on the Committee and includes an overview of the powers and duties, work plan and jurisdiction, relevant reports and publications, and Committee staff contact information. As I am sure you are all aware, [Assembly Bill 443](#) from last session created the Joint Interim Standing Committee on Government Affairs and set its membership, duties and powers, and jurisdiction. Pursuant to Section 6 of that bill, the Committee may evaluate and review issues within the jurisdiction of the corresponding standing committee or committees from the preceding regular session of the Legislature. This Committee may exercise any investigative power set forth under [Nevada Revised Statutes \(NRS\) 218E.105](#) to [218E.140](#) and, within the limits of the Committee's budget, conduct studies directed by the Legislature or the Legislative Commission. And I would note that this Committee has not been assigned any study specifically. Finally, this Committee may request up to ten bill draft requests related to government affairs for the 2023 Session of the Legislature.

A little bit about the proposed work plan: The Committee has been approved by the Legislative Commission to conduct up to six hearings this interim. It must conclude this

work by August 31, 2022, and if you take a look at page 2 of the committee brief, we have some tentatively confirmed dates for future meetings. They all fall on Tuesdays in the first half of the month. We are looking at February 15, March 15, April 12, May 10, and then our final meeting and work session on June 7.

As far as jurisdiction goes, I am sure you are aware that this Committee has a wide range of authority over laws affecting state and local government. We have included a list of some of the more prominent issues that you would see during session and then have jurisdiction over in the interim, as well. That is on the top of page 3. We have included a list of reports and publications that you may find interesting. We are always updating and adding new ones as we go along, so you can take a look at that on the bottom of page 3. We have a link to statutorily required reports on the top of page 4, and you can jump into that link and search around for some of the government affairs related issues if you would like, or reach out to me and we can track those down for you.

We also, on the last page, have contact information for all the Committee staff with their emails and telephone numbers to contact folks, so please feel free to do that. Finally, as you know, the Research Division is available to assist you on any issues that come before this Committee. In addition, staff provides individual members of the Legislature with information and assistance on a confidential basis on any topic, so please contact the Research Division at (775) 684-6825 or by email at Research@lcb.state.nv.us if you need anything. Well, that is what I have for the committee brief, and I will go ahead and move on to the recap of legislation from last session ([Agenda Item III B](#)).

If you would like to refer to the document, we have included it on the meeting page for today. We have got a document titled, [Summary of Government Affairs Related Legislation Approved by the 2021 Legislature](#). A review of that document—just based on pure volume—111 bills were referred to the Assembly Committee on Government Affairs. That committee voted out 88 bills. The Senate Committee on Government Affairs were referred 108 bills and 86 of those bills were voted out of committee. In total, the Legislature approved 95 bills that went through one or both committees, and that is the list that we have included for today. You can peruse that list and refresh your memory on some of those bills. There are quite a few there, 95, so I would take a few minutes.

As you know, the committee's jurisdiction varies from house to house a little bit; however, most of these bills—about 62 of the 95—went through the Assembly Government Affairs or Senate Government Affairs, and 38 went to Assembly Government Affairs and 24 to Senate Government Affairs. If you did not see some of these bills in Government Affairs, you may have reviewed them in other Committees. A significant number of Assembly Government Affairs bills tend to go to Senate Education, Senate Judiciary, or Legislative Operations and Elections. Last session, we had quite a few Senate Government Affairs bills end up in Assembly Ways and Means towards the end of session. Last session, we had one bill on this list that was vetoed and that was [Assembly Bill 254](#).

Major topics addressed during last session based purely on the number of bills passed: we had seven bills addressing peace officers that were passed and they were [Assembly Bill 409](#), [Assembly Bill 111](#), [Assembly Bill 186](#), [Assembly Bill 220](#), [Assembly Bill 304](#), [Assembly Bill 315](#), and [Assembly Bill 336](#). We had five bills that addressed veterans' issues, four bills that addressed housing, and two bills that altered the charter of a couple of cities. You may recall that [Assembly Bill 55](#) altered the charter for the City of North Las Vegas and [Senate Bill 127](#) altered the charter for the City of Mesquite. You had two bills that addressed investment of public money and that was [Assembly Bill 338](#) and [Senate Bill 68](#). You had two bills that addressed common interest communities and that was [Assembly Bill 249](#) and

[Senate Bill 72](#). I was going to throw in a couple others that I think just came to my mind based on the volume of work that went into them in the committees. You may recall [Assembly Bill 253](#) amended the Open Meeting Law to address meetings held during times of emergency. We also had [Assembly Bill 445](#), which was the bill that moved the Office of Grant Procurement, Coordination and Management to the Office of the Governor and renamed it the Office of Federal Assistance. We will be getting an update on the implementation of that bill today. That concludes my brief recap of legislation from last session that was approved by the government affairs committees, and I would be happy to take any questions on the committee brief or on the recap of legislation. Thank you, Chair.

Chair Dondero Loop:

Thank you so much and I appreciate that information. Anybody have questions? If I do not see you, please feel free to unmute and let me know.

I do not think I see any questions. I appreciate that information. I am sure as we move forward we may have some questions. Thank you again, Mr. McDonald, for that information.

AGENDA ITEM IV—DISCUSSION OF TOPICS TO STUDY DURING THE 2021-2022 INTERIM

Chair Dondero Loop:

We will go to Agenda Item IV, and I would like to take a few minutes to discuss possible issues the Committee may be interested in studying this Interim. Before I go to Committee members, I would like to identify a few issues based on a review of topics from last session that I am interested in studying, and those include: affordable housing, collective bargaining, housing discrimination, and tribal engagement. These issues were addressed last session and in previous sessions; however, I believe there is improvement we can still make in these areas if we take time to better understand some of the underlying issues. The new interim structure provides this Committee the opportunity to take a meaningful look at these topics. I would like to open discussion to Committee members to see if anybody would like to suggest other study topics or legislation to review from last session. Finally, I would like to note to the Committee as we move into the Interim, if issues pop up on your radar as we move through this, please let me know and we will see if we can add them to our agenda. Committee members, if anybody has anything they would like to jump in with here and give us your wisdom, I would so love it. Senator Neal, please go ahead.

Senator Neal:

Thank you, Chair Dondero Loop. A couple of things I would like to see—local government budget. In Government Affairs, we actually can get presentations on where local governments are within their budget, public safety, and various categories. It would be good to try to see that so we know going into session what they are dealing with with their COVID—in what I would say, American Rescue Plan (ARP) money—and then we can get an idea of where their baseline and funding is, because Government Affairs is one of those committees where we review those, at least for Clark County.

Chair Dondero Loop:

Thank you very much. Good suggestion. Thank you very much. Senator Goicoechea, did I see your hand up?

Senator Goicoechea:

No, not at this point. I am just thinking deep thoughts but thank you, Madam Chair.

Chair Dondero Loop:

Okay, thank you. Keep those deep thoughts going. Assemblywoman Torres, please.

Assemblywoman Torres:

Thank you, Chair. One of the things that I think we should definitely look into is community relationships between our community and local law enforcement agencies. One of the things that has continued to be a topic of discussion, post Legislative Session, is the relationship between local law enforcement agencies and federal agencies, like the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement

Chair Dondero Loop:

Thank you very much. Any additional comments? If I have missed you, please feel free to jump in there. Assemblywoman Brown-May.

Assemblywoman Brown-May:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Following up on Assemblywoman Torres' comments, we did spend a significant amount of time during this session really looking at training for police officers to eliminate bias. I am curious to know if we could add that in as we look at some of the police officer trainings and how we are addressing potential bias toward significant populations around the state.

Chair Dondero Loop:

Thank you very much. Additional comments? Senator Goicoechea.

Senator Goicoechea:

Thank you. You knew if you waited long enough, I would have something to say. I guess, and of course I am really looking at this in the short term, but we might be able to take it up along the comments of Senator Neal. I am really concerned about all of the others we are putting through in the COVID programs. I do not care where it is. I, just last night, was talking to some of the people from state health, and again we are talking about making the availability of home tests and how this is getting to the ground. I realize this should be behind us by the time we get to the next session. I think there is some information there that might be good as we move forward, and it is kind of related to health and human services. As Senator Neal says, this is really impacting our local governments and how they stand up and what programs, where in their communities, and how they are funded. As we move into this in the short term, maybe we can get some kind of report on how that is impacting local government budgets.

Chair Dondero Loop:

Thank you very much. Additional comments? I do not think I see anymore; if I have missed you, please jump in there. Thank you very much and we will keep all those. Senator Neal, did you have something you want to add?

Senator Neal:

If it is possible to see, one of the prior pieces of legislation that came through with this Committee was [Senate Bill 327](#), and I am hearing that some of the local governments and agencies are having some kind of interesting interpretation on how they apply the bill; but that is up to you, if you want to do that. We could do that towards maybe meeting number four or five, but it would be good to see where they are going with that. I have also heard that one of the bills that deals with retaliation—false records in peoples files—that there has not necessarily been an implementation of this legislation, and it actually goes back to 2019. That is up to you, Chair; I am just throwing stuff out there. We can do stuff at your will.

Chair Dondero Loop:

I am trying to catch it. Thank you very much. We will mull this over and see the amount of time we have with the meeting schedule. I appreciate those comments. Anyone else?

AGENDA ITEM V—REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LEGISLATION FROM THE 2021 SESSION

Chair Dondero Loop:

We will move on to Agenda Item V. Under Agenda Item V, we are going to get some updates on the implementation of certain legislation from last session.

A. SECTION 26.5 OF [ASSEMBLY BILL 376](#) MAKES AN APPROPRIATION TO THE IMMIGRATION CLINIC AT THE WILLIAM S. BOYD SCHOOL OF LAW OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING CERTAIN PRO BONO LEGAL SERVICES

Chair Dondero Loop:

We are going to start with [AB 376](#). You may recall that AB 376 does three things: (1) it creates the Keep Nevada Working Task Force in the Office of the Lieutenant Governor; (2) requires the attorney general to publish model policies regarding immigration enforcement; and (3) provides the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) Immigration Clinic an appropriation to carry out certain activities. Neither the lieutenant governor nor the attorney general could be with us today, so we are going to focus on the third part of the bill regarding the UNLV Immigration Clinic and we will have the others at a later time.

I would like to invite Michael Kagan, Director of the UNLV Immigration Clinic, to provide the Committee with an update on the Clinic's activities funded by Section 26.5 of AB 376. Mr. Kagan, welcome and please begin when you are ready.

Michael Kagan, Director, UNLV Immigration Clinic, William S. Boyd School of Law, UNLV:

Thank you very much, Madam Chair. I am extremely happy to be here and to update the Committee, not just on progress, but on the fact that we are at the beginning where, I think, it is going to be a really important year for building a key part of our community infrastructure for defending all of our neighbors here. By the way, I am the Director of the UNLV Immigration Clinic. I have to give a disclaimer at the beginning that I do not speak for all of UNLV. That said, I am really proud that this is a project that the University has gotten

really behind at the highest levels. I think it is going to be really important for our community here and for the university as a whole.

Assembly Bill 376 provided to our clinic \$500,000 over two years, but before I get into how exactly we are using that, let me give a very brief picture of the immigration clinic before I focus on what that funding is going to. So, we are a part of the William S. Boyd School of Law at UNLV, and our clinical law programs are something like a teaching hospital for lawyers. We involve law students in working on cases. In the process of doing that, we also expand community services, so it is a marriage of legal education and community service, and we continue to do that. For example, this coming semester we are having a unique clinic that we have never done before where we are working closely with the Governor's Office for New Americans and with the Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada to defend and to represent resettled Afghan refugees and asylum applications. That is not funded by AB 376, but it is an important part of our of our clinic.

We also have, in our clinic, something called University Legal Services. UNLV and the College of Southern Nevada (CSN) jointly pay for one attorney to provide immigration legal services to students, staff, and their family members at UNLV and CSN, and that is something we have started having some informal discussions about, whether that could be expanded. That also is outside of AB 376, but we are a relatively small group and team, and I think it is important to understand the full picture of what we do.

Now let me get into what AB 376 is allowing us to do. The bread and butter of our work in our clinic is deportation defense. Technically, it is called removal defense; most people call it deportation. Deportation defense is much like criminal defense in that the government is trying to often detain someone and take them to a place they do not want to go. Obviously, a whole lot of issues come up in that, but in order for those processes to be fair, people really need to have attorneys. Immigration law is a vast field, and the practice of immigration laws is a vast field. Assemblyman Flores, your Vice Chair here, can tell you all about it, but some areas of immigration law do not even require an attorney, technically speaking. Some are lighter touch. These cases that we handle are the most intensive. If you want to look at a medical analogy, we are like an intensive care unit. We sometimes actually handle a relatively small number of cases, but they are incredibly intensive. We have cases that go on; we have one case that has now gone on for ten years. That is at the extreme, but it is not unusual for cases to go on for several years. A lot is at stake. Often, they are asylum cases where people are fleeing, fearing bodily harm, and people's families are in danger of being broken up. Zealous representation is extremely important here.

We focus on two groups for that deportation defense; one of those groups is people in immigration detention. Local statistics here and national statistics show that about three in four people in immigration detention do not manage to find a lawyer on their own in a private market, typically because they cannot afford it. The other category, and the oldest for us, is unaccompanied children. We started that work in 2014, and we represent unaccompanied kids fleeing from typically horrendous violence and in some cases family breakdown coming to the United States. They are here in the Las Vegas area because they have family here. That is how they end up here; they are living with relatives here in virtually every case.

In addition to the funds that the Nevada Legislature provided us through AB 376, in September those funds were matched by the Clark County Commission, which provided us an extra \$500,000 over the same two-year period. So effectively, that is \$1 million over two years, and with that we are doing something extremely exciting. We are opening a community advocacy office, an off-campus office in downtown Las Vegas. It will be on

Casino Center Boulevard. That will both give us more office space that we needed, but more important than that, more accessibility for the people that we serve. I am on campus right now in my office; I love being on campus, especially when there is no pandemic. It is a great environment, but to be honest it is not actually great for our clients. It is hard to park. It is hard to find the law school building. The clinical law office at the law school is literally under a stairwell, so we want to be closer to the community that we serve, and we are able to do that. We are in the process of setting that up and we are actually very close; movers are coming for furniture, I believe, June 18th. The Internet is being set up—all those details I am not going to bore you with everything it takes to move into an office. We are weeks away from having our location be open and we look forward to announcing that to the public.

I want to tell you everything that we have done and what we plan for the coming year and a half and beyond. The first thing that we did after AB 376 was signed into law was set up a community advisory committee, because we want to make sure that, as we make infinite number of decisions about the direction of this office and its work, that we have a community sounding board that remains close to the people that we are serving. There are 12 people on that committee; Assemblywoman Torres is a member. Other members include impacted people, community leaders, student counselors from institutions of higher education, organized labor, and experienced attorneys—but not ones who work for our clinic.

I am also happy to report about office space. We want to take all of the money that you and the Clark County Commission have given us and turn that into direct services to people who need it. We have a great, thanks to Mr. Ozzie Fumo, former member of this body, who is donating the office space to us at zero cost for two years. We are incredibly grateful to that, and actually that is somewhat new news, and we are reworking our budget to figure out how to be able to use that money that we had allocated to rent in the past so that we can turn that around to directly helping people.

We already are working, although that office is still being physically set up and there is still wiring going on the Internet routers. We already have two lawyers working on this project, plus one from the University of Legal Services. We hired a managing attorney, Alissa Cooley, she started December 1st. She is also related to AB 376; she is a member of the Keep Nevada Working Task Force in the lieutenant governor's office, and she actually was, when she first graduated from law school in 2014, one of the first lawyers in our office who started our work with unaccompanied children. We planned by the end of this year to have an office for attorneys related to this project, five total, and I am not counting myself. I am a faculty member at the law school; I am the director of the clinic, but I am not paid out of any of these funds. I am also a bit of a part time director because I have responsibilities as a faculty member. We are also in the process nearing the end of recruitment for an office manager position and we will be hiring another staff attorney. We work, as I testified to the Legislature during the session, we work closely with an organization based in New York called Immigrant Justice Corps, which essentially pays about 93 percent of the costs of junior lawyers to fill out our office. We have one Immigrant Justice Corp fellow right now, and we are hoping to receive one more attorney and one paralegal by the end of the year from them.

We have already started taking cases; although, we are waiting for the office. Since December 1st, we have taken on four new children who approached us. In fact, actually right now we are getting most of our requests from unaccompanied children who are coming to Las Vegas and are in deportation proceedings alone. These are unaccompanied

kids; they are in immigration court alone if we do not represent them or if no one else represents them.

I am looking forward to taking your questions but let me close by saying that our intention with this, although we have two years of funding—I want to be very transparent—we want to earn your trust to renew this funding because our goal is not just to build a short-term program for two years. Our goal is to build an institution that will last and that will be a key part of serving our community for the foreseeable future. It is part of having a fair legal immigration system. It is part of standing with essential members of our community when they need us. I would like to say, I think I am proud that UNLV is part of this. Some of that is historical accident in the way different organizations developed in Las Vegas, but I am very proud as a faculty member here. We have immigrant students in our law school. We have many children of immigrants in our law school and throughout the university. I am really proud to be part of an institution that is serving the community from which we come. I am really happy to answer your questions about our work, and I am really excited about what you will see us do in 2022.

Chair Dondero Loop:

Thank you very much. I will ask the Committee, does anyone have any questions? Senator Goicoechea, please go ahead, and then I will go to you, Vice Chair.

Senator Goicoechea:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Typically, a case that would come to you, are these people that would have an action being taken against them or is it just someone trying to avoid—. Could people come off the street and say, “Hey, I am concerned about this; I really maybe do not have legal status,” and then come to you and see if you can resolve it? Or truly is it each case has had an action taken against them and you are coming forward to defend?

Michael Kagan:

The answer to your question is that in deportation defense—by definition—the United States Department of Homeland Security is seeking to remove our clients, and those include our clients in immigration detention and the children. They all have cases in immigration court. In our University Legal Services program, which serves at the campus community that I described, which is outside of this bill but still part of our clinic, there we serve actually most of our clients. There are people who are seeking to fix their status, or they might be students who got married and are seeking a green card, all of that. Other than the campus community, we do not usually do that type of work. There are others who do both for fees and pro bono.

Senator Goicoechea:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Just to be clear, under AB 376, they have to have a deportation case pending before you take it?

Michael Kagan:

Assembly Bill 376 does not actually say that. I believe the language is just to provide pro bono legal assistance. When I testified, I presented, much as I have right now, our areas of work—unaccompanied kids, people in detention, and focusing on deportation defense—and so we are staying true to that. Actually, our contract with Clark County is explicit and so we are using those funds jointly, so we are limited to that deportation

defense. I should have mentioned, actually, that with this bill, Nevada became the eighth state to provide this type of funding plus the District of Columbia, and there are more than 50 local governments around the country now, including Clark County, Nevada, that have provided funding for this type of work.

Chair Dondero Loop:

Senator Goicoechea, I think you were muted right there at the end. Were you just thanking?

Senator Goicoechea:

I said thank you, Mr. Kagan; Thank you, Madam Chair. I am not holding my button long enough, I guess. Thank you.

Chair Dondero Loop:

Thank you very much. Vice Chair Flores, please go ahead.

Vice Chair Flores:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I wanted to share more of a comment than a question. I just wanted to say how incredibly proud I am of Assemblywoman Torres for the work she did last session to get a bill that, at one point, was pretty much dead and was able to work with the community, Professor Kagan, and so many other members of this Committee, in particular, to get the bill to where it is now. I know there is going to be a whole host of kids and a bunch of other individuals that, but for this program, would likely be removed from this country, and will now have an opportunity to remain here because they are going to have competent, strong, and talented individuals representing them. I just wanted to say thank you, Professor Kagan. I know we put this bill in amazing hands.

Chair Dondero Loop:

Thank you very much. Any additional comments or questions from the Committee? Seeing none, I want to thank you as well, Mr. Kagan, moving forward, I know there is a lot of work still to be done, and we appreciate your time today. We may see you again for another update. We thank you very much.

B. [ASSEMBLY BILL 445](#) REVISES PROVISIONS RELATING TO FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

Chair Dondero Loop:

With no more questions from the Committee, we will thank you and move on to [Assembly Bill 445](#) and the update on that implementation. This bill, among many provisions, transfers the Office of Grant Procurement, Coordination and Management of the Department of Administration into the Office of the Governor and renames it the Office of Federal Assistance. With us today to provide that update on the bill we have: Denise Frohlich, Interim Administrator of the Office of Grant Procurement Coordination and Management; Matthew Tuma, Deputy Director of the Department of Administration; and Laura Freed, Director of the Department of Administration. Welcome, and thank you for being with us and giving us your time today. Please, begin when you are ready.

Denise Frohlich, Interim Administrator, Office of Grant Procurement, Coordination and Management, Department of Administration:

Thank you very much, Madam Chair, and thank you all for your time and your interest today. I am going to share my screen with a presentation for you all ([Agenda Item V B](#)). Today we are going to go give an update on a brief—.

Chair Dondero Loop:

Just as a reminder, please state your name for the record.

Denise Frohlich:

My name is Denise Frohlich. I am the Interim Administrator for the Office of Grant Procurement, Coordination and Management, and today I will be providing you a summary of AB 445 and progress towards our implementation of that bill. To give you a context for what we are going to talk about today, I would like to provide you with a brief timeline so that you have context for what we are going to talk about. I will then give an overview of the eight major changes. We will then take a deeper dive into those changes to talk about what exactly they did, our progress towards implementation, and our plans looking forward. Then we will look at what the next six months look like. So, diving into that, our brief timeline is we were able to start implementation, as you know, at the beginning of the fiscal year. I was appointed into this position on August 30th, so I will primarily be speaking to my time in this four and a half months that I have been in the role. During that time, we have been working on planning and implementation, and our plans are for the next six months to continue that momentum. Then on July 1st, 2022, in the fiscal year we will be moving over to the governor's office and our office name will change to the Office of Federal Assistance.

Very briefly, a high-level summary of AB 445: We had eight major changes that impacted our office. The first one is, as I said, we will be moving to the governor's office and our title will be changing to the Governor's Office of Federal Assistance. The administrator role will shift to a director role, which will be a cabinet-level position. The director will be tasked with creating a state plan on federal assistance. The focus of our office has also shifted. Assembly Bill 445 brought about changes to our [Grant Matching Program](#) and our grant management system process. It also brought about changes to the membership and the duties of our council, and it provides for an office in northern and southern Nevada. Those first three changes—the first two especially—they change at the start of the new fiscal year. The third one, the state plan, will begin with those changes and the director assuming that position.

I am really going to take a deeper dive into the following five changes. The first one is the focus of our office. Our focus is to significantly move the needle across Nevada in obtaining and managing federal assistance. This focus and this goal really has not shifted throughout the term of the office, but what has changed with AB 445 is the way in which we achieve that goal. Our focus is now shifting to really identifying those strategies: looking at data across the state and across federal assistance that is brought in and managed across the state; and developing key performance indicators so we can start answering questions like, "What does success look like, and how will we know when we have achieved it?" with real concrete numbers. We will be looking at best practices and intervening to apply them so that we can move that needle. We will be looking for opportunities to streamline processes and reduce costs, and will be looking for opportunities to increase coordination across the state.

Our progress on implementation with this is—it is one thing to say this is our new change and our new focus; it is another thing we have to implement that. What we have done is we have rewritten our vision, our mission, and our goals to align to this. We have written our strategic plan to align to this. I also had the benefit of having all of my positions were going to be vacant, and so I really was able to realign the duties of all of those positions to align them to those objectives to ensure that we can achieve them. Then we filled all of those positions, so we are now fully staffed. What we are working on is revising our data systems so that we have a process to gather and track those new key performance indicators. Some timeline highlights for you: our staff was fully staffed as of last week, so I am very excited about that; and all of our staff started between November 22nd of last year and January 3rd of this year, so to give you some context on that.

The next change that AB 445 brought about is some changes to our Grant Matching Program. This program was a pilot program and what AB 445 did was it extended the pilot for another year, so that is the year we are currently in, and it also makes the program permanent starting July 1st. Our progress toward that, like I said, this was a pilot program, and it was paused during all of the changes that COVID brought about, so we relaunched that pilot program, and we opened up for applications on November 1st. We have had three applications thus far; one of them is actually making its way through to the Interim Finance Committee (IFC) agenda. We project that it will be on the agenda in April. Assembly Bill 445 also provided a new position to help oversee this program and we have filled that position.

Next thing that AB 445 brought about is changes to our grant management system procurement process. It allocated funds so that we can conduct a needs assessment to inform the procurement of our system. Where we are on our progress with this is we have identified a contractor and that contract is on the February State Board of Examiners agenda. This individual will provide that needs assessment. They will conduct this from February all the way through May. Really the goal is to get as much stakeholder feedback as possible so that we really have a very informed request for proposal (RFP) to procure that system. We anticipate that the contractor will write that RFP in June, so that at the start of the new fiscal year we can immediately start putting forward that RFP to procure the system. In preparation for the needs assessment, we have been asking stakeholders to sign up to be included and provide their feedback, and as of today we have over 120 people signed up for that. What we are also doing is—we know that getting a system is not the whole answer; we know that a system is only as good as the data put into it. What we are working on also is developing systems for people to be able to easily report the data that we need to put into that system and to develop that habit now so that when we have the system, people are already in the habit of providing their information into that system.

Assembly Bill 445 also made changes to our council in terms of the membership and the focus. The focus of the council is now going to be assisting the director in developing and implementing that state plan. So again, that work will begin in July 2022, but we have made progress towards implementation of this, as well. All of our voting members have termed out this last year, and so what we are working on right now is assembling a new council. We have five of our eleven seats filled. That does include two of our nonvoting members, and it also includes two of our four new seats that are filled. In order to have a quorum, we will need to appoint two more positions and that will bring us to—right now we have three of our nine voting members—that will bring us to five of our nine voting members so that we have a quorum. In terms of timeline highlights, we were able to secure the representative from the treasurer's office and the controller's office in 2021, in September, and those are both two new seats. We also submitted the annual report in December and grants office

staff submitted and wrote that report on behalf of the council, considering that chair is vacant at this time.

Finally, the other major change AB 445 brought about was maintaining an office presence in both northern and southern Nevada. Where we are in terms of progress on this is we have identified a location. It is going to be in Grant Sawyer, Suite 5300, and we are in the process of drafting the lease to sign with an anticipated lease start date of March 1st. So, what do the next six months look like? Our goals are to continue this progress and momentum on all of those above listed areas. We are also going to be training that new staff so that they can really hit the ground running on all of this. We are also, as I mentioned with the grant management system, we are increasing grant reporting so that we can establish that baseline data. That is the conclusion of my presentation at this time. Thank you very much for your time. I will, at this time, ask if there are any questions?

Chair Dondero Loop:

Thank you very much, and just as a point of clarification for our audience and possibly members, would you please tell us about NACFA? Would you please specify because it was never actually said out loud; I think it was just the initials.

Denise Frohlich:

You are absolutely right. That is an oversight on my part. NACFA is our advisory council, and it stands for the Nevada Advisory Council on Federal Assistance.

Chair Dondero Loop:

Thank you very much. Any additional questions from the Committee? Senator Goicoechea, I see your hand; go ahead please.

Senator Goicoechea:

Thank you, Madam Chair. The 11 seats on the Committee, I am just going through the backup information here, but exactly—you have got 5 of 11 have been filled, 2 new seats—but can you walk through that again for me? I might have missed just exactly who those 11 members are going to be.

Denise Frohlich:

Absolutely, I would be happy to. We have one member of the Senate appointed by the Majority Leader of the Senate; this position is currently vacant. We have one member of the Assembly appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly, and this position is currently filled by Assemblywoman Daniele Monroe-Moreno. We have one member who represents a nonprofit organization that provides grants to the state; this is a governor-appointed position and currently vacant. We have one member who represents a local government; this is governor appointed, currently vacant. One member who represents private business, appointed by the governor, currently vacant. One member who represents a nonprofit organization, a local agency or a tribal government, and one of these individuals will be appointed by Majority Leader of the Senate, and one will be appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly; both of these are vacant. We then have the state treasurer and the state controller; both of these are filled. We have then the two nonvoting members, which are the chief of the Budget Division in the Office of Finance, and myself.

Senator Goicoechea:

Thank you, madam, and a follow up if I may, Madam Chair?

Chair Dondero Loop:

Please, go ahead.

Senator Goicoechea:

We are assuming you are going to try and push for the appointment of these people rather quickly or to have it in place by July, I assume?

Denise Frohlich:

Yes, our goal is to have them definitely in place by July, preferably earlier so that we can onboard them to the committee's duties so that the committee can hit the ground running with the director in July. At present, we have made outreach efforts to both the governor's office and the LCB. We have also been talking with members of the community. We have provided an all-agency memo, which did spark interest. We have also been talking to try to recruit that involvement, and of course, if anyone here knows anyone who might be interested, we would love to hear that, as well.

Senator Goicoechea:

Madam Chair.

Chair Dondero Loop:

Thank you very much. Additional questions or comments from the Committee? I see Senator Neal; please, go ahead.

Senator Neal:

Thank you, Madam Chair. I had a question on the data system—two questions. Number one: How much is that going to cost? Number two: You are aligning the system to speak to what other system?

Denise Frohlich:

Those are great questions. So, the first question: AB 445 appropriated \$200,000 to conduct the needs assessment and then \$1 million dollars for that program. At this point, what the needs assessment is going to do is gather information about what we need in the system. That will include conversations with people who are using existing systems that are going to, let us say, speak and integrate with this system. That will include the Smart 21 project team. We have people that we are going to add to the Governor's Finance Office (GFO), so all of the financial systems and processes that they are using. We want to make sure that we are aligning to that and that we are not duplicating, but we are complimenting. We are also going to be talking with Enterprise IT Services (EITS) and ensuring that any system that is procured is going to align and meet all of their requirements, as well—any integration requirements, security requirements, licensing requirements, and things of that nature. Really, we want to make sure that the system is embedded in all processes that currently exist and processes that we see on the horizon. We want to make sure that part of the implementation plan also includes an integration plan so that it is a smooth integration with

these systems. I hope that answered your question, but please let me know if you would like any additional information.

Senator Neal:

Yeah, it just sounds expensive. I will just be watching those IFC meetings.

Chair Dondero Loop:

Thank you very much. Vice Chair Flores, please go ahead.

Vice Chair Flores:

Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you for the presentation. I may have missed it, and if I did, I apologize. Well first of all, I want to say thank you for all the work. I know when I first came on this Committee in 2015, I think that was the very first thing I learned from my fellow colleagues, the importance of what we were doing, more importantly, what we are not doing as a state. There has been such a focus on that so I just—I am excited to see this kind of play out. I am curious to know, besides the folks who are sitting on the committee and the expertise you are kind of compiling now, is there any interaction with any other state that we are using as a model or trying to replicate, or we are seeing what they are doing? Anything like that? Or that we just straight out reached out to, and we bring them into and inserting them into the conversation?

Denise Frohlich:

I can speak briefly to some of the time before I started. I know that there was a lot of work, especially with the council, in exploring what other states were doing and looking for models and best practices. Illinois was one of those states that they had identified. We have also written into the RFP for our contractor conducting the needs assessment is to do some intentional research in terms of, what are best practices that other states are doing and what systems do they use? How do they use them and leverage them, and how do they use the data there to make data-informed decisions? So yes, that will definitely be a part of the process moving forward, and I know that it has been part of the process in the past, as well, to bring us to this point.

Vice Chair Flores:

Thank you.

Chair Dondero Loop:

Thank you very much. Assemblywoman Brown-May, please go ahead.

Assemblywoman Brown-May:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you for that great presentation. This is one item that I was particularly excited to track throughout the legislative session, and it is nice to see that we are so close to really implementing. I have two questions. First, you mentioned that we have 120 people who are currently signed up as part of the stakeholder group. I am wondering if you could really clarify who are the stakeholders. Is it division administration or state employees and staff who are really looking to be part of the stakeholders? Or is it also members of the greater community and the nonprofit sector that would partner with the state? So, I am curious if you could clarify a little bit of that. My second question would be

really, what part are you and the grant administration able to play in tracking the allocation of some of the federal emergency relief funds that are coming into the state? What part of follow up in matching will this play in that as we go forward?

Denise Frohlich:

Absolutely. So, for your first question, who are our stakeholders? Specifically, for the grant management system our stakeholders are really anybody who might interact with this system. Since we do not have the system, it is in the dream world right now, and that means that it can do all things for all people. In the dream world, this system would be used by state agencies. It would also be used by—so many state agencies use subaward federal grants—so it would ideally be able to be used by all of those individuals who are receiving the subawards. The system on the user side would allow people to track and monitor their grants from, “We are thinking about applying to this one,” to, “We have applied,” to, “We have been awarded,” to management, and to closing out. What it does on the backside for us, is it provides us all of that data to be able to see and identify where those trends and numbers are. Stakeholders will include state agencies who either bring in federal money and/or subaward award federal money. It will be the people who receive those subawards, and that will include nonprofits; that will include tribal governments; that will include local governments. So, all of those are our stakeholder groups and all of those are participating in that setting up. We have connected with various different stakeholders to spread the word. We have a link to the signup form on our webpage, and we encourage—at this point, we would rather have more people contribute than not. If anyone feels that they may want to provide feedback, we absolutely encourage them to sign up on that list, because again, we are in discovery phase, and so there may be a stakeholder who provides insight that we did not think about. We want to keep the dialogue as open as possible.

In terms of your second question and tracking the relief funds, we are the single point of contact for the state when it comes to federal assistance. This was actually an executive order that was passed, and the goal is to help organize, to have one single point of contact in each state who can really have that high level view to track what the federal assistance is and what it is doing in the state. Where we stand right now is this has been more of a self-reporting system. This is not unique to Nevada; we have the same issues at the federal level in that people need to self-report in that way, so when I talked about how we are increasing and trying to encourage that reporting, this falls into that area. We are working with some of those key stakeholders and some of the key project managers who are overseeing the distribution and application of a lot of those funds, and we are working on developing those pipelines so that they can report that information to us. They still provide the management and oversight and the daily distribution and management of those grant funds, but what we do is we will be providing that big picture overview, collecting all of that information of what was the money that was brought in. Where did it go? Did it go local, state, nonprofit, tribes, and so on? What were the projects that were funded? Those are the types of things that we will be tracking. I hope I answered your questions but if you would like additional information, please let me know.

Assemblywoman Brown-May:

Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Chair Dondero Loop:

Thank you very much. Any additional questions from the Committee? I do not see any additional questions, so thank you so much for being with us today. Thank you for your

time, a lot of information and good luck moving forward. We will probably hear from you again, so thank you very much.

C. SENATE BILL 222 REVISES PROVISIONS RELATING TO GOVERNMENTAL ADMINISTRATION

Chair Dondero Loop:

Finally, we are going to get an update on the implementation of SB 222. As you may recall, this bill requires state agencies to collaborate with minority groups on policies, agreements, and programs; ensure that programs and services are accessible and inclusive; and designate a diversity and inclusion liaison. To provide the update we have with us today: Tina Dortch, Program Manager with the Nevada Office of Minority Health and Equity (NOMHE); Charina de Asis, Director of the Governor's Office for New Americans; and Margarita Salas Crespo, Senior Advisor to the Governor's Office of New Americans. We also have Emily Ku, Management Analyst with the Nevada Commission on Minority Affairs, Department of Business and Industry, available for questions, if needed. Please, go ahead and unmute when you are ready, and please remember to say your name for the record. Thank you.

Tina Dortch, Program Manager, Office of Minority Health and Equity, Department of Health and Human Services:

Good morning. Are you able to hear and see me?

Chair Dondero Loop:

Sounds good. Thank you.

Tina Dortch:

Hello to Chairperson Loop, Vice Chairperson Flores, as well as members of the Joint Interim Committee on Government Affairs. My name is Tina Dortch, for the record. I am the Program Manager for the Nevada Office of Minority Health and Equity—to be referred to as NOMHE for the duration of my remarks. NOMHE is a Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) program located within the Director's Office. Thank you very much for your request to update this body on the implementation of SB 222. My role in responding to this request will be to provide a four-part overview of the bill, which includes highlighting the benefits of pairing minority-serving state programs in its actioning, and lastly to point out an important nonlegislative synergy.

First, effective January 2022, per Section 10 of the bill, we are to identify diversity and inclusion (DI) liaisons designated within state agencies that interact with or offer programs and services affecting minority groups.

The DI liaisons will assist their respective agency with five primary functions: (1) producing and promoting effective, culturally competent and linguistically diverse communication services; (2) serving as a contact person between the agency and members of minority groups; (3) providing technical assistance on its new services that increase accessibility and inclusivity; (4) maintaining a collaborative partnership with other agency DI liaisons; and (5) is notifying coworkers of their role.

The second part of the overview that I want to explain is that the bill provisions that NOMHE, the Commission on Minority Affairs, and the Governor's Office for New Americans—to be called ONA—that we each collaborate. The working partnership serves to broaden

awareness of the existence and role of these DI liaisons. Furthermore, this bill ensures the DI liaisons are prepared and sufficiently supported in an on-going fashion because of this collaboration.

Not only has this measure effectively designed a sustainable three-entity network to shepherd the provisions of this bill, but our collaboration has forged a resource capable of actioning other equity-focused initiatives, as seen during the promotion of the recent Nevada Recovers Listening Tour hosted by our governor and state treasurer.

The third overview that I want to explain and demonstrate, per Section 12 of the bill, is that the DI liaisons are required to convene an annual meeting between themselves and those minority advocating organizations. During this meeting they will develop recommendations related to matters of mutual concern, such as the means for state agencies to eliminate discriminatory systems or protocols; they will also develop strategies that increase accessibility and inclusivity of services delivered to minority groups; and then also they are going to work together to address opportunities to further collaborate. Because of the collaborative facilitation approach that I just mentioned, DI liaisons will be supported in this activity and participation will be highly stratified and inclusive. For example, by virtue of assistance from the Commission, given its multi-focal issue areas, advocacy groups across the health-determining sectors—housing, education, employment, economic and workforce development—those entities will be identified. Also, assistance from ONA will ensure that participation from advocacy groups representing immigrant and refugee communities are accounted for. Then for NOMHE's role in planning the annual meeting, it will identify additional ally organizations across ability status advocates, as well as Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC), and sexual orientation or gender identity minority communities.

The last point to share under Section 12 is that by January 1st of each year, an annual report shall be jointly prepared by ONA, the Commission, and NOMHE for submission to the governor and the director of LCB for transmittal to the Legislative Commission, and it will reflect the outcomes of the annual meeting.

For my last remark, I wanted to share a nonlegislative example of a strategically relevant synergy that are coming about because of it. This represents the intersection between DI liaisons and DHHS division-level advisory committees. If you recall, in August of 2020, Governor Sisolak released a proclamation naming systemic racism a public health crisis. Soon thereafter, the DHHS created its own Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Steering Committee as the entity to oversee actioning the proclamation. Its members represent all divisions of the Department, and NOMHE was named the point agency on its activities, with facilitation support coming from Social Entrepreneurs Incorporated.

Since its formation, the Steering Committee's efforts have focused on workforce inclusivity and its impact on culturally competent service delivery. Actions of the Steering Committee have included completion of a series of agency-wide town halls to gather employee feedback on current—or what we call legacy—systems and protocols. They have also completed a climate survey. Both of these actions have influenced the production of a DEI Situational Analysis Report that discusses the current DHHS conditions.

The most recent action of the Steering Committee intersects with the work of the SB 222 DI liaisons. Per the interest of the Director at DHHS, Richard Whitley, he impressed upon us that policy and system revisions must reflect input from all DHHS employees. Division-level DEI advisory committees have been created and initial meetings have begun taking place this month. In addition to these groups providing employee-level feedback to the Steering

Committee, they will also potentially be the ones to produce DHHS's own DI liaisons. DI liaisons and the DEI advisory committees will work very closely together.

Furthermore, it is evidenced that by creating multiple "equity check points"—per SB 222 DI liaisons and DHHS advisory committees—that this is the most important way to impact on revising legacy systems, specifically those categorized as workforce development or human resources (HR) in nature. They are more likely to avoid biased influences and also to become operationally sustainable.

Please allow me now to transition to the next person who is going to discuss SB 222. This is a representative from the Office for New Americans. She will introduce herself and she is going to discuss the collective responsibilities that we share. She is going to summarize actions that have been taken to date, and she will outline next steps representing implementation.

Charina de Asis, Director, ONA:

Thank you so much, Ms. Dortch, and good morning, Chair Senator Dondero Loop, Vice Chair Assemblyman Edgar Flores, and members of the Joint Interim Committee on Government Affairs. For the record, my name is Charina de Asis, Director of the Governor's Office for New Americans or ONA. With me today is ONA's Senior Advisor, Margarita Salas Crespo. I would also like to note that Emily Ku from the Commission on Minority Affairs is here, but will not be presenting as this is her last day in her position. We are unfortunate and we are sad about that.

Ms. Dortch indicated the collaboration between the Office for New Americans, the Office of Minority Health and Equity, and the Nevada Commission on Minority Affairs for the implementation of SB 222. We have collectively and loosely named all three offices as the Minority Interagency Collaboration or MIC. I will be referring to all three agencies as MIC for the duration of my remarks.

It is to be noted that before SB 222, the Office for New Americans has been already engaging in interagency collaboration, not only with the members of MIC but with other state agencies, to ensure that state government is more accessible to the constituency we serve. This was usually done in a case-by-case basis or when we saw emerging patterns that call for a more systemic solution. We have collaborated with state agencies in various matters like the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), DHHS, and the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation, among others.

I am sure that members of the MIC have been engaging in the same interagency collaboration themselves, as well.

However, through SB 222 and the DI liaisons, interagency collaboration will now be institutionalized to ensure state government is more accessible to minority populations.

One example I could think of that could benefit ONA's constituency with the implementation of SB 222 is through language access. ONA has launched the Nevada Initiative for Language Access or NILA, a project created to provide technical assistance to state agencies to assist them with the creation of their Language Access Plan or LAP, as mandated by SB 318. Limited accessibility due to language barriers continues to be a top issue for immigrant and refugee populations, so we envision that DI liaisons will play a role in this project. That is just one example on how we can see how this interagency collaboration will work in state government.

The MIC has been working collaboratively on SB 222 and made significant strides to ensure the implementation of this crucial piece of legislation.

So, what have we done so far? On January 4th of this year, 2022, the Governor's Office sent out a letter from Governor Steve Sisolak emphasizing his support for the successful implementation of SB 222 and SB 318, identifying points of contacts for the minority offices and identifying next steps.

Agencies were instructed to provide the name and contact information of their DI liaisons to MIC by February 15th of this year. Once all DI liaisons have been identified, MIC will schedule and conduct an orientation for state agencies to discuss expectations for this first year and then the next steps. We expect the orientation to happen sometime in March or April.

For this first year, the MIC will be focusing on conducting a services and programs landscape analysis. This will be done via a survey among state agencies and departments to help us better understand how we are currently serving our minority populations. Gathering this data will help us make informed recommendations and develop sound strategies to increase accessibility and inclusivity of services delivered to minority populations in the state. The survey will be introduced and be provided to agencies during the orientation.

Our official annual meeting with DI liaisons and various minority groups will happen subsequent to the orientation. During this meeting, we plan to review the data we collect from agencies to provide context to our discussion. At the annual meeting we will take recommendations from minority groups, which will all be reflected in the annual report provided to the governor and the director of LCB for transmittal to the Legislative Commission. We expect to conduct the annual meeting sometime in July or August.

It is our intent to convene our DI liaisons for a 3rd meeting this first year to review the draft report and recommendations and to discuss an action plan for the following year. We expect the last convening to take place sometime before the holidays, in November.

In addition to these convenings, MIC members will be available to DI liaisons to provide guidance and technical assistance as needed. The MIC will serve as a resource to DI liaisons throughout the entire year to ensure we support their efforts to increase accessibility to minority populations. The MIC will also be responsible for completing and submitting the annual report.

That is the end of the things we have done and our actionable steps. We are open for questions, as well.

Chair Dondero Loop:

Thank you so much. That is a lot of information. We appreciate what you are doing. Questions from the Committee? Senator Neal, go ahead, please.

Senator Neal:

Thank you, Chair Dondero Loop. I have a question: Is the MIC going to have the role of prioritizing the policies and programs that the liaison will then act on? Because the way I envisioned the bill was that this liaison would have more of a community presence and be able to go out and talk to communities about the kind of policy priorities that they want to engage in. Talk to me about how this direction will work because I am not clear.

Tina Dortch:

I can try to answer that on behalf of the MIC and please, my colleagues, please chime in if I am not accurate. Senator, thank you for the question. I think, at its core, it is about how do we prioritize the recommendations that are produced? I think that was the core of your question, and in response to that, it really is going to become a collaborative effort, Senator. We, as the support team to the DI liaisons, would not overtake that process, but help with structured facilitation so that those prioritizations can be conducted. We would be using that meeting structure for that purpose. As you heard from my partner from ONA, that is why there is that third meeting where we are going to review the assembled recommendations before presenting them in report format.

Senator Neal:

Madam Chair, can I have a follow up?

Chair Dondero Loop:

Please, go ahead. Would you please, Ms. Dortch make sure you say your name for the record so that we can keep things straight? Thank you. Go ahead please, Senator.

Senator Neal:

How does it roll up from the bottom? Let us say for example, I want to get involved and there are some community groups in my district that have some particular policies or programs that they would like to influence. How then do I get them to submit what they are interested in so that it rolls up grassroot to MIC?

Margarita Salas Crespo, Senior Advisor, ONA:

[INAUDIBLE]

Chair Dondero Loop:

Ms. Crespo, you are really breaking up.

Margarita Salas Crespo:

I am having an issue with my sound, so I am going to pass the question to one of my colleagues.

Tina Dortch:

Would it be acceptable, Chair, if she disabled her camera for the moment?

Chair Dondero Loop:

Sure, go ahead, please.

If you are speaking, we cannot hear you.

Margarita Salas Crespo:

I am going to have to logout and log back in.

Chair Dondero Loop:

Yes, thank you.

Tina Dortch:

During the Interim—. This is Tina Dortch, for the record. I will attempt to respond to that question. That information is also part of the process for the survey that we mentioned, Senator Neal, to identify what those community groups are per each DI liaison's agency, and to make sure that information that needs to be reflected back to the DI liaisons for actioning is at least assembled. That will be part of the pipeline; I think that is the core of your question—what is the process, the pipeline, for moving information from the community level to the DI's attention.

Charina de Asis:

Charina de Asis, for the record. The bill also outlines that the DI liaisons—each agency should have DI liaisons on their website, as well, to introduce the community to who their DI liaisons are and their contact information; that will help. Their annual meeting on that very end, as well, will also gather community organizations. All of our three offices represent the whole swath of minority populations in the State of Nevada, so hopefully we will get you know those grassroots recommendations and concerns towards state government.

***Emily Ku, Management Analyst, Nevada Commission on Minority Affairs,
Department of Business and Industry:***

This is Emily Ku, for the record. I also want to just mention that our meetings will be public, so there will be a public comment period where groups can put forward recommendations.

Senator Neal:

I just want to make sure I receive that information because it sounds like your meetings are going to go quick, and posting that on my Facebook page, allowing actual folks to access this, and kind of do a simple five step process—here is how you engage—so that if there is a policy that your legislator is not going to carry but it is something that you can move through this process, here is an opportunity to speak to some programs and policies within these 25 agencies. You know what I am saying? It needs to be that finite so that people can grab it and run with it.

Margarita Salas Crespo:

This is Margarita Salas Crespo, for the record. I want to make sure my sound is working a lot better now, yes?

Chair Dondero Loop:

Yes, we can hear you.

Margarita Salas Crespo:

Perfect. Thank you so much. I do want to very quickly address the question, or the response I was going to provide Senator Neal earlier. One of the requirements of the bill is that the state agencies must identify their DI liaison under website, and ONA, and our state

agencies will also have the full list of DI liaisons, so that information is available to community members and they know who to contact if they have a specific policy issue or something that they want to bring up to that DI liaison so that then they can bring back to our attention, as well as where we are working and collaborating with them on different issues. The other concern about community outreach, I speak primarily from ONA's perspective, but I do believe that this still applies to our other minority offices. Engaging our community is one of our areas of expertise, and we try to focus on that. We are actually already working and identifying some groups that we can start engaging now, even though we know that the first meeting is not going to happen until the summer where we are going to convene the DI liaisons with our community members. Again, we welcome any other recommendations as well from you all so that we can start reaching out to folks and start engaging them early on in the process.

Senator Neal:

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Chair Dondero Loop:

Thank you, Senator Neal. Any additional comments? Any additional questions from the Committee? Assemblywoman Torres.

Assemblywoman Torres:

Thank you, Chair. I was just kind of wondering; I am trying to understand, if I am an employee at that agency, how am I going to be notified of the role of the DI liaison and how am I going to be notified what the DI liaison has the ability to do?

Tina Dortch:

For the record, this is Tina Dortch. Thank you very much, Assemblywoman Torres. As we explained, there has already been a distribution of the announcement. That went out, I believe, the 3rd or 4th of January, and it alerted the administrators, the directors, and leadership of various state agencies that SB 222 is being actioned and that they are now to recruit for their own DI liaisons. That information gave them until February 15th as a deadline to do that. What we are doing, one of the actions of the MIC, is developing a—what we refer to as—the orientation packet, so that if you come on board as a DI liaison, you are equipped to perform your role—those five steps that I mentioned in my remarks. Part of that is going to make sure that you are also aware about recent legislation and past legislation that really impacts how effectively and inclusively your agency is addressing its constituency. We plan to give them a primer on how to be a DI liaison during the first convening of those new officials.

Assemblywoman Torres:

I will probably have a couple of follow-ups. Based off of that, how are the employees in the agency, who are not the DI liaisons, going to know that this is a person they have, and what type of confidentiality is there when an employee has a conversation with a DI liaison regarding an issue that occurred to ensure that the employee is protected and not going to be subject to some type of retaliation later on?

Tina Dortch:

I can take an attempt to answer, MIC members. For the record, Tina Dortch. The role of the DI liaison is not meant to supplant that of the HR protocol system. They are there to be a conduit to pass information along, but not to replace the role of an HR official and representative. As I mentioned, as part of my remarks, there is a bigger task force—Steering Committee—looking at some of the legacy systems that involve how to report workplace discrimination or issues that may come under that umbrella. The DI liaisons, on their own accord, would not be the vehicle for that.

Margarita Salas Crespo:

This is Margarita Salas Crespo, for the record. I can answer that from the perspective of ONA, given that we have engaged in some interagency collaboration as issues are being brought to our attention. What I would say is that, the way that we see it at least, the goal for the DI liaison is going to be that point person, right? If an issue is being brought up, for them to work with us collaboratively on how do we find best solutions for that. I think in terms of the minute details, we are going to work with each state agency to develop those depending on how they run shop, I would say. But given with the work that we have been doing at ONA, one example I can give: When we work with DMV, because the issues are ranging, it is usually a different person and then we find the folks that play part in ensuring that program or process is in place, and we work together with them, advising them, and finding a solution jointly. That is sort of what we envision that to be. Of course, we may see problems or issues that are being raised to us from employees, but of course we will work with them on those cases. I think we will work directly with the DI liaison to find the best processes that work for that specific agency.

Assemblywoman Torres:

A follow up, if I may, Chair. What type of conversations are going to take place then? I just feel like, if I was an employee at an agency and I knew that the DI liaison was appointed by the director of the agency and that the DI liaison was having conversations with the director of the agency, I do not know that as an employee that I would feel comfortable having conversations with the DI liaison about issues that I thought existed in the workplace. If I was the DI liaison and I was appointed by the director of the organization, I do not know that I would feel comfortable then going to a different office and meeting space and saying, "Hey, these are the problems that I think exist in my state agency," because I still work under that director; I work at the leisure of the individual that is appointing me.

I do have some concerns that the DI liaison is not going to feel comfortable expressing some issues that might exist and that the employees may not feel comfortable expressing those issues to the DI liaison, or that the employees will feel comfortable expressing those issues to the DI liaisons and that there is some type of retaliation later on. I know that this is something that happens in workplaces. I know this is a fear that exists. I do have concerns that there just has to be a conversation of how that is going to be met and what protections exist for that DI liaison for confidentiality. That is going to need to be an important part of that training and making sure that any employee that goes towards the DI liaison does have that type of confidentiality.

Additionally, maybe there needs to be some HR representatives brought into that greater conversation because they can speak from a more general perspective instead of a specific employee. I do think that there also have to be some protections for the employees that are saying, "Hey, this is an incident that is occurring too frequently in our workplace, and it

should not be occurring, and yes, it has happened to me but does not mean that I am the only case.” Right? There has to be some protection so that that employee coming forward to the DI liaison is not going to get retaliated against.

Margarita Salas Crespo:

I will go ahead and chime in here, but MIC members feel free to jump in. Margarita Salas Crespo, for the record. I will say that we definitely will be having some kind of conversations to address, but based on the language of the bill—given that the one annual meeting is expected to happen with community members and DI liaisons—the intent is really for us to get the feedback from the community. How they see it on their end, from the ones that are receiving the information and receiving the services. What is working, what is not. Then we can bring that into the different systems and processes in place and work with DI liaisons to make those changes, right? So, the focus here—at least the way that we are interpreting the bill—is that we are gathering the feedback primarily from the community, because they are the ones that are approaching the agencies that are receiving the services, right? We want to know what that engagement looks like, how do we make it better, and how do we make state government agencies more approachable to the community members in the constituency and minority populations, primarily. I will ask my MIC members if they have anything additional to add there?

Tina Dortch:

This is Tina Dortch, for the record. Maggie, you actually took the words right out of my mouth. I was going to just impress upon the conversation, at this point, that as we action this bill, the emphasis is on ensuring that the community representation that we are to service through our various agencies, that they have a voice in the process. I think, though, to Assemblywoman Torres’ point, individual employees play a role in that discussion, but we just wanted to make sure that it was very clear that the emphasis from the bill is that our efforts are externally facing to make sure they have that conduit and pipeline to impress upon change with leadership of various agencies.

Assemblywoman Torres:

I have two shorter follow ups, if I may, Chair?

Chair Dondero Loop:

Please, go ahead.

Assemblywoman Torres:

Thank you. One of the things I was hoping was that the survey was going to be anonymous so that employees can participate and feel that they are not going to get reprimanded?

Charina de Asis:

Charina de Asis, for the record. Our intention for this survey, is a survey of programs that each agency offers and who they are reaching out to, who they are trying to reach, who they are actually reaching in this program, like all the data, so that will inform our recommendations for the next go around. I think that was our intention of the survey.

Assemblywoman Torres:

Okay, with that information I am just wondering, when the recommendations are released, are those recommendations going to be made for specific agencies or are the recommendations going to be very general?

Tina Dortch:

Tina Dortch, for the record. It is hard to predict what the recommendations will be today, but we would assume that they will be reflective of input from all of state agencies and that they will be reported in the collective.

Also, as a follow up, I wanted to ensure you that most survey responses, if it is in fact presented to an individual, for example, that information would be deidentified, but to Charina's point, it really is a survey of programs, and so we think that would address the concerns about privacy in that example.

Chair Dondero Loop:

Thank you very much. Thank you for the questions and thank you for the answers. Any additional questions from the Committee? Well not seeing any, I surely appreciate all of your team's time and look forward to hearing more from you as you move forward, and thank you very much for joining us today.

AGENDA ITEM VI—PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Dondero Loop:

Next, we are going to go to our second round of public comment.

BPS:

Thank you, Madam Chair. Broadcast standing by. If you would like to provide public comment, please press raise hand in your Zoom window or *9 on your telephone to take your place in the queue.

Caller you are unmuted please begin.

Dorothy "Dora" Martinez, Nevada Disability Peer Action Coalition:

Good morning. Happy New Year to the Chair and Vice Chair. My name is Dorothy Martinez. I represent the Disability Peer Action Coalition. I want to say, first off, thank you all so much for passing Assembly Bill 121. Now I hear a lot of the states are against equal and inclusive voting, but here we are, home means Nevada. We passed it and I am helping lot of people with disabilities who cannot go to the polls register to vote so they can vote this year. I appreciate all of you guys, ladies and gentlemen, who passed that bill. Thank you to my awesome—well she is not mine, but I wish she was—Assemblywoman Lesley E. Cohen, District 29. I just want to remind the previous presenters regarding the DI, but you know I did testify in favor of this bill, SB 222, with Eric Jimenez—he is an awesome dude. I just want to say that one of the minorities that sometimes are, or most of the time are, forgotten are people with disabilities, so if they do go with the vocational rehabilitation, I do hope that their liaison is a person with a disability, because sometimes we say, "Oh, I studied special education and minored in disability." That is not the same thing if the person is not disabled. It is not. Cannot walk in our shoes. Right now, it is really hard to get tested

because all of the—for COVID—all of the test sites require drivers, and not all of us can drive. I, for example, am blind, unless Assemblywoman Tracy Brown-May would like to lend me her car. But thank you so much for everything that you guys do. I hope that we can get some testing sites in the city where people do not have to drive. Because we cannot drive, get a bus, drop off, walk up there and get tested for COVID or get vaccinated because some of us, like I said, cannot. I want to emphasize that because here in Reno, Nevada, we had a strike three times and the buses were not running, and people who use public transit were stuck and could not get tested and they kind of lost their jobs because they could not go to work safely. So, thank you so much for all that you guys do and have a great year. Thank you.

BPS:

Chair, there are no additional participants wishing to provide public comment at this time.

Chair Dondero Loop:

Thank you very much, and so with that are there any comments from the Committee members at this time? Seeing none, please note that our next meeting will be on Tuesday, February 15th at 9:00 a.m. and it will also be virtual.

AGENDA ITEM VII—ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin Andersen

Research Policy Assistant

Jered M. McDonald

Senior Principal Policy Analyst

APPROVED BY:

Senator Marilyn Dondero Loop, Chair

Date: _____

MEETING MATERIALS

AGENDA ITEM	PRESENTER/ENTITY	DESCRIPTION
Agenda Item III A	Jered M. McDonald, Senior Principal Policy Analyst, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB)	Committee Brief
Agenda Item III B	Jered M. McDonald, Senior Principal Policy Analyst, Research Division, LCB	Summary of Legislation passed in the 2021 Session
Agenda Item V B	Denise Frohlich, Interim Administrator, Office of Grant Procurement, Coordination and Management, Department of Administration	PowerPoint Presentation

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