

SHANNON BILBRAY-AXELROD

ASSEMBLYWOMAN

District No. 34



DISTRICT OFFICE:

7500 West Lake Mead Boulevard

Suite 9-486

Las Vegas, Nevada 89128-0298

COMMITTEES:

Chair

Education

Member

Judiciary

Natural Resources

LEGISLATIVE BUILDING:

401 South Carson Street

Carson City, Nevada 89701-4747

Office: (775) 684-8847

Fax No.: (775) 684-8533

Email: Shannon.BilbrayAxelrod@asm.state.nv.us

www.leg.state.nv.us

State of Nevada Assembly

Eighty-Second Session

October 23, 2024

The Honorable Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator
520 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jacky Rosen
United States Senator
713 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Dina Titus
United States Representative
2464 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mark Amodei
United States Representative
104 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Susie Lee
United States Representative
365 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steven Horsford
United States Representative
406 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senators and Members of Congress:

The [Joint Interim Standing Committee on Education](#) (COE) spent a significant amount of time during the 2023–2024 Interim considering recommendations made by a variety of stakeholders to positively impact education in this State. Several of these recommendations have national implications and would require federal intervention. As such, the COE voted unanimously to send the following recommendations to Nevada’s Congressional Delegation:

- Encourage support for the Child Tax Credit.
 - Rationale: During a COE hearing focused, in part, on early childhood topics, one aspect of the conversation covered the impact poverty has on early childhood education and support. One presenter in this area emphasized the policy choices that impact poverty, such as the Child Tax Credit, which the presenter described as cutting child poverty by 30 percent;
- Encourage support to increase the total cap of new H-1B visas allowed each year and to allow for increased periods of a J-1 visa stay from three years to five years to allow teachers under these programs to vest in the Public Employees’ Retirement System (PERS) of Nevada.
 - Rationale: During a COE hearing that covered visa teaching programs, the members heard information about the ways Nevada’s teaching workforce is supported by visa recipients, particularly those in a J-1 visa program. Recipients of such visas face challenges though, such as bearing the burden of significant fees. As a result, some school district J-1 programs in Nevada

are looking into becoming their own sponsor of an H-1B program in order to expand and diversify their program and reduce recipient fees. Furthermore, J-1 visa recipients face difficulties in participating in Nevada's retirement system—PERS. Because of the retirement plan each school district in the State uses, if employees do not obtain five years of service credit to vest in PERS, there will not be any refundable contributions. Since the visa contract period is currently outlined as three to five years, there are often vestment issues for J-1 visa teachers; and

- Encourage sponsorship of legislation to repeal the Social Security Windfall Elimination Provision.
 - Rationale: The Nevada State Teacher and Education Support Professional Recruitment and Retention Advisory Task Force (Task Force), an entity charged with identifying and reviewing issues related to building and maintaining an educational workforce in this State, provided recommendations for the COE's consideration. One such recommendation was to repeal the Social Security Windfall Elimination Provision, which adjusts Social Security benefits for those who receive non-covered pensions, such as PERS. The Task Force specified that retirees who may be considering a second career in teaching are choosing not to because participation in PERS will reduce their Social Security benefits, thus increasing Nevada's difficulty in recruiting teachers.

Thank you for considering the COE's recommendations and your continued passion and efforts to support Nevada's education system. Should you or your staff have any questions, please contact the COE's policy analysts, Alex Drozdoff and Jen Sturm-Gahner, via phone at (775) 684-6825 or via email at Alex.Drozdoff@lcb.state.nv.us or Jen.Sturm@lcb.state.nv.us.

Sincerely,

Assemblywoman Bilbray-Axelrod, Chair
Joint Interim Standing Committee on
Education

SBA/cr:W242562

cc: Asher Killian, Legislative Counsel, Legal Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB)
Cameron Newton, Senior Deputy Legislative Counsel, Legal Division, LCB
James Malone, Principal Program Analyst, Fiscal Analysis Division, LCB
Alex Drozdoff, Principal Policy Analyst, Research Division, LCB
Jennifer A. Sturm-Gahner, Senior Principal Policy Analyst, Research Division, LCB