



NEVADA LEGISLATURE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON CHILD WELFARE AND JUVENILE JUSTICE

(Nevada Revised Statutes 218E.705)

SUMMARY MINUTES AND ACTION REPORT

The first meeting of the Nevada Legislature's Legislative Committee on Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice was held on Friday, February 12, 2016, at 9 a.m. in Room 4412 of the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 3138 of the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada. A copy of this set of "Summary Minutes and Action Report," including the "Meeting Notice and Agenda" ([Exhibit A](#)) and other substantive exhibits, is available on the Nevada Legislature's website at <http://www.leg.state.nv.us/interim/78th2015/committee/>. In addition, copies of the audio or video record are available through the Legislative Counsel Bureau's Publications Office (e-mail: publications@lcb.state.nv.us; telephone: 775/684-6835) and may be available online at <http://www.leg.state.nv.us/Granicus/>.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT IN LAS VEGAS:

Senator Scott T. Hammond, Chair
Assemblyman John Hambrick, Vice Chair
Senator Becky Harris
Senator Joyce Woodhouse
Assemblyman James Ohrenschall

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT IN CARSON CITY:

Assemblyman Philip (P. K.) O'Neill

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL BUREAU STAFF PRESENT:

Patrick Guinan, Principal Research Analyst, Research Division
Diane Thornton, Senior Research Analyst, Research Division
Bryan Fernley, Senior Principal Deputy Legislative Counsel, Legal Division
Michael Morton, Deputy Legislative Counsel, Legal Division
Lisa Gardner, Senior Research Secretary, Research Division

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

AGENDA ITEM I—OPENING REMARKS

Chair Hammond called the meeting to order. He introduced himself and staff, and solicited remarks from members of the Committee.

Vice Chair Hambrick, Senators Harris and Woodhouse, and Assembly Members O'Neill and Ohrenschall introduced themselves and commented on their interest in serving on the Committee.

AGENDA ITEM II—PUBLIC COMMENT

Amanda Haboush-Deloye, representing the Nevada Institute for Children's Research and Policy, School of Community Health Sciences, University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), remarked on the Task Force on the Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Children and noted various activities of Prevent Child Abuse Nevada, including a Pinwheels for Prevention event, scheduled for April 8, 2016, at the Nevada Legislature.

Scott Shick, Chief Juvenile Probation Officer, Douglas County Juvenile Probation Department, and representing the Nevada Association of Juvenile Justice Administrators (NAJJA), shared brief comments regarding the NAJJA and noted the organization is interested in providing testimony before the Committee at future meetings.

AGENDA ITEM III—PRESENTATION ON ACTIVITIES OF THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON CHILD WELFARE AND JUVENILE JUSTICE DURING THE 2013–2014 INTERIM

Patrick Guinan, previously identified, referenced a document containing information on the duties and past activities of the Committee ([Exhibit B](#)).

AGENDA ITEM IV—PRESENTATION ON RECENT ACTIVITIES AND PRIORITIES OF THE CLARK COUNTY BLUE RIBBON FOR KIDS COMMISSION

The Honorable Nancy M. Saitta, Associate Justice, Supreme Court of Nevada, provided an overview of the Clark County Blue Ribbon Commission and discussed recommendations compiled in the Commission's final report ([Exhibit C](#)).

In response to questions from the Committee, Associate Justice Saitta commented on: (1) the frequency of status checks in the courts; (2) sibling cohesion in foster care; (3) the recruitment of child advocate attorneys; (4) the participation of William S. Boyd School of Law, UNLV, with subcommittees and the Children's Attorneys Project; and (5) education considerations for children in foster care, including transportation and private school tuition.

AGENDA ITEM V—PRESENTATION ON NATIONAL TRENDS IN CHILD WELFARE AND JUVENILE JUSTICE

Nina Williams-Mbengue, Program Director, Children and Families Program, National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), provided an overview of national trends in child welfare ([Exhibit D](#)).

There was discussion between Ms. Williams-Mbengue and the Committee regarding:

- Data on child fatalities;
- Risk factors with child maltreatment;
- The national uptick in foster care caseloads;
- The number of children on psychotropic medications;
- The average length of stay for children in foster care;
- Child and family services review reports for Nevada;
- Services for older youth who have aged out of foster care;
- The Commission to Eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities;
- Extending foster care for older youth through Title IV-E Foster Care funds; and
- *Child Maltreatment 2014*, United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau.

Ms. Williams-Mbengue offered to provide reports and additional data to Committee members subsequent to the meeting.

Chair Hammond commented on the topic of “rehoming” and noted the Committee addressed the issue through Assembly Bill 8 (Chapter 361, *Statutes of Nevada, 2015*).

Sarah Alice Brown, Program Director, Criminal Justice Program, NCSL, gave a presentation on national trends in juvenile justice ([Exhibit E](#)).

There was discussion regarding:

- Risk factors for criminality among females;
- State definitions pertaining to quality counsel;
- State reforms with transfer, waiver, and direct file laws;
- Juvenile justice statistics—comparing Nevada with other states;
- Certification for practicing law in Nevada’s juvenile justice system;
- The proximity of youth facilities to population centers in other states;
- Diagnoses of mental health disorders for youth in contact with the juvenile justice system;
- Comprehensive responses and programs in other states that address issues in the home for youth in contact with the juvenile justice system;
- Human trafficking statistics—the number of victims previously in contact with the child welfare system; and
- Innovative programs in other states that assist former juvenile offenders with employment and higher education opportunities.

Ms. Brown offered to provide additional information to Committee members subsequent to the meeting.

Ms. Brown announced two upcoming NCSL events: (1) a three-hour “deep dive” on juvenile justice issues; and (2) a juvenile justice policy forum scheduled for June 2016 in the Lake Tahoe Basin.

There was a conversation between Chair Hammond and Ms. Brown regarding a group tour of a juvenile assessment center in Denver, Colorado, and the possibility of sharing information about the facility at the next Committee meeting.

AGENDA ITEM VI—OVERVIEW OF CURRENT STATE AND LOCAL CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICE PROGRAMS

Jill Marano, Deputy Administrator, Child Welfare, Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS), Department of Health and Human Services, shared information pertaining to State child and family service programs ([Exhibit F](#)).

There was discussion between Ms. Marano and Committee members regarding: (1) differential response referrals; (2) child removals in Clark County; (3) caseworker contact compliance; (4) out-of-state placements; (5) services for older youth; and (6) extending foster care for older youth.

Timothy Burch, Interim Director, Clark County Department of Family Services, commented on the population of older youth in Clark County who have aged out of foster care and are receiving transitional services—either under the court’s jurisdiction or through the County’s Step Up program.

Amber Howell, Director, Washoe County Department of Social Services, provided an overview of Washoe County’s child and family service programs ([Exhibit F](#)).

There was a brief discussion on Safe Haven.

Mr. Burch gave an overview of Clark County’s child and family service programs ([Exhibit F](#)).

There was discussion regarding: (1) employee attrition at DCFS; (2) the average length of stay at Child Haven; and (3) Clark County’s Title IV-E Waiver Demonstration project.

AGENDA ITEM VII—PUBLIC COMMENT

Amy Gray, public citizen, requested information on legal matters pertaining to her children who have been placed in out-of-state foster care.

There was discussion amongst Chair Hammond, Bryan Fernley, previously identified, and Ms. Gray regarding the purview of the Committee.

Subsequent to the meeting, Ms. Howell, previously identified, submitted a document regarding Washoe County’s child and family service programs ([Exhibit G](#)).

AGENDA ITEM VIII—ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 1:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Gardner
Senior Research Secretary

Patrick Guinan
Principal Research Analyst

APPROVED BY:

Senator Scott T. Hammond, Chair

Date: _____

EXHIBITS

EXHIBIT	WITNESS/ENTITY	DESCRIPTION
Exhibit A	Patrick Guinan, Principal Research Analyst, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB)	Agenda
Exhibit B	Patrick Guinan, Principal Research Analyst, Research Division, LCB	Memorandum
Exhibit C	Patrick Guinan, Principal Research Analyst, Research Division, LCB	Report
Exhibit D	Nina Williams-Mbengue, Program Director, Children and Families Program, National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL)	Microsoft PowerPoint Presentation
Exhibit E	Sarah Alice Brown, Program Director, Criminal Justice Program, NCSL	Microsoft PowerPoint Presentation
Exhibit F	Jill Marano, Deputy Administrator, Child Welfare, Division of Child and Family Services, Department of Health and Human Services	Microsoft PowerPoint Presentation
Exhibit G	Amber Howell, Director, Washoe County Department of Social Services	Letter

This set of “Summary Minutes and Action Report” is supplied as an informational service. Exhibits in electronic format may not be complete. Copies of the complete exhibits and other materials distributed at the meeting are on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau, Carson City, Nevada. You may contact the Library online at www.leg.state.nv.us/lcb/research/library/feedbackmail.cfm or telephone: (775) 684-6827.