



NEVADA POLICY
Research Institute

Testimony in Support re: Senate Bill 287 – Senate Government Affairs Committee
Wednesday, April 3, 2019
1pm

My name is Daniel Honchariw. I represent the Nevada Policy Research Institute as its senior policy analyst and registered lobbyist.

NPRI is happy to join the broad, bipartisan Right to Know Nevada coalition in supporting SB287.

It is a testament to the widespread support of transparency to see so many groups of differing ideologies come together in support of this bill.

Nevada already has a very good transparency law on the books; SB287 will simply ensure the law as written will be faithfully followed.

SB287 will save money by encouraging agencies to comply with the law as written, rather than forcing expensive, protracted lawsuits.

For example, after CCSD denied our request for copies of emails late last year, we were forced to file a lawsuit. After filing the lawsuit, CCSD immediately turned over all the emails, which is a good indication that their original denial was unlawful.

If SB287 were in place, CCSD would have very likely provided the emails in response to our request in the first place. However, because CCSD forced a lawsuit to be filed, this will end up costing the district, and thus taxpayers, several thousand dollars in legal fees.

The people who stand most to benefit from SB287 are ordinary citizens who don't have the time or resources to sue, and thus are effectively shut out of the transparency promised to them under existing law. We hear from citizens of all walks of life who have been unlawfully denied access or been charged excessive fees when requesting access to public records.

Most simply give up, which is disheartening to see. We should be encouraging citizens to be engaged with their local government, not turning them away because some government agencies choose to violate the NPRA and deny requests or charge excessive fees improperly.

We thank Senator Parks for bringing forward SB287 and ask this committee to support it as written.

Respectfully submitted,

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