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## MEMORANDUM

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DATE: August 29, 2018  
TO: Rick Combs, Director  
FROM: Jennifer Ruedy, Senior Principal Policy Analyst, Research Division  
SUBJECT: **Nevada Legislature Oral History Program—Report to the Legislative Commission Pursuant to Nevada Revised Statutes 218A.350, Section 7**

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The memorandum serves to satisfy the requirements of Section 7 of *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS) 218A.350, which requires the Research Division of the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB) to submit to the Legislative Commission a report concerning activities relating to the Nevada Legislature Oral History Program.<sup>1</sup>

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND ASSEMBLY BILL 384 OF THE 2015 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

During the 2007 Legislative Session, the Nevada Legislature approved Senate Bill 579 (Chapter 345, *Statutes of Nevada*), which appropriated \$228,056 to the Legislative Fund for the Research Division to create an oral history of the Nevada Legislature. As a result, the Division conducted a competitive bid process to identify and retain a contractor to carry out the project. In January 2008, a contract was signed between the LCB and Get Consensus, LLC, for an 18-month program, which ended in June 2009. During the project, 17 video- and audio-taped interviews were conducted of former legislators who have made significant contributions to Nevada. In commemoration of the Legislature's 75th Legislative Session, portions of 16 interviews were compiled into a 27-minute film titled, "Remembering Citizen Legislators: The Nevada Legislature Oral History Project." A "[fact sheet](#)" summarizing the 2008–2009 oral history project is attached. Transcripts and videos of all interviews are also available online via the Nevada Legislature's website at: <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Division/Research/LegInfo/OHP/index.html>.

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<sup>1</sup> NRS 218A.350(7) — 7. On or before September 1 of each even-numbered year, for the biennium ending June 30 of such year, the Research Division shall submit a report to the Legislative Commission concerning the activities of the Program during that biennium.

## **Assembly Bill 384 of the 2015 Legislative Session**

The Nevada Legislature approved unanimously [AB 384](#) (Chapter 183, *Statutes of Nevada 2015*), which establishes in NRS the Nevada Legislature Oral History Program in the Research Division of the LCB. Within the limits of available funds, the Division shall conduct (or cause to be conducted) the oral histories of current and former legislators and ensure the preservation of these histories. The Director of the LCB may accept gifts, grants, or donations in support of the program. The measure also requires the Division to submit a report concerning the Legislature's Oral History Program on or before September 1 of each even-numbered year.

### **REPORT OF ONGOING ACTIVITIES AND PLANNING RELATING TO THE NEVADA ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM**

While the implementation of the oral history program is largely dependent on available funds, the Research Division can, without such funding, prepare a plan setting forth the oral histories proposed to be conducted and detailing the policies and procedures to conduct and preserve the oral histories and any related materials.

#### **Program Plan—Nevada Legislature Oral History Program**

The Division is in the process of preparing a “program plan” which will, at a minimum, consist of the following components:

- *General Background Information*—including a comprehensive [legislative history of AB 384](#) and related historical information;
- *Forms*—interview schedule forms, informational forms for interviewees to complete, acknowledgements, and relevant contracts;
- *Selection Criteria for Interviewees*—unique characteristics of interview subjects, age of potential interviewees, leadership positions held, major legislation sponsored, length of legislative service, et cetera;
- *Selection Criteria for Interviewers*—who should conduct the interview, pre-interview research needs and requirements, best practices used during the 2008–2009 oral history project, et cetera;
- *Interview Parameters and Expectations*—the use of personalized questions versus “stock” questions, ideal length of interview time, inclusion of a spouse or partner, and document preparation, both before and after the interviews;
- *Finances and Grants*—budget statements, acceptable sources of grants and donations, criteria for potential grants or donations, deliverables, and related travel costs;

- *Information Management*—storage, retention, and preservation of documents; web site design; publication of oral history materials; role of the Research Library; confidentiality of materials; redaction issues; transmission of documents to the Division of State Library, Archives and Public Records within the State’s Department of Administration (SDA); et cetera;
- *Project Management*—designation of project manager(s) and points of contact from within the Research Division, interview schedules, behind-the-scenes coordination, printing needs, contact lists of key players, liaison with interested lawmakers, work logs and time allotments, and reporting requirements;
- *Technical Logistics*—technical assistance needs, such as audio and video recording; lighting during interviews; travel requirements; staging; and general technology needs;
- *Biennial Report*—copies of reports due to the Legislative Commission on September 1 of each even-numbered year; and
- *Miscellaneous and Other Information*—additional items, documents, or electronic mail that may not fit in the categories noted above.

### **Anticipated Approval of Oral History Program Plan, Policies, and Procedures**

Pursuant to subsection 3 of NRS 218A.350, the Research Division must “. . . prepare a plan setting forth any oral histories proposed to be conducted during a biennium . . .” and “. . . adopt procedures for the conduct and preservation of the oral histories and any related materials . . .” The Division must also adopt policies, subject to Legislative Commission approval, relating to: (1) the acceptance of oral histories and related documents from current and former legislators and others; (2) the release to the public of oral histories conducted or accepted; (3) the transfer of oral histories and related documents to the Division of State Library, Archives, and Public Records within the SDA; and (4) other matters necessary to carry out the program.

If funding is approved for the Oral History Program, the Division will seek Legislative Commission approval of the plan, procedures, and policies (as highlighted above). Without added funding, the Division may not conduct any oral histories in the near future; however, there is a possibility that the costs associated with a small number of oral histories could be absorbed within the current Research Division budget.

### **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

The Research Division is honored to facilitate the Nevada Legislature Oral History Program, conduct the necessary interviews, and prepare and adopt the required policies and guidelines for the program.

Questions related to the program may be directed to the following staff members of the Research Division (775/684-6825):

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