

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 26–  
Committee on Natural Resources

FILE NUMBER.....

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION—Creating an interim study of the use, allocation and management of water resources in Nevada.

WHEREAS, The waters of the State of Nevada are among its most precious and vital resources; and

WHEREAS, The State of Nevada is the most arid state in the country and has relatively few supplies of surface water and groundwater, a condition which is periodically exacerbated by drought conditions in Nevada and in the Rocky Mountains which supply the headwaters of the Colorado River; and

WHEREAS, Adequate, long-term supplies of water are essential to maintaining stable economic growth and the development of rural and urban areas of this State; and

WHEREAS, The conservative and prudent use of supplies of water is necessary to promote adequate, long-term supplies and to protect the environment of this State; and

WHEREAS, The rapid growth in the population and the economy of this State within the last 30 years has placed growing demands on the limited water supplies and has resulted in an increasing number of projects for the reallocation of water resources from areas of supply to areas of demand; and

WHEREAS, The residents of this State are vitally interested in the decisions made relating to the use, management and allocation of Nevada's scarce water resources; and

WHEREAS, The Nevada Legislature has conducted several interim studies on the general topic of laws and activities related to water resources and large amounts of information concerning Nevada's water resources have been compiled through the years and the degree to which these materials fill the current needs is not immediately evident; and

WHEREAS, The provision of services related to water, including the supply of safe water for municipal and industrial uses, the management of wastewater and storm drainage, the management of floodplains and the administration of water reclamation projects, in an efficient manner is critical to the current and future welfare of the citizens of Washoe County; and

WHEREAS, In Washoe County, these water-related services are presently provided through several governmental entities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, THE ASSEMBLY CONCURRING, That the Legislative Commission is hereby directed to appoint a committee to conduct an interim study

of the use, management and allocation of water resources in this State; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the committee must:

1. Be composed of eight Legislators as follows:

(a) The Chairman of the Senate Standing Committee on Government Affairs;

(b) The Chairman of the Senate Standing Committee on Natural Resources;

(c) One member appointed by the Majority Leader of the Senate;

(d) One member appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate;

(e) The Chairman of the Assembly Standing Committee on Government Affairs;

(f) The Chairman of the Assembly Standing Committee on Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Mining;

(g) One member appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly; and

(h) One member appointed by the Minority Leader of the Assembly.

2. Select a chairman and vice chairman from among its members; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the study must include, without limitation:

1. An analysis of the laws, regulations and policies regulating the use, allocation and management of water in this State;

2. A review of the status of existing information and studies relating to water use, surface water resources, and groundwater resources in this State;

3. An evaluation of the need, if any, for additional information or studies of water use and water resources in this State, including, without limitation, an analysis of whether:

(a) A need exists for additional field investigations to quantify surface water resources, groundwater resources and water uses, and if so, the procedures and costs associated with such investigations; and

(b) Valuable information can be obtained through placing groundwater basins, or portions thereof, under hydrologic stress by drilling and pumping wells over a period of time within those basins, and if so, the procedures and costs associated with these actions;

4. A review of the report of the State Engineer provided pursuant to Assembly Bill 213 of the 2003 Session of the Nevada Legislature;

5. Development of recommendations concerning appropriate statutory provisions for administrative procedures and penalties to be imposed upon a person who violates the provisions of NRS 533.460;

6. An analysis of the potential ramifications of initiating procedures for the adjudication of existing rights within hydrologic basins in the State;

7. An evaluation of the feasibility and desirability of quantifying the groundwater resources of this State using existing information;

8. A review of statewide water use and the efficiency of water use, including, without limitation:

(a) Per capita water consumption;

(b) Water use by the economic sector; and

(c) Potential methods of increasing the efficiency of water use in this State;

9. An analysis of the effectiveness of existing water systems for administrating, controlling, allocating, distributing and protecting the water resources of this State;

10. An evaluation of the potential for the government of this State to provide:

(a) Technical assistance and information services regarding water resources to local governments within the State; and

(b) Increased access to informational and educational services regarding water resources to the residents of the State;

11. An evaluation of the feasibility and advisability of creating a statutory Legislative Committee on Water Resources and prescribing its membership and duties; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Legislative Commission is hereby directed to appoint a subcommittee of the committee to study the feasibility and advisability of consolidating the water-related services in Washoe County; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the subcommittee must:

1. Be composed of six Legislators as follows:

(a) One member of the Senate appointed by the Chairman of the Committee;

(b) One member of the Assembly appointed by the Chairman of the Committee;

(c) One member appointed by the Majority Leader of the Senate;

(d) One member appointed by the Minority Leader of the Senate;

(e) One member appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly; and

(f) One member appointed by the Minority Leader of the Assembly;

2. Select a chairman and vice chairman from among its members; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the study conducted by the subcommittee must include, without limitation:

1. An analysis of relevant financial considerations, ownership and operation of facilities, and potential management and staffing structures;

2. A review of potential alternatives including, without limitation, consolidation of:

(a) All water supply, wastewater treatment, flood control, storm drainage and water reclamation programs;

(b) Only water supply and wastewater treatment programs;

(c) Only the water supply programs;

(d) Only the responsibilities for procuring water and water rights, treating the water and providing the water to the existing distributors; and

(e) Only the responsibilities for procuring water and water rights and providing the water to the water treatment facilities managed by the various distributors; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the entities providing water-related services in Washoe County are hereby directed to participate and cooperate in the study and furnish all necessary assistance to the subcommittee; and be it further

RESOLVED, That any recommended legislation proposed by the committee or subcommittee must be approved by a majority of the members of the Senate and a majority of the members of the Assembly appointed to that committee or subcommittee; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Legislative Commission shall submit a report of the results of the studies and any recommendations for legislation to the 74th Session of the Nevada Legislature.