

SENATE BILL NO. 61—COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

(ON BEHALF OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL)

PREFILED NOVEMBER 16, 2022

Referred to Committee on Judiciary

**SUMMARY**—Revises provisions relating to exploitation involving the deposits or proceeds of an account held by an older person or a vulnerable person in joint tenancy. (BDR 15-427)

**FISCAL NOTE:** Effect on Local Government: No.  
Effect on the State: Yes.

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EXPLANATION – Matter in *bolded italics* is new; matter between brackets ~~omitted material~~ is material to be omitted.

AN ACT relating to crimes; providing that the holding of an account in joint tenancy does not, in and of itself, convey to the persons named on the account legal ownership of the account and the deposits and proceeds of the account in a manner that would preclude such a person from committing or being prosecuted for exploitation involving the control or conversion of any deposits or proceeds of the account; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

**Legislative Counsel’s Digest:**

Existing law sets forth certain circumstances in which a deposit made in the names of two or more persons creates an account held in joint tenancy. Existing law provides, with certain exceptions, that the use by a depositor of the term “joint account,” or a similar term, in designating the ownership of an account indicates the intent of the depositor that the account be held in joint tenancy. If an account is intended to be held in joint tenancy, existing law provides that the account or proceeds from the account are owned by the persons named on the account. (NRS 100.085)

In 1996, the Nevada Supreme Court held that the status of a defendant as a joint account holder under NRS 100.085 did not preclude her conviction for theft of money from the joint account because the jury could have concluded that the criminal intent and actions of the defendant arose before she placed the money into the joint account. (*Walch v. State*, 112 Nev. 25, 31-33 (1996)) In 2018, the Nevada Court of Appeals determined that NRS 100.085 establishes a presumption that a



15 joint account holder has ownership of, and the authority to use, money in a joint  
16 account. The Court held that, under the reasoning of the Nevada Supreme Court,  
17 for a joint account holder to be convicted of theft based on the withdrawal or  
18 misuse of money from a joint account, the State is required to establish that the  
19 criminal intent of the joint account holder arose before the money was deposited  
20 into the joint account. (*Natko v. State*, 134 Nev. 841, 843-44 (Nev. Ct. App. 2018))

21 Existing law imposes criminal penalties on a person who exploits or who  
22 conspires to exploit an older person or vulnerable person. (NRS 200.5099,  
23 200.50995) Existing law defines “exploitation” to mean, in general, any act taken  
24 by a person who has the trust and confidence of an older person or a vulnerable  
25 person or any use of the power of attorney or guardianship of an older person or a  
26 vulnerable person to obtain control of or to convert the person’s money, assets or  
27 property with the intention of permanently depriving the person of the ownership,  
28 use, benefit or possession of his or her money, assets or property. (NRS 200.5092)  
29 **Section 1** of this bill provides that the mere fact that an account of an older person  
30 or a vulnerable person is held in joint tenancy does not, in and of itself, convey to  
31 the persons named on the account legal ownership of the account and the deposits  
32 and proceeds of the account in such a way that would preclude any of those persons  
33 from committing or being prosecuted for exploitation involving the control or  
34 conversion of any deposits or proceeds of the account, regardless of when the intent  
35 to commit exploitation arose.

36 **Section 2-4 and 6** of this bill make conforming changes to indicate the proper  
37 placement of **section 1** in the Nevada Revised Statutes.

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THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, REPRESENTED IN  
SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

1 **Section 1.** Chapter 200 of NRS is hereby amended by adding  
2 thereto a new section to read as follows:

3 *The mere fact that an account of an older person or a*  
4 *vulnerable person is held in joint tenancy pursuant to NRS*  
5 *100.085 does not, in and of itself, convey to all persons named on*  
6 *the account legal ownership of the account and the deposits and*  
7 *proceeds of the account in a manner that would preclude such a*  
8 *person from committing or being prosecuted for exploitation*  
9 *involving the control or conversion of any deposits or proceeds of*  
10 *the account if the facts and circumstances demonstrate that*  
11 *exploitation has occurred, regardless of whether the intent to*  
12 *commit exploitation arose before, during or after the creation of*  
13 *the account.*

14 **Sec. 2.** NRS 200.5092 is hereby amended to read as follows:

15 200.5092 As used in NRS 200.5091 to 200.50995, inclusive,  
16 **and section 1 of this act**, unless the context otherwise requires:

17 1. “Abandonment” means:

18 (a) Desertion of an older person or a vulnerable person in an  
19 unsafe manner by a caretaker or other person with a legal duty of  
20 care; or



1 (b) Withdrawal of necessary assistance owed to an older person  
2 or a vulnerable person by a caretaker or other person with an  
3 obligation to provide services to the older person or vulnerable  
4 person.

5 2. "Abuse" means willful:

6 (a) Infliction of pain or injury on an older person or a vulnerable  
7 person;

8 (b) Deprivation of food, shelter, clothing or services which are  
9 necessary to maintain the physical or mental health of an older  
10 person or a vulnerable person;

11 (c) Infliction of psychological or emotional anguish, pain or  
12 distress on an older person or a vulnerable person through any act,  
13 including, without limitation:

14 (1) Threatening, controlling or socially isolating the older  
15 person or vulnerable person;

16 (2) Disregarding the needs of the older person or vulnerable  
17 person; or

18 (3) Harming, damaging or destroying any property of the  
19 older person or vulnerable person, including, without limitation,  
20 pets;

21 (d) Nonconsensual sexual contact with an older person or a  
22 vulnerable person, including, without limitation:

23 (1) An act that the older person or vulnerable person is  
24 unable to understand or to which the older person or vulnerable  
25 person is unable to communicate his or her objection; or

26 (2) Intentional touching, either directly or through the  
27 clothing, of the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh or buttocks  
28 of the older person or vulnerable person; or

29 (e) Permitting any of the acts described in paragraphs (a) to (d),  
30 inclusive, to be committed against an older person or a vulnerable  
31 person.

32 3. "Exploitation" means any act taken by a person who has the  
33 trust and confidence of an older person or a vulnerable person or  
34 any use of the power of attorney or guardianship of an older person  
35 or a vulnerable person to:

36 (a) Obtain control, through deception, intimidation or undue  
37 influence, over the older person's or vulnerable person's money,  
38 assets or property with the intention of permanently depriving the  
39 older person or vulnerable person of the ownership, use, benefit or  
40 possession of his or her money, assets or property; or

41 (b) Convert money, assets or property of the older person or  
42 vulnerable person with the intention of permanently depriving the  
43 older person or vulnerable person of the ownership, use, benefit or  
44 possession of his or her money, assets or property.



1 ➤ As used in this subsection, “undue influence” means the  
2 improper use of power or trust in a way that deprives a person of his  
3 or her free will and substitutes the objectives of another person. The  
4 term does not include the normal influence that one member of a  
5 family has over another.

6 4. “Isolation” means preventing an older person or a vulnerable  
7 person from having contact with another person by:

8 (a) Intentionally preventing the older person or vulnerable  
9 person from receiving visitors, mail or telephone calls, including,  
10 without limitation, communicating to a person who comes to visit  
11 the older person or vulnerable person or a person who telephones  
12 the older person or vulnerable person that the older person or  
13 vulnerable person is not present or does not want to meet with or  
14 talk to the visitor or caller knowing that the statement is false,  
15 contrary to the express wishes of the older person or vulnerable  
16 person and intended to prevent the older person or vulnerable person  
17 from having contact with the visitor;

18 (b) Physically restraining the older person or vulnerable person  
19 to prevent the older person or vulnerable person from meeting with  
20 a person who comes to visit the older person or vulnerable person;  
21 or

22 (c) Permitting any of the acts described in paragraphs (a) and (b)  
23 to be committed against an older person or a vulnerable person.

24 ➤ The term does not include an act intended to protect the property  
25 or physical or mental welfare of the older person or vulnerable  
26 person or an act performed pursuant to the instructions of a  
27 physician of the older person or vulnerable person.

28 5. “Neglect” means the failure of a person or a manager of a  
29 facility who has assumed legal responsibility or a contractual  
30 obligation for caring for an older person or a vulnerable person or  
31 who has voluntarily assumed responsibility for his or her care to  
32 provide food, shelter, clothing or services which are necessary to  
33 maintain the physical or mental health of the older person or  
34 vulnerable person.

35 6. “Older person” means a person who is 60 years of age or  
36 older.

37 7. “Protective services” means services the purpose of which is  
38 to prevent and remedy the abuse, neglect, exploitation, isolation and  
39 abandonment of older persons or vulnerable persons. The services  
40 may include:

41 (a) The investigation, evaluation, counseling, arrangement and  
42 referral for other services and assistance; and

43 (b) Services provided to an older person or a vulnerable person  
44 who is unable to provide for his or her own needs.



1 8. "Vulnerable person" means a person 18 years of age or older  
2 who:

3 (a) Suffers from a condition of physical or mental incapacitation  
4 because of a developmental disability, organic brain damage or  
5 mental illness; or

6 (b) Has one or more physical or mental limitations that restrict  
7 the ability of the person to perform the normal activities of daily  
8 living.

9 **Sec. 3.** NRS 200.50925 is hereby amended to read as follows:

10 200.50925 For the purposes of NRS 200.5091 to 200.50995,  
11 inclusive, *and section 1 of this act*, a person:

12 1. Has "reasonable cause to believe" if, in light of all the  
13 surrounding facts and circumstances which are known or which  
14 reasonably should be known to the person at the time, a reasonable  
15 person would believe, under those facts and circumstances, that an  
16 act, transaction, event, situation or condition exists, is occurring or  
17 has occurred.

18 2. Acts "as soon as reasonably practicable" if, in light of all the  
19 surrounding facts and circumstances which are known or which  
20 reasonably should be known to the person at the time, a reasonable  
21 person would act within approximately the same period under those  
22 facts and circumstances.

23 **Sec. 4.** NRS 200.5099 is hereby amended to read as follows:

24 200.5099 1. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 6,  
25 any person who abuses an older person or a vulnerable person is  
26 guilty:

27 (a) For the first offense, of either of the following, as determined  
28 by the court:

29 (1) A category C felony and shall be punished as provided in  
30 NRS 193.130; or

31 (2) A gross misdemeanor and shall be punished by  
32 imprisonment in the county jail for not more than 364 days, or by a  
33 fine of not more than \$2,000, or by both fine and imprisonment; or

34 (b) For the second and all subsequent offenses or if the person  
35 has been previously convicted of violating a law of any other  
36 jurisdiction that prohibits the same or similar conduct, of a category  
37 B felony and shall be punished by imprisonment in the state prison  
38 for a minimum term of not less than 2 years and a maximum term of  
39 not more than 6 years,

40 ➤ unless a more severe penalty is prescribed by law for the act or  
41 omission which brings about the abuse.

42 2. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 7, any person  
43 who has assumed responsibility, legally, voluntarily or pursuant to a  
44 contract, to care for an older person or a vulnerable person and who  
45 neglects the older person or vulnerable person, causing the older



1 person or vulnerable person to suffer physical pain or mental  
2 suffering, permits or allows the older person or vulnerable person to  
3 suffer unjustifiable physical pain or mental suffering or permits or  
4 allows the older person or vulnerable person to be placed in a  
5 situation where the older person or vulnerable person may suffer  
6 physical pain or mental suffering as the result of abuse or neglect is  
7 guilty:

8 (a) For the first offense, of either of the following, as determined  
9 by the court:

10 (1) A category C felony and shall be punished as provided in  
11 NRS 193.130; or

12 (2) A gross misdemeanor and shall be punished by  
13 imprisonment in the county jail for not more than 364 days, or by a  
14 fine of not more than \$2,000, or by both fine and imprisonment; or

15 (b) For the second and all subsequent offenses, of a category B  
16 felony and shall be punished by imprisonment in the state prison for  
17 a minimum term of not less than 2 years and a maximum term of not  
18 more than 6 years,

19 ↪ unless a more severe penalty is prescribed by law for the act or  
20 omission which brings about the abuse or neglect.

21 3. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 4, any person  
22 who exploits an older person or a vulnerable person shall be  
23 punished:

24 (a) For the first offense, if the value of any money, assets and  
25 property obtained or used:

26 (1) Is less than \$650, of either of the following, as  
27 determined by the court:

28 (I) A category C felony as provided in NRS 193.130; or

29 (II) A gross misdemeanor by imprisonment in the county  
30 jail for not more than 364 days, or by a fine of not more than  
31 \$2,000, or by both fine and imprisonment;

32 (2) Is at least \$650, but less than \$5,000, for a category B  
33 felony by imprisonment in the state prison for a minimum term of  
34 not less than 2 years and a maximum term of not more than 10  
35 years, or by a fine of not more than \$10,000, or by both fine and  
36 imprisonment; or

37 (3) Is \$5,000 or more, for a category B felony by  
38 imprisonment in the state prison for a minimum term of not less  
39 than 2 years and a maximum term of not more than 20 years, or by a  
40 fine of not more than \$25,000, or by both fine and imprisonment; or

41 (b) For the second and all subsequent offenses, regardless of the  
42 value of any money, assets and property obtained or used, for a  
43 category B felony by imprisonment in the state prison for a  
44 minimum term of not less than 2 years and a maximum term of not



1 more than 20 years, or by a fine of not more than \$25,000, or by  
2 both fine and imprisonment,

3 ↪ unless a more severe penalty is prescribed by law for the act  
4 which brought about the exploitation. The monetary value of all of  
5 the money, assets and property of the older person or vulnerable  
6 person which have been obtained or used, or both, may be combined  
7 for the purpose of imposing punishment for an offense charged  
8 pursuant to this subsection.

9 4. If a person exploits an older person or a vulnerable person  
10 and the monetary value of any money, assets and property obtained  
11 cannot be determined, the person shall be punished:

12 (a) For the first offense, of either of the following, as determined  
13 by the court:

14 (1) A category C felony as provided in NRS 193.130; or

15 (2) A gross misdemeanor by imprisonment in the county jail  
16 for not more than 364 days, or by a fine of not more than \$2,000, or  
17 by both fine and imprisonment; or

18 (b) For the second and all subsequent offenses, for a category B  
19 felony by imprisonment in the state prison for a minimum term of  
20 not less than 2 years and a maximum term of not more than 20  
21 years, or by a fine of not more than \$25,000, or by both fine and  
22 imprisonment,

23 ↪ unless a more severe penalty is prescribed by law for the act  
24 which brought about the exploitation.

25 5. Any person who isolates or abandons an older person or a  
26 vulnerable person is guilty:

27 (a) For the first offense, of either of the following, as determined  
28 by the court:

29 (1) A category C felony and shall be punished as provided in  
30 NRS 193.130; or

31 (2) A gross misdemeanor and shall be punished by  
32 imprisonment in the county jail for not more than 364 days, or by a  
33 fine of not more than \$2,000, or by both fine and imprisonment; or

34 (b) For the second and all subsequent offenses, of a category B  
35 felony and shall be punished by imprisonment in the state prison for  
36 a minimum term of not less than 2 years and a maximum term of not  
37 more than 10 years, and may be further punished by a fine of not  
38 more than \$5,000,

39 ↪ unless a more severe penalty is prescribed by law for the act or  
40 omission which brings about the isolation or abandonment.

41 6. A person who violates any provision of subsection 1, if  
42 substantial bodily or mental harm or death results to the older person  
43 or vulnerable person, is guilty of a category B felony and shall be  
44 punished by imprisonment in the state prison for a minimum term of  
45 not less than 2 years and a maximum term of not more than



1 20 years, unless a more severe penalty is prescribed by law for the  
2 act or omission which brings about the abuse.

3 7. A person who violates any provision of subsection 2, if  
4 substantial bodily or mental harm or death results to the older person  
5 or vulnerable person, shall be punished for a category B felony by  
6 imprisonment in the state prison for a minimum term of not less  
7 than 2 years and a maximum term of not more than 20 years, unless  
8 a more severe penalty is prescribed by law for the act or omission  
9 which brings about the abuse or neglect.

10 8. In addition to any other penalty imposed against a person for  
11 a violation of any provision of NRS 200.5091 to 200.50995,  
12 inclusive, *and section 1 of this act* the court shall order the person  
13 to pay restitution.

14 9. As used in this section:

15 (a) "Allow" means to take no action to prevent or stop the abuse  
16 or neglect of an older person or a vulnerable person if the person  
17 knows or has reason to know that the older person or vulnerable  
18 person is being abused or neglected.

19 (b) "Permit" means permission that a reasonable person would  
20 not grant and which amounts to a neglect of responsibility attending  
21 the care and custody of an older person or a vulnerable person.

22 (c) "Substantial mental harm" means an injury to the intellectual  
23 or psychological capacity or the emotional condition of an older  
24 person or a vulnerable person as evidenced by an observable and  
25 substantial impairment of the ability of the older person or  
26 vulnerable person to function within his or her normal range of  
27 performance or behavior.

28 **Sec. 5.** (Deleted by amendment.)

29 **Sec. 6.** NRS 162C.330 is hereby amended to read as follows:

30 162C.330 1. The provisions of this chapter must not be  
31 construed to affect the requirement of any person to report the  
32 abuse, neglect, exploitation, isolation or abandonment of an older  
33 person or a vulnerable person as provided in NRS 200.5091 to  
34 200.50995, inclusive ~~§~~, *and section 1 of this act.*

35 2. As used in this section, the words and terms defined in NRS  
36 200.5091 to 200.50995, inclusive, *and section 1 of this act* have the  
37 meanings ascribed to them in those sections.

