

**MINUTES OF THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**Eighty-second Session
June 3, 2023**

The Senate Committee on Finance was called to order by Chair Marilyn Dondero Loop at 1:05 p.m. on Saturday, June 3, 2023, in Room 2135 of the Legislative Building, Carson City, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 4412E of the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada. [Exhibit A](#) is the Agenda. [Exhibit B](#) is the Attendance Roster. All exhibits are available and on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Marilyn Dondero Loop, Chair
Senator Nicole J. Cannizzaro, Vice Chair
Senator Dallas Harris
Senator Dina Neal
Senator Rochelle T. Nguyen
Senator Pete Goicoechea
Senator Heidi Seevers Gansert
Senator Robin L. Titus

GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:

Assemblywoman Shea Backus, Assembly District No. 37
Assemblywoman Tracy Brown-May, Assembly District No. 42
Assemblywoman Lesley E. Cohen, Assembly District No. 29
Assemblywoman Michelle Gorelow, Assembly District No. 35
Assemblywoman Brittney Miller, Assembly District No. 5
Assemblywoman Daniele Monroe-Moreno, Assembly District No.1
Assemblywoman Sabra Newby, Assembly District No. 10
Assemblyman David Orentlicher, Assembly District No. 20
Assemblywoman Shondra Summers-Armstrong, Assembly District No. 6
Assemblywoman Selena Torres, Assembly District No. 3
Assemblyman Howard Watts, Assembly District No. 15

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Wayne Thorley, Senate Fiscal Analyst
Cathy Crocket, Chief Principal Deputy Fiscal Analyst
Adam Drost, Principal Program Analyst
Jaimarie Mangoba, Principal Program Analyst
James Malone, Senior Program Analyst
Paul Breen, Committee Assistant
Michelle Friedlander, Committee Secretary
Dee Chekowitz-Dykes, Committee Secretary

OTHERS PRESENT:

Andres Moses, Assistant Court Administrator, Eighth Judicial District Court,
Clark County
John McCormick, Assistant Court Administrator, Administrative Office of the
Courts, Nevada Supreme Court
Michael D. Hillerby, Nevada District Judges' Association
Jessica Ferrato, Second Judicial District Court, Washoe County; American
College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, Nevada Section
Zach Conine, Nevada State Treasurer
Erik Jimenez, Chief Policy Deputy, Office of the State Treasurer
Elyse Monroy-Marsala, Children's Advocacy Alliance; Nevada Public Health
Association; Nevada Primary Care Association
Paul Catha, Culinary Workers Union Local 226
Christine Saunders, Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada;
Nevada Immigrant Coalition
Eric Jeng, One APIA Nevada; Asian Community Development Council
Jon Norman, Nevada Coalition of Legal Services Providers
Dora Martinez, Nevada Disability Peer Action Coalition
Shelbie Swartz, Battle Born Progress
Fergus Laughridge, Rural Regional Behavioral Health Policy Board
Sara Hunt, Assistant Dean, Behavioral Health Sciences, Kirk Kerkorian School of
Medicine, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Alejandro Rodriguez, Nevada System of Higher Education
Zoe Houghton, MedX AirOne; Nevada Outdoor Business Coalition; Outdoor
Industry Association
Constance Brooks, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Dan Musgrove, Clark County Regional Behavior Health Policy Board;
Clark County Children's Mental Health Consortium
Joan Hall, Nevada Rural Hospital Partners
Alex Tanchek, Vitality Unlimited; New Frontier Treatment Center
Christi Cabrera-Georgeson, Deputy Director, Nevada Conservation League
Dawn Etcheverry, Nevada State Education Association
Jermareon Williams, Western Resource Advocates
Unidentified, Environmental Justice Youth Organizer
Kerry Durmick, All Voting is Local Action
Emily Persaud-Zamora, Silver State Voices; Latin Nevadan Vote Coalition
Janet Quintero, United Way of Southern Nevada
Janine Hansen, Nevada Families for Freedom
Lynn Chapman, Independent American Party of Nevada
Jim DeGraffenreid, Nevada Republican Party
Gabriel Di Chiara, Chief Deputy, Office of the Secretary of State
Stacie Weeks, Administrator, Division of Health Care Financing and Policy,
Nevada Department of Health and Human Services
Catherine Nielsen, Executive Director, Nevada Governor's Council on
Developmental Disabilities
Melissa Clement, Nevada Right to Life
Melanie Young, Deputy Administrator, Division of Child and Family Services,
Nevada Department of Health and Human Services
Steven Cohen
Liz Ortenburger, SafeNest
William Horne, SafeNest
Serena Evans, Nevada Coalition to END Domestic and Sexual Violence
Jeff Rogan, Clark County
David Cherry, City of Henderson
Mary Pierczynski, State of Nevada Association of Providers
Matthew Wilkie
Christina Quattrone
Jon Leleu, Alliance to Prevent Legionnaires' Disease, Inc.
Patrick Kelly, Nevada Hospital Association
George Ross, HCA Healthcare
Bryan Wachter, Retail Association of Nevada
Christina Cottrell
Christine Hess, Nevada Housing Coalition
Dakota Hoskins, Service Employees International Union 1107
Cadence Matijevich, Washoe County

Nic Ciccone, City of Reno
Arielle Edwards, Nevada HAND, Inc.
Vanessa Dunn, Children's Advocacy Alliance; Nevada Psychiatric Association;
Nevada Public Health Association
Sarah Adler, National Alliance on Mental Illness, Nevada
Tom Clark, Reno + Sparks Chamber of Commerce
Mendy Elliott, Southern Nevada Regional Housing Authority; Reno Housing
Authority; Nevada Rural Housing Authority
Steve Messinger, Nevada Primary Care Association
Brooke Page, Nevada Corporation for Supportive Housing; Nevada Housing
Coalition
Will Adler, Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe; Duck Valley Indian Reservation;
Duckwater Shoshone Tribe and Reservation
Kent Ervin, Nevada Faculty Alliance
Carter Bundy, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees
Caitlin Gatchalian, American Heart Association
Amy Stephenson, Director, Office of Finance, Office of the Governor
Tonja Brown, Advocates for the Inmates and the Innocent
Ayanna Simmons-Oglesby, Nevada Strong Battle Born
Tina Leiss, Public Employees' Retirement System of Nevada
Alexander Marks, Nevada State Education Association
Amber Falgout, Battle Born Progress
Marcie Ryba, Executive Director, Nevada Department of Indigent Defense
Services
Vinson Guthreau, Nevada Association of Counties
Mary Walker, Douglas County; Lyon County; Storey County
Craig Statucki, Interim Deputy Superintendent, Educator Effectiveness and
Family Engagement, Nevada Department of Education
Megan Peterson, Deputy Superintendent, Nevada Department of Education
Alexander Marks, Nevada State Education Association
Lea Case, Nevada Psychiatric Association
Michael Flores, University of Nevada, Reno
Paige Barnes, Nevada Nurses Association
Connor Cain, Touro University
Jennifer Lanahan, Las Vegas Paiute Tribe; Reno Sparks Indian Colony
Beth Schmidt, Lieutenant, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
Abbey Bernhardt, National Alliance on Mental Illness, Nevada Chapter
Jimmy Lau, Dignity Health-St. Rose Dominican Hospital
Jayson Dagher

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
We begin with a work session.

CATHY CROCKET (Chief Principal Deputy Fiscal Analyst):
The first bill for work session is Senate Bill (S.B.) 221 which was heard in Committee on May 26, 2023. To the extent federal funding is available, beginning October 1, 2023, it requires the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Division of Health Care Financing and Policy to amend the *Medicaid Services Manual* to create a specific billing category for special clinics that provide services primarily to children with cancer and rare diseases, and establishes associated billing guidance and a rate-setting methodology.

SENATE BILL 221: Revises provisions relating to Medicaid. (BDR S-951)

The bill becomes effective upon passage and approval and was presented by Senator Fabian Doñate. No amendments were discussed during the bill hearing. There is a fiscal impact to the General Fund of \$294,240 in fiscal year (FY) 2023-2024 and \$890,135 and in FY 2024-2025. Authorized funds required would be \$517,759 in FY 2023-2024 and \$1,459,291 in FY 2024-2025. There were no comments in support, opposition or neutral on the bill.

If the Committee wishes to act on the bill, the motion would be to amend and do pass as amended to add the required funding.

SENATOR TITUS MOVED TO AMEND AND DO PASS AS AMENDED
S.B. 221 TO ADD THE REQUIRED FUNDING.

SENATOR NGUYEN SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATOR CANNIZZARO WAS EXCUSED FOR
THE VOTE).

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WAYNE THORLEY (Senate Fiscal Analyst):
Senate Bill 490 is in work session and was presented to the Committee on May 15, 2023, by Kirk Hendrick, Chairman of the Gaming Control Board.

SENATE BILL 490: Makes appropriations to the Nevada Gaming Control Board relating to information technology. (BDR S-1160)

The bill in its current form requests a General Fund appropriation of \$3.6 million for the continuation of the replacement of the Board's information technology system. In section 2 is a request for a General Fund appropriation of \$1.7 million for replacement or purchase of computer hardware, software, other equipment, and employee training.

There was no testimony in support, opposition or neutral at the hearing when the bill was presented. The Chairman mentioned the amount needed for the continuation of the Alpha Migration Project has increased to \$13.5 million. The increased amount is for the expedited completion of the project. Chairman Hendrick sent the Committee a follow-up memo comparing the estimated completion date with additional funding of \$13.5 million to the original requested funding of \$3.6 million.

The Chair has a proposed amendment.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

After a discussion of the error and needed funding with Mr. Hendrick and others, I suggest we award \$8 million and put \$5.5 million in the Interim Finance Committee's (IFC) Restricted Contingency Fund. The Gaming Control Board can report its progress to the IFC and award the funds as needed, if that is permissible with the Committee.

MR. THORLEY:

With this amendment, the appropriation amount in section 1 would be increased to \$8 million. A new section would be added to the bill for an appropriation to the IFC Restricted Contingency Account for \$5.5 million.

The Gaming Control Board would come before the IFC in the upcoming Interim to request an allocation of some or all the \$5.5 million upon demonstration that the project is progressing toward completion based on the timeline included in the Gantt chart submitted by the Chairman.

There would be no change to the General Fund appropriation of \$1.7 million in section 2 of S.B. 490.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

I want to add, it is not lost on any of us that the gaming industry is our industry. It is important we spend this money judiciously.

SENATOR NGUYEN MOVED TO AMEND AND DO PASS AS AMENDED S.B. 490 WITH THE AMENDMENT TO INCREASE THE APPROPRIATION AMOUNT IN SECTION 1 TO \$8 MILLION AND THE ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION TO THE IFC RESTRICTED CONTINGENCY ACCOUNT FOR \$5.5 MILLION AS DESCRIBED BY CHAIR DONDERO LOOP.

SENATOR CANNIZZARO SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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Ms. CROCKET:

Senate Bill 505 was heard in Committee on June 3, 2023. It provides an \$11 million General Fund appropriation to the Office of the Governor, Office of Energy for a program to track and optimize energy use by State agencies' vehicle fleets to conserve energy and reduce costs, conduct audits of State-owned buildings to recommend efficient ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and providing for other similar matters.

SENATE BILL 505: Makes an appropriation to the Office of Energy in the Office of the Governor for a program to reduce energy use by and emissions resulting from certain activities of state agencies. (BDR S-1217)

The bill becomes effective upon passage and approval. There were no fiscal notes submitted. It was presented by Senator Nicole Cannizzaro, and noted it would help the State achieve its emission goals of net zero by 2050.

No amendments were discussed during the bill hearing, and there were no comments in support, opposition or neutral.

SENATOR CANNIZZARO MOVED TO DO PASS S.B. 505.

SENATOR NGUYEN SECONDED THE MOTION.

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SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

I will vote yes but reserve my right on this bill. We have already allocated \$5 million of State funds to look at conservation throughout the State.

SENATOR GOICOECHEA:

I am also concerned about this \$11 million appropriation. I am going to be a no on this bill and hope we can track this less expensively.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS GOICOECHEA AND TITUS VOTED NO.)

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CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

We will now have bill hearings and will start with Assembly Bill (A.B.) 15.

ASSEMBLY BILL 15: Prescribes the manner for increasing the base salaries of district judges. (BDR 1-430)

ANDRES MOSES (Assistant Court Administrator, Eighth Judicial District Court, Clark County):

Assembly Bill 15 relates to compensation for 90 district court judges throughout the State. The bill will apply the same cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) increases given to State employees and apply those to the district court judges. In A.B. 15, we used the same methodology and language used for Legislators and constitutional officers.

The bill has no fiscal impact on the 2023-2025 biennium since the judges will not get a pay increase until their new term, which will start in 2027.

SENATOR CANNIZZARO:

The cumulative percentage increase in the salaries of classified employees in the State began on January 5, 2009, and ends on January 3, 2027. Are we increasing the salary from \$130,000 to \$160,000? In 2027, would the salary be \$160,000 plus the cumulative of any COLA increases that have occurred from 2009 to 2027?

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JOHN MCCORMICK (Assistant Court Administrator, Administrative Office of the Court, Nevada Supreme Court):

The change in salary to \$160,000 happened in 2007 and was implemented in 2009. The increase would be the cumulative percentage on a base salary of \$160,000.

SENATOR CANNIZZARO:

Why are we using the period from 2009 to 2027? Do you know what the cumulative percentage would be?

MR. MOSES:

The year 2009 was the last time the judges received a COLA increase. It is 10.5 percent cumulatively and does not include the 2025 COLA increase for State employees.

SENATOR CANNIZZARO:

Is it 10.5 percent plus whatever is approved in 2025?

MR. MOSES:

Yes.

SENATOR GOICOECHEA:

That will be a 40 percent increase.

SENATOR NEAL:

Will the annual salary base of \$181,000 grow with COLA increases?

MR. MCCORMICK:

The current base of \$160,000 was implemented in S.B. No. 248 of the 74th Session. It will be the \$160,000 plus whatever amount the cumulative percentage is.

SENATOR NEAL:

In *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS) 3.030, the language said after 2009, the base would be \$160,000. This bill strikes out that language, and as I understand it the floor is now \$160,000. What will judges' salaries be ending on January 3, 2027?

MR. THORLEY:

Based on the fiscal notes submitted from the Administrative Office of the Court, salaries vary depending on the position. In Budget Account 101-1490 for judicial elected officials' salaries, the \$160,000 would become approximately \$210,000 in 2027. This makes assumptions in the calculation using only the Governor's COLA adjustments included in A.B. 522, known as the Pay Bill, this Session.

ASSEMBLY BILL 522: Revises provisions relating to the compensation of state employees. (BDR S-1212)

LEGISLATIVE – JUDICIAL

JUDICIAL BRANCH

State Judicial Elected Officials — Budget Page JUDICIAL-25 (Volume I)
Budget Account 101-1490

SENATOR NEAL:

Did the provisions of S.B. 58 include Legislative authority over their salaries?

SENATE BILL 58 (1st Reprint): Revises provisions related to the Judicial Department of the State Government. (BDR 1-436)

MR. THORLEY:

Senate Bill 58 created the pot of money for nonelected position salaries in the Judicial Branch. Assembly Bill 15 only applies to elected positions, District Court judge positions, which were not included in S.B. 58 or in the Appropriations Act language related to that action.

SENATOR NEAL:

Will \$210,000 become the base in 2027?

MR. THORLEY:

My calculation was inexact math, but yes, that would become the base salary with the cumulative COLA increases through January 2027. We can give you more precise numbers after the meeting if the Committee wishes.

SENATOR NEAL:

In short, it is a \$50,000 raise.

MR. THORLEY:

Yes. There are several large COLAs included in the Pay Bill from this Session. The Governor recommended a 10 percent COLA in FY 2023-2024. In the Pay Bill the Legislature approved and the Governor signed an additional 2 percent for a total of 12 percent. There was a 4 percent COLA recommended by the Governor for FY 2024-2025 in the Pay Bill. The Legislature added an additional 7 percent for a total of 11 percent in FY 2024-2025.

In the upcoming biennium, we are looking at a 23 percent COLA. If you calculate previous years' COLAs from 2009, you have a significant increase.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

Even though there are increases, that is not what a judge might earn as the salary doesn't change until the person is reelected. In this case, it looks like those amounts will be changed regardless of where judges are in their election cycle.

MR. MCCORMICK:

All 90 of the District Court judges are on the same election cycle. There is a constitutional prohibition against raising or decreasing their salaries during the current term. This raise would not take effect until all 90 run for election or reelection in 2026 with a new term beginning in 2027.

SENATOR NGUYEN:

I support S.B. 58. I know it seems like a significant amount of money, but there have not been changes in salaries over the years. We have seen disparities in pay within our own Judicial Branch between Municipal Court judges and Supreme Court justices. Are we lagging nationally?

MR. MOSES:

Yes. According to the National Center for State Courts in their Judicial survey, when adjusted for cost of living, Nevada ranks forty-fifth in the Country. We are one of the only jurisdictions in the Country that has not had any increases for judicial officers in the last four to six years.

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CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

We will go to support of A.B. 15.

MICHAEL D. HILLERBY (Nevada District Judges' Association):

Just a reminder, it was A.B. No. 462 of the 73rd Session in 2005 that created the current system for the Legislature and all constitutional officers. That has been the COLA increase system in place since then. The judges have not been on that system and have not seen any increases since 2009. We support A.B. 15.

JESSICA FERRATO (Second Judicial District Court, Washoe County):

The Second Judicial District Court is in support of A.B. 15.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

We will close the hearing on A.B. 15, and we will go to A.B. 16.

ASSEMBLY BILL 16 (1st Reprint): Prescribes the manner for increasing the base salaries of justices of the Nevada Supreme Court and judges of the Nevada Court of Appeals. (BDR 1-434)

MR. MCCORMICK:

Assembly Bill 16 applies the same COLA mechanism we just discussed for the District Court judges to the justices of the Nevada Supreme Court and the judges of the Nevada Court of Appeals. This would apply to ten judicial officers.

This bill has a fiscal impact on the 2023-2025 biennium for approximately six months of the increase for the next three Supreme Court justices who are up for reelection. The cost is approximately \$86,000.

SENATOR NGUYEN:

It looks like A.B. 15 will go into effect in 2025. Is there a hierarchy in pay among the judges and justices?

MR. MCCORMICK:

The Supreme Court justices' base pay is \$170,000, \$10,000 more than the district judges. It may appear different because the Supreme Court justices are on a staggered election cycle. In the next general election, there will be three justices up for reelection, then two the next cycle and then the next two. It was much cleaner to do the bill for the district judges who are on one cycle.

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The cumulative COLA increases for the prior two terms for Supreme Court justices will be added and will be implemented when the new term begins. There will be a chance for disparity in salaries because of the cycles of when justices are elected.

SENATOR NEAL:

What is the amount of salary growth in A.B. 16 with the applied COLAs?

MR. MCCORMICK:

For the first three justices who would receive this COLA, it would be 13 percent plus the amount authorized in the Pay Bill. It is an estimated 23 percent.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

We will close the hearing on A.B. 16 and pause to introduce a Bill Draft Request (BDR) to the Committee.

MR. THORLEY:

Bill Draft Request S-1230 is a Senate Committee on Finance BDR. It contains the exact same language as A.B. 520 which is the State Appropriations Act.

BILL DRAFT REQUEST S-1230: Makes various changes regarding state financial administration and makes appropriations for the support of the civil government of the State of Nevada for the 2023-2025 biennium. (Later introduced as S.B. 511.)

ASSEMBLY BILL 520: Makes various changes regarding the state financial administration and makes appropriations for the support of civil government of the State. (BDR S-1210)

SENATOR CANNIZZARO MOVED TO INTRODUCE BDR S-1230.

SENATOR NGUYEN SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

We will move to A.B. 28.

ASSEMBLY BILL 28 (2nd Reprint): Establishes the Nevada Baby Bonds Program.
(BDR 18-356)

ZACH CONINE (Nevada State Treasurer):

Assembly Bill 28 establishes the Nevada Baby Bonds Program. The Program would take the population of Nevadans born in a year whose birth was paid for by Medicaid, it would then select recipients by lottery. The number of recipients is based on the proceeds available in the appropriation. Each baby would receive \$3,200 invested in a baby bond at the time of their birth or within the first year. The baby bond would then grow over the next 18 years before becoming available to them for very specific and finite purposes: the purchase of a home, continuing with their higher education needs or starting a small business. All proceeds are intended to go directly to the recipient. We anticipate we will have an opportunity to talk to the recipient prior to the distribution of the funds. We would inform the recipient about the bond available to them and the other opportunities available, such as Pell Grants or other assistance for higher education. In the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means, the appropriation was amended from \$80 million over the 2023-2025 biennium to \$5 million.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

Would you give more details on how the bond program will work?

TREASURER CONINE:

Originally, we started with the entire population of children born under Medicaid, but it was a big fiscal note. The program was amended to \$5 million. After talking to experts in this space, the fairest way to pick recipients within that population is a lottery system. If additional proceeds are available later, we could expand the program.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

What type of system will you have to notify the recipients and track it for 18 years? We want to make sure they receive the benefits, and it does not end up in unclaimed property.

TREASURER CONINE:

We spend a lot of time staying connected with families through Nevada's 529 Plans, Nevada College Kickstart and Nevada Prepaid Tuition Plan. There is a plan to communicate with recipients over time so they can plan for it. We found with College Kickstart, simply knowing that there are funds available

in the future allows people to make different decisions and make different plans for college expenses.

SENATOR HARRIS:

Is there any provision in the bill to assure this helps continued Nevadans? If a child receives the bond but their parents move them to Florida permanently, is there anything to mitigate against that possibility?

TREASURER CONINE:

Yes. To receive the proceeds from the baby bond, people must be a resident of Nevada for a year before those proceeds are available. We can use in-State tuition records but did not want to penalize someone whose family is in the military and has left Nevada for example. We will determine whether they are in Nevada for other reasons than just to receive this bond.

SENATOR HARRIS:

In the instance of a child who wins a baby bond in the lottery but moves at two years old, would they forfeit that baby bond?

TREASURER CONINE:

Yes, it is my understanding they would forfeit.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

Can a recipient be born here, move away by no fault of their own, come back and establish residency for a year and get the money?

TREASURER CONINE:

Yes. We do expect there will be recipients who move away through no fault of their own. If they choose to come back here to establish residency and go to any Nevada school or university, we want to be sure we can support them as Nevadans.

We expect this \$3,200 bond will grow to about \$10,000 or \$12,000 by the end of the term. It is a lot of money but not enough to encourage someone to move from another state.

SENATOR HARRIS:

Is there any opportunity for parents to add to this bond?

TREASURER CONINE:

From an administrative perspective, we would pool the funds together which makes it less expensive to manage the investment. Parents cannot add money to the Baby Bonds Program, but they can use College Kickstart or any of our other college savings programs.

ERIK JIMENEZ (Chief Policy Deputy, Office of the State Treasurer):

One of the eligible uses in section 9, subsection 2, paragraph (c), subparagraph (4) is to invest in financial assets of personal capital that provides a long-term gain to wages or wealth. We do not know what is going to happen 18 years from now, or 30 years from now. We have contemplated and would promulgate under regulation if funds from a baby bond could be contributed to a retirement savings account.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

Why would we give an 18-year-old access to cash instead of using the funds toward a prepaid tuition plan? A prepaid tuition plan could be transferable to a family member.

TREASURER CONINE:

One of our intentions with A.B. 28 was to help fight generational poverty. We know education can be one of the ways to fight generational poverty, but homeownership is one of the largest.

We wanted the dollars to be flexible. Our intention both from a financial literacy perspective and from a use of funds perspective is to work with them to determine which of those potential investments would be most effective for them. We can direct them to other available programs, such as down payment assistance, educational programs, or small business assistance.

ELYSE MONROY-MARSALA (Children's Advocacy Alliance; Nevada Public Health Association; Nevada Primary Care Association):

We support A.B. 28.

PAUL CATHA (Culinary Workers Union Local 226):

We support A.B. 28.

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CHRISTINE SAUNDERS (Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada; Nevada Immigrant Coalition):
We support A.B. 28.

ERIC JENG (One APIA Nevada; Asian Community Development Council):
We support A.B. 28.

JON NORMAN (Nevada Coalition of Legal Services Providers):
We support A.B. 28.

DORA MARTINEZ (Nevada Disability Peer Action Coalition):
We support A.B. 28.

SHELBY SWARTZ (Battle Born Progress):
We support A.B. 28.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
We will close the hearing on A.B. 28, and we will open the hearing on A.B. 37.

ASSEMBLY BILL 37 (1st Reprint): Authorizes the establishment of the Behavioral Health Workforce Development Center of Nevada. (BDR 34-361)

FERGUS LAUGHRIDGE (Rural Regional Behavioral Health Policy Board):
I represent the Rural Regional Behavioral Health Policy Board and have worked on this bill in collaboration with the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV). We are in a crisis with behavioral health issues in the State. We have tried several fixes, but it is time to legislate action.

The purpose of this bill is to establish the Behavioral Health Workforce Development Center of Nevada to grow a robust pipeline for behavioral health providers in Nevada. The Center will reside within the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE). It will incorporate and expand upon existing successful programs already in place and introduce new programs and connections across the educational system.

The Center is modeled after systems that have worked in Nebraska. It will have an advisory committee with a Statewide stakeholder group and will provide outreach and education about mental health professionals to K-12 and

adult learners. At healthcare fairs, we speak to high school students who have little interest in becoming marriage and family therapists or psychologists. We strive to change that.

The Center will expand the mental health training programs within higher education with an emphasis on building a diverse workforce to serve Nevada's diverse communities. We want to create a pipeline to keep them here. We cannot wait any longer for them to come from other states. This bill will increase postgraduate internships and increase the number of provider supervisors. The supervisory aspect has been a challenge in getting our people licensed. In addition, we will support the existing workforce through continuing education and technical assistance and work with the licensing boards.

This will work off a hub-and-spoke model where the hub could be either one or both UNLV or the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR). The spokes will reach out to the regions across the State. Each region knows their unique needs. We are the Rural Regional Behavioral Health Policy Board, but I want to emphasize this is a Statewide initiative.

Assembly Bill 37 comes with a fiscal note, and its first reprint incorporates Amendment 858 which was adopted.

SENATOR NEAL:

How much money do you think you will expend doing outreach to the high schools to get them familiar with the pipeline you are creating?

SARA HUNT (Assistant Dean, Behavioral Health Sciences, Kirk Kerkorian School of Medicine, University of Nevada, Las Vegas):

We have allotted \$90,000 for the first year's operating expenses that will include the development of curriculum to be used in the K-12 space to do trainings. Those educational outreaches can take on many different forms, such as stopping into a class to talk about a mental health topic, presenting information on how to become a mental health professional or setting up a multiday introductory camp to mental health professions. This would be similar to a program by our colleagues in the School of Nursing. It is difficult to say exactly how much cost is involved because it can go into different types and lengths of training, and provide outreach in different forms.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

Creating pipelines is a long-term solution. Dean's Future Scholars or the Nevada First-Gen Network is a good example. If you start mentoring early, students will learn about and believe they belong in these professions.

Senate Bill 300 was introduced to establish internships for training. As you mentioned, it is difficult to find supervision for the required clinical work. This is an important piece of broadening the pipeline in behavioral health.

SENATE BILL 300: Makes an appropriation from the State General Fund to the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, for a grant program for certain interns. (BDR S-100)

SENATOR NGUYEN:

I heard about this program during the Southern Nevada Forum. How will the Nevada program differ from other states' programs?

Ms. HUNT:

Nevada's program will be based off a model from the University of Nebraska, which has been in existence for over a decade with good results in growing their own mental health pipeline. Southern Illinois University and the University of Illinois, Chicago are opening their center this year after it went through their legislative process.

The Illinois model uses the hub-and-spoke model with Southern Illinois University and the University of Illinois Chicago as the hubs with programming out across the state. Nebraska has established several centers across their state versus a hub-and-spoke model.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

In section 10.5 of the bill, there is a General Fund appropriation for \$684,926 in FY 2023-2024 and \$1,369,321 in FY 2024-2025. Is this the final fiscal note?

MR. LAUGHRIDGE:

Yes, it is over the 2023-2025 biennium.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

Would that fund eight positions?

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MR. LAUGHRIDGE:
Yes.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
Is that sustainable?

MR. LAUGHRIDGE:
We have had conversations with NSHE, and we could possibly be sustainable as they work more of the program costs into their budget.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
This is a very important subject.

ALEJANDRO RODRIGUEZ (Nevada System of Higher Education):
We support A.B. 37 and the opportunity to provide for the future of the behavioral health workforce in our State.

ZOE HOUGHTON (MedX AirOne; Nevada Outdoor Business Coalition;
Outdoor Industry Association):
We support A.B. 37.

CONSTANCE BROOKS (University of Nevada, Las Vegas):
We support A.B. 37 to address a critical workforce shortage.

DAN MUSGROVE (Clark County Regional Behavior Health Policy Board;
Clark County Children's Mental Health Consortium):
Every part of the State is facing a critical need, and this is game-changing legislation. We support A.B. 37.

JOAN HALL (Nevada Rural Hospital Partners):
Ditto to what you have heard before. We support A.B. 37.

MS. MONROY-MARSALA:
We support A.B. 37.

ALEX TANCHEK (Vitality Unlimited; New Frontier Treatment Center):
We support A.B. 37.

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CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

We will close the hearing on A.B. 37 and go to A.B. 128.

ASSEMBLY BILL 128 (1st Reprint): Makes an appropriation to the Outdoor Education and Recreation Grant Program Account for the costs of the program. (BDR S-778)

CHRISTI CABRERA-GEORGESON (Deputy Director, Nevada Conservation League): Assembly Bill 128 will make a \$500,000 appropriation to the Outdoor Education and Recreation Grant program over the 2023-2025 biennium. This program was created under the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Division of Outdoor Recreation in 2019 to provide underserved youth in Nevada with high-quality outdoor education recreation opportunities. This program has never received State funding hindering its implementation and success.

After this money is appropriated, public agencies, nonprofit organizations and other community-based entities would be able to apply for micro grants up to \$5,000 or Tier 2 grants from \$5,000 to \$50,000. According to the Division of Outdoor Recreation, this level of appropriation would be able to fund approximately 13 grantees and serve 2,400 youth each year.

Studies show getting kids outdoors is beneficial to not only their health but their cognitive abilities. This is especially true for students from low-income backgrounds and communities of color who often do not have the same access to the outdoors. We urge the members to support this A.B. 128.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

Was there a one-shot appropriation to fund this program?

MS. CABRERA-GEORGESON:

Yes. Senate Bill 474 from the Office of the Governor, Office of Finance (GFO) passed through your Committee to the Assembly. The Assembly is moving forward with A.B. 128 instead of S.B. 474. This would be the only funding for this program.

SENATE BILL 474: Makes an appropriation to the Outdoor Education and Recreation Grant Program Account. (BDR S-1174)

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DAWN ETCHEVERRY (Nevada State Education Association):
We support A.B. 128.

Ms. HOUGHTON:
We support A.B. 128.

Ms. SWARTZ:
We support A.B. 128.

JERMAREON WILLIAMS (Western Resource Advocates):
I have submitted our detailed comments ([Exhibit C](#)) in support of A.B. 128.

UNIDENTIFIED (Environmental Justice Youth Organizer):
I am an environmental justice organizer. We support A.B. 128. Through our youth programs, we have met many students who have never experienced the outdoors. These funds will break down barriers for those students and other students across our great State.

Ms. MARTINEZ:
We support A.B. 28.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
We will close the hearing on A.B. 128, and we will open the hearing on A.B. 246.

[ASSEMBLY BILL 246 \(2nd Reprint\)](#): Revises provision governing elections.
(BDR 24-821)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN SELENA TORRES (Assembly District No. 3):
Assembly Bill 246 revises provisions governing elections specifically to improve access to voting for limited-English proficient Nevadans by establishing additional State standards and resources for providing voting materials in languages other than English. Assembly Bill 246 will eliminate language barriers many Nevadans face in the electoral process and will ensure it is accessible and equitable for all Nevadans. Every Nevadan has a fundamental right to participate in the electoral process.

This bill was heard in the Senate Legislative Operations and Elections Committee. Over the 2023-2025 biennium, the Office of the Secretary of State

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projects to have an associated cost of \$449,547. This includes an estimated \$56,000 to translate the listed languages in this bill on election materials across all 17 counties; \$14,000 for a Statewide voter language access hotline; and \$270,000 for staffing expenses to carry out the core functions of this bill.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

Is there a federal law around the threshold to provide voters with election materials in languages other than English?

KERRY DURMICK (All Voting is Local Action):

The federal threshold is currently 10,000 voters or 5 percent whichever applies first to the county or state.

We are asking for a decrease to 5,000 to uphold a State mandate. This bill was modeled after a Colorado bill.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN TORRES:

The bill will impact Washoe County and will add language in Spanish, which Washoe County is already providing, and Clark County's ballots will expand to Chinese.

MR. JENG:

We missed getting Chinese language ballots by 500 households. We support A.B. 246, which is an equitable and physically responsible way to increase access for our limited-English proficient citizen communities.

SENATOR NGUYEN:

Would the inclusion of Chinese be Mandarin Chinese?

MR. JENG:

Yes, Mandarin Chinese.

MS. DURMICK:

We support A.B. 246. We want to make sure all voters have access to vote in the language of their choice.

MS. SAUNDERS:

We support A.B. 246.

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EMILY PERSAUD-ZAMORA (Silver State Voices; Latin Nevadan Vote Coalition)
We support A.B. 246.

JANET QUINTERO (United Way of Southern Nevada):
The United Way of Southern Nevada has committed to language access for our basic resources. We support A.B. 246.

Ms. SWARTZ:
Battle Born Progress supports A.B. 246 to allow more accessible languages be added to ballots supporting the right to vote.

Ms. MARTINEZ:
We support A.B. 246.

JANINE HANSEN (Nevada Families for Freedom):
Anyone seeking naturalization must have the ability to speak English at the time of the naturalization exam. This is an important requirement and leads to cultural integration. We want to encourage people to embrace English to participate in that way. We oppose A.B. 246.

LYNN CHAPMAN (Independent American Party of Nevada):
An annual reference publication which provides statistics on languages, estimates there are 7,111 living languages in the world today. English is spoken in 58 countries. Let us not waste the taxpayer's hard-earned dollars by printing thousands of ballots and registration applications in many different languages. I oppose A.B. 246.

JIM DEGRAFFENREID (Nevada Republican Party):
We oppose A.B. 246. In the process to become a naturalized U.S. citizen, the fourth requirement is to be able to read, write and speak basic English. Article 2, section 1 of the Nevada Constitution states that U.S. citizens have the right to vote. If the requirements for all naturalized citizens are to read, write and speak English, why would any U.S. citizen need a ballot in another language?

This bill places a significant unfunded mandate burden on Nevada counties. The Clark County fiscal note is \$750,000 alone. Nevada already offers Spanish and Tagalog ballots pursuant to federal law. This bill clarifies that limited-English proficiency means being unable to speak or understand English adequately to

participate in the electoral process. According to the Nevada Department of Education, in 2021 only 44 percent of high school students and future voters in Clark County demonstrate proficiency in English and reading.

There is no need for an unfunded government mandate that goes beyond federal law to override the election diversity Nevada voters have demanded at the local level. We support the right of all legal citizens to exercise their right to vote, but we do not support the expenditure of these funds on A.B. 246.

GABRIEL DI CHIARA (Chief Deputy, Office of the Secretary of State):

There would be some paper documents, but most of this translation would happen digitally including translating for voting machines across the State.

It would allow us to provide Spanish in counties that do not currently provide voting in Spanish. The Secretary of State's office will work with the counties to begin gathering languages of preference. We will not print hundreds of thousands of ballots in languages we will not use. We promise we are not trying to waste the State's money.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

We will close A.B. 246, and we will open the hearing on A.B. 383.

ASSEMBLY BILL 383 (2nd Reprint): Revises provisions relating to health care.
(BDR 40-116)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN SELENA TORRES (Assembly District No. 3):

Assembly Bill 383 preserves the right to reproductive health care and makes various changes to ensure working class Nevadans have more affordable and accessible reproductive healthcare coverage. This bill does two core things. First, it expressly names contraception access as a protected and fundamental right in Nevada. Second, it uses new tools to ensure every Nevadan can fully engage in their healthcare decisions in a language they feel most comfortable with.

During conflicting court decisions across the Nation, this bill's fundamental goals are to put Nevadans at ease and to clarify our State's belief in basic reproductive freedom while also building on the work this Body has already done to expand access to birth control.

Sections 2 through 7 of A.B. 383 enact the Right to Reproductive Health Care Act. Sections 2 through 5 provide definitions for this bill. Section 5.5 defines "reproductive health services," meaning any medical, surgical, counseling or referral services relating to the human reproductive system, including without limitation, services relating to pregnancy, contraception, miscarriage, in-vitro fertilization or any procedure or care found by a competent medical professional to be appropriate based upon the wishes of a patient and in accordance with the laws of this State. The definition is nearly identical to that of S.B. 131 which the Governor signed into law on May 30, 2023.

SENATE BILL 131: Revised provision relating to reproductive health care.
(BDR 54-44)

Section 6 prohibits further State or local entities from enacting any substantial burdens on healthcare providers prescribing or individuals seeking any type of reproductive health care. Section 7 outlines the legal process to review any restrictive changes to reproductive health care and codifies the process by which a person or a provider of health care can initiate court proceedings challenging inaccessibility. Section 8 of the bill, as amended, outlines changes to the State Plan for Medicaid; subsection 1(h) changes provisions to include coverage for any critical services relating to contraceptive care.

Section 8, subsection 6 of A.B. 383 is where the fiscal note arises. Subsection 6 directs the DHHS to cover the cost of translation or interpretive services for Medicaid recipients. Generally, the federal government reimburses state costs for these services at 75 percent for Children's Health Insurance Program recipients and 50 percent rate for all other Medicaid recipients. Subsection 6 requires the Department to set the rate of compensation for services like other states.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

Sections 9 through 20 are deleted. Is the total fiscal impact \$125,000?

STACIE WEEKS (Administrator, Division of Health Care Financing and Policy, Nevada Department of Health and Human Services):

Fiscal impact to the General Fund in FY 2023-2024 is \$15,102, FY 2024-2025 is \$23,449 and total for the 2023-2025 biennium is \$38,551. This is to fund the cost of translation services for recipients when tied to contraceptives.

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CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

Those numbers are not the numbers in section 20.5. I just wanted to be clear.

SENATOR TITUS:

Who covers the cost of the interpreter? Would a provider need to hire someone for their office?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN TORRES:

This is specifically related to the Medicaid reimbursement for translation services.

SENATOR TITUS:

If I hire a translator in my office, will there be a billing code for that?

Ms. WEEKS:

Yes.

Ms. SAUNDERS:

The Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada supports A.B. 383.

Ms. MONROY-MARSALA:

The Nevada Primary Care Association supports A.B. 383.

Ms. SWARTZ:

Battle Born Progress supports A.B. 383 because every Nevadan deserves guaranteed access to contraception and reproductive freedom.

CATHERINE NIELSEN (Executive Director, Nevada Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities):

We support A.B. 383.

Ms. MARTINEZ:

Me too.

MELISSA CLEMENT (Nevada Right to Life):

We are opposed to A.B. 383. There are three main parts: translation, birth control and abortion services/reproductive health care. The first two, we do not have a problem with. Assembly Bill 383 was written to create a privileged class of businesses—abortion facilities—and strip local government's

ability to regulate them. This is particularly dangerous for our communities along the I-80 corridor. Like cannabis in local communities, some of them like it, some do not. They get to choose; they get to vote. Those communities should be able to say, we do not want abortion in our community. You are bleeding over into abortion mandates.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

This bill does not cover abortion.

Ms. HANSEN:

I do not see how it does not apply to abortion when it has to do with reproductive healthcare services and businesses. We would call it the Planned Parenthood Abortion Profits Protection Act. We do not oppose the part about contraceptives or translation. Our concerns are mandating local communities. It is antidemocratic, anti-local government, dictatorial and retroactive. The City of Wendover voted not to have a Planned Parenthood Clinic in their community, and according to this bill, they could not do that. We are concerned about mandated abortion clinics next to schools, churches, community centers and homes.

MR. DEGRAFFENREID:

The Nevada Republican Party echoes the comments of Ms. Clement and Ms. Hansen. We believe this is an overreach into local control, and we are disturbed by the fact that the bill is retroactive and would damage our rural communities.

Ms. CHAPMAN:

The Independent American Party of Nevada is opposed to A.B. 383. We are concerned about the overreach into our counties.

SENATOR NGUYEN:

I heard the comments in opposition. I am looking at section 6 on page 3 of the bill and on lines 18 through 20. It says the provisions of section 2 through 7 inclusive of this Act, do not apply to NRS 442.250 or the implementation of NRS 442.250. Abortion is specifically not included and does not apply. Is that correct?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN TORRES:

Yes. There was a conversation about this issue, and many people did not want this to apply to abortion. It also does not mean a clinic could open in a residential area because local government planning and zoning ordinances would still apply. This bill has to do with access to contraception and does not have to do with access to abortion services.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

We will close this hearing and move to A.B. 255.

ASSEMBLY BILL 255 (2nd Reprint): Revises provisions governing adoption.
(BDR 11-658)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN LESLEY E. COHEN (Assembly District No. 29):

The Adoption Assistance Program was enacted in accordance with the Child Welfare Assistance Act of 1980. The subsidy encourages and supports families in adopting children with special needs from foster care by enabling families to adopt without placing an undue financial burden on the family. It provides a subsidy based on the child's special needs rather than the adoptive family's income. The subsidy is available if a child is in the custody of the child welfare agency or a Nevada-licensed child placement agency through termination of parental rights and a relinquishment for six months. There must first be an effort made to locate an adoptive family who could adopt without the subsidy assistance.

The child must meet the following requirements: not yet 18 years old, cannot or should not be returned to the birth parents and meets one of the criteria for special needs. The monthly adoption assistance payment may be negotiated up to but not exceed the monthly foster care maintenance rate.

An agency that provides child welfare services may provide financial assistance to a family that adopts a child with special needs until the child attains the age of majority, becomes self-sustaining, is emancipated, or dies, whichever occurs first. Assembly Bill 255 would allow the subsidy to continue until the child reaches 18 years of age if the child is not enrolled in school or 19 years of age if the child is enrolled in school, graduates from high school, is at least 18 years of age, becomes self-supporting, is emancipated, or dies. This bill's language mirrors what we do for the child support statute.

A child may turn 18 years old and may not have graduated high school yet. They are not automatically self-supporting at 18 years old. That is why child support continues generally until they graduate. In the Assembly Committee on Judiciary hearing, we heard testimony about the importance of getting these kids through high school. If the subsidy cuts off before graduation, some families might find it necessary to have their child find a job, and that puts the ability of the child to graduate in jeopardy.

We need to be clear about an aspect of this subsidy. These children are fully adopted; their parents have the rights and responsibility of all parents in raising their children. However, we should not forget that at some point in these children's lives, they were the responsibility of the State. These adoptive families made their families whole by adopting these children. The families also took on the financial responsibility our State would otherwise be required to bear.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

Was the age of 18 years chosen to keep the fiscal note down? I imagine their needs do not go away when they turn 18 years old.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN COHEN:

I was specifically thinking about the way we fund child support. At a minimum, we should get these kids through high school. If families were to continue receiving a subsidy past the age of 18, I would be happy with that.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

Would you confirm the fiscal note on this?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN COHEN:

For FY 2023-2024, it would be \$1.5 million.

MELANIE YOUNG (Deputy Administrator, Division of Child and Family Services, Nevada Department of Health and Human Services):

The fiscal impact of this bill in FY 2023-2024 is \$1,750,997, split between federal Title IV-E of the 1994 Amendment to the Social Security Act and the State General Fund. In FY 2024-2025, the fiscal impact is \$1,978,567 with the same split between Title IV-E and the General Fund.

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SENATOR TITUS:

Do you have the amounts of the split between federal funds and the General Fund?

Ms. YOUNG:

The General Fund appropriation in FY 2023-2024 is \$733,450, and in FY 2024-2025 it is \$855,187. This would fund the adoption subsidies for all child welfare jurisdictions, rural counties, Washoe and Clark County.

SENATOR TITUS:

How many children would that cover?

Ms. YOUNG:

I can get that to you.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN COHEN:

Division Administrator Cindy Pitlock said they based these numbers on the children that are getting the subsidy. Every year, it will fluctuate because kids graduate or turn 18 years old.

STEVEN COHEN:

I am in support of A.B. 255.

Ms. MARTINEZ:

This is a commonsense bill. We support A.B. 255.

Ms. NIELSEN:

The Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities supports A.B. 255.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

We will close the hearing on A.B. 255 and go to A.B. 257.

[ASSEMBLY BILL 257 \(1st Reprint\)](#): Revises provisions relating to forensic medical examinations of certain victims of certain crimes. (BDR 16-839)

LIZ ORTENBURGER (SafeNest):

Assembly Bill 257 provides the same no-cost examination for victims of strangulation as we currently have in place for victims of sexual assault. Strangulation is the most lethal indicator of domestic violence escalating

towards homicide. A victim of one strangulation is 750 percent more likely to be strangled again. Most women do not call 911 until they have been strangled five times, escalating the chances of it being lethal.

This bill has a \$4.3 million fiscal note over the 2023-2025 biennium that covers the maximum case scenario of an estimated 120 exams monthly within the State at a maximum exam cost of \$1,500. The actual number is unknown. At SafeNest, we work with 80 strangulation victims a month that do not get an exam. Given additional barriers, it is unknown how many will take advantage of this exam. This gives us the opportunity to provide an option of a no-cost examination for victims.

WILLIAM HORNE (SafeNest):

I am here to answers questions if needed. I can also address the fiscal note for A.B. 257.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

That would be helpful because we understand the fiscal note was put back on.

MR. HORNE:

The original bill had language that the strangulation patient could not be charged for an examination and the county would need to absorb the cost. The language was changed to make it permissible for counties to seek reimbursement to the extent that funds are available in the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) of 1984 account. That change removed the fiscal note, but on further assessment of the new language, it was determined there could be other costs. An estimate was made of the number of victims, and the fiscal note was placed on the bill again.

We would like the Committee either to allow the Agency to come to the IFC should those funds be depleted or appropriate the funds with a cap to allow this bill to go forward. Those are the two options that could address this problem.

Assembly Concurrent Resolution (ACR) 6 will study this issue. It has not been taken up yet.

ASSEMBLY CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 6: Directs the Joint Interim Standing Committee on the Judiciary to conduct a study relating to battery which constitutes domestic violence (BDR R-840)

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

What makes this type of examination so expensive, or is it the number of examinations needed?

MS. ORTENBURGER:

The examination is expensive and has a range from \$5 to \$1,500. Fifty percent of strangulation, even lethal strangulation, has no physical signs to the eye. Imaging must be used. It can go from a simple camera that looks at subdermal bruising all the way to an MRI or CAT scan to look for broken bones or carotid artery damage. That is why there is a large range on cost for an exam that can make it expensive, and we have a high volume.

SENATOR NEAL:

Would it be better to get an idea of what the potential caseload is going to be before appropriating funds? It sounds like the DHHS has approximations of the caseload. The fiscal note is based on the highest amount versus what is known.

MS. ORTENBURGER:

Within the ecosystem of domestic violence, it would be detrimental to ask a survivor if they are willing to take a strangulation exam, then say it will be \$500 to \$1,500 out of pocket.

SENATOR NEAL:

From my understanding, the fiscal note was off. Now the fiscal note is back on for \$4.3 million. I am saying hold \$2 million in reserve until the caseload can be determined.

MS. ORTENBURGER:

That is what the State of Colorado did when they enacted this legislation. They restricted the money for exactly that reason. They studied it to determine how many people are taking advantage of the exam.

SENATOR NGUYEN:

I know there is a part of our State Plan that covers certain things through the Violence Against Women Act of 1994. Is this included?

MS. ORTENBURGER:

It is not.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

Do you need to have this test so someone can be charged appropriately? I understand we have higher levels of prosecution for strangulation.

MS. ORTENBURGER:

The reason is twofold: for the health of the victim and if that survivor chooses to go forward with prosecution. Then, they have the appropriate forensic exams in hand.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

With domestic violence, so many individuals do not prosecute immediately. I agree with setting aside some money.

I had a niece who was a victim of domestic violence, and eventually killed by strangulation. The offender was not appropriately charged, most likely because there was not sufficient evidence to raise it to the level of prosecution.

SENATOR NGUYEN:

This legislation does not ask the State to amend the State Plan to include strangulation. If that was possible, the funding could go to the VOCA account, which would allow for reimbursement of \$.75 to \$.85 for every \$1 spent.

MS. YOUNG:

This is not covered under the State Plan and is not eligible for the federal funding which comes through the VOCA Compensation Fund.

There are conversations happening at the federal level, and we anticipate it is moving in that direction. Part of what makes this a challenge is that to be eligible for federal dollars, victims must apply themselves for the funds. Since this funding is coming in through the counties, it is not something eligible for federal funds.

SENATOR NGUYEN:

That makes more sense. Under federal law, our counties cannot seek this kind of compensation through those matching dollars.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

Why was the fiscal note taken off and put back on?

Ms. YOUNG:

When A.B. 257 originally came out, section 2 required the VOCA Fund to reimburse the counties for these funds. However, it was deleted by amendment, and we interpreted it was to remove the fiscal note, which we did.

During testimony in the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means, we understood it was the intent of this program to still reimburse the county. We put the fiscal note back on because there is still a fiscal impact even though we do not know exactly what it is.

SENATOR NEAL:

Since section 2 was deleted, did the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means account for this \$4.3 million over the biennium?

Ms. YOUNG:

I am not aware it was accounted for because the bill was interpreted as having no fiscal impact.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

If the VOCA Fund is reimbursing the victim, how does the county get reimbursed? Does the money go directly to the victim?

Ms. YOUNG:

I view this could happen in two parts. If the victim pays for this exam, they could apply to the VOCA Fund for reimbursement, which is an eligible expense. In the bill, the way the county is being reimbursed is not approved on a federal level. These exams are different than the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) exams, which are an approved federal expense.

Ms. ORTENBURGER:

Of the 80 clients we work with, 95 percent are below the poverty line. Women at and below the poverty line are five times more likely to be victims of abuse, which is why the reimbursement is cumbersome.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

Are the counties required to reimburse, or is it permissive and they can reimburse to the extent resources are available?

MR. HORNE:

I read the amended bill to say it is permissive for counties to seek reimbursement to the extent funds are available. The bill does not mandate that the county must seek reimbursement from the State; it says they may seek reimbursement to the extent funds are available.

SENATOR NGUYEN:

Are the counties covering this exam, or are they not covering it because it is too expensive? Are they looking for additional ways to pay for the exam? Could the counties set up a program to help victims complete reimbursement forms?

MS. ORTENBURGER:

The information we have is anecdotal because there is no data in this space. When our clients go to the University Medical Center (UMC), they are met with the cost of the exam at \$500 to \$1,500, and the answer is almost always an immediate no. There is no system for victims to get support for this other than what agencies like SafeNest are willing to provide.

SENATOR NGUYEN:

How does it work with the SANE exam which is covered? Is UMC performing the SANE exam and helping victims obtain the reimbursement?

MS. ORTENBURGER:

The SANE examination performed in a hospital is free.

SENATOR NGUYEN:

Can the county collect reimbursement from the federal government?

MS. YOUNG:

Nevada Revised Statutes 217 allows the counties to seek reimbursement from the VOCA Fund of up to about \$10,000 per year. Because it is specified in NRS and allowed by the federal guidelines, it is an approved federal expense for which we could seek reimbursement.

SENATOR NGUYEN:

Is that \$10,000 per person or \$10,000 total?

MS. YOUNG:

It is \$10,000 per county, per year.

SENATOR NEAL:

The issue is not the public policy; it is the \$4.3 million fiscal note over the 2023-2025 biennium that is being presented in this Committee. The \$4.3 million is what needs to be reconciled and should have been dealt with in the other House.

SHONDRA SUMMERS-ARMSTRONG (Assembly District No. 6):

I am sponsoring A.B. 257 on behalf of SafeNest and the people in the community who need this type of service. I apologize for the misunderstanding because this bill got out of the Assembly without an appropriation. I do not know where the miscommunication was, but it is my bill, and I take responsibility.

The language was changed at the behest of Clark County so it was clear this examination would fit under the standards for reimbursement for victims of crime. It needed to be for the benefit of the person, a permissible expense from VOCA and to ensure there is no permanent damage to or physical impairment to the victim. The language was changed to have it be a reimbursable expense.

It got out of the Assembly without an appropriation attached and now we are coming to this Committee asking for your assistance. This Committee is not wrong in asking for the appropriation to be phased in. We believe ACR 6 will answer some questions about how often this test would be used. We are trying to run these things concurrently to be able to fund the examinations we need right now. At the same time, we have a list of things in ACR 6 we have developed with advocacy groups, the public defender's office and the district attorneys to gather data to help us move forward.

We have victims. Do we do nothing this Session, or do we set aside a few dollars to get us moving to assist victims who cannot afford to pay out of pocket or fight with their insurance companies?

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

In plain language, the way I am reading this is, the State does not have to reimburse, but the county does have to pay.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN SUMMERS-ARMSTRONG:

This is a heavy lift for us to drop on the county. They could have prepared since this bill has been out since the first months of 2023. Clark County has their

own budgetary process, and since the fiscal note was removed, they believed they would be able to seek reimbursement with the current language.

Clark County is a large county, and I am not here to advocate for them. I must be honest because my district lies within Clark County, and I know the responsibility the County has and what they must fund on a regular basis. The County's concern is they will have an unfunded mandate when there was supposed to be reimbursement from the VOCA Fund available to them.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

I understand that. We will call up the County and hear testimony from them.

SERENA EVANS (Nevada Coalition to END Domestic and Sexual Violence):

For far too long, the burden of receiving these exams has fallen on the victim-survivor. Our current systems are not set up to support them. This bill is a victim-centered approach, and we urge this Committee's passage.

JEFF ROGAN (Clark County):

We worked with the Assemblywoman on A.B. 257. Washoe County was also involved to a lesser degree. The Assemblywoman was correct when the language first came out. There was a problem for reimbursement through the VOCA Fund and is why it was amended in the Assembly.

Every county understood the language, once amended, was to seek reimbursement through the VOCA. The State interpreted it differently, which is why they removed their fiscal note. If you look at all the counties and most of the cities, their fiscal notes were always zero because of the belief we could seek reimbursement.

We still think the language provides for that reimbursement. Chair, you are correct, you do not have to provide funding for this bill, and it will be on the counties. I have not spoken with our finance department to determine what our position would be should you decide not to provide funding. I can find out and provide the information to the Committee later this afternoon.

SENATOR NGUYEN:

I would like to clarify this. Initially, we thought we could get reimbursement through VOCA. We later learned we cannot get money through VOCA because

it is not authorized currently by federal law or regulation. To fund that mandate, we need the \$4.3 million if the bill stays intact.

MR. ROGAN:

You are partially correct. We did have to change the language because we would not have the ability to seek VOCA funds as the bill originally intended under the original language.

If the counties read the amended language to place the mandate on them, and if State funding was in question, all the counties would have put a fiscal note on it. Our interpretation at the time was that it did not require a fiscal note, and the State would be reimbursing the counties.

SENATOR NGUYEN:

The bill language says the counties must pay the costs and the State may, to the extent money is available for that purpose. I read this as you are on the hook for it unless we have money.

MR. ROGAN:

The VOCA Fund usually has money. They do not have a lot of money and are at an all-time low in terms of their financial situation. When we read the language, it was because of the present lack of funds. Before COVID-19, there were more funds. Although, the \$4.3 million they are estimating this bill to cost is at the high end and would have been a significant amount of their funds.

SENATOR NEAL:

How much is left in the VOCA Fund?

Ms. YOUNG:

We estimate a little over \$1 million at the end of FY 2023-2024 that we will be balancing forward. We have been communicating throughout this budget process that the Fund would become insolvent. There is a General Fund appropriation to keep the funds at the level of reimbursement for victims today.

The payment for strangulation exams from the VOCA Fund was not a budgeted expense.

SENATOR NEAL:

How much is the General Fund appropriation to make the account whole?

Ms. YOUNG:

A little over \$2 million each year of the 2023-2025 biennium, but I need to verify that.

SENATOR NEAL:

Is that \$4 million over the 2023-2025 biennium, or \$6 million that will make the VOCA Fund whole?

Ms. YOUNG:

I would need to go back to the budget for the final number.

SENATOR NEAL:

In theory, you would have \$5 million because there was \$1 million carried forward and none was anticipated to be used for the purposes of A.B. 257.

Ms. YOUNG:

Yes. The budget is not currently funding these expenses and was not considered.

SENATOR NEAL:

If this is a very important public policy issue for the counties, and they are already operating under these policies, how much do the counties have that can be expended for some of these cases? The fiscal note from the DHHS could be approximately 120 examinations. Would the county be willing to pay for 60 of those examinations? Of course, that is an estimated number.

MR. ROGAN:

This would be from our General Fund. If this Committee and this Legislature decide we are to fund all or some of these exams, we are going to do that knowing this is an unfunded mandate. We would love to have the State's help in funding it.

SENATOR NEAL:

I struggled with this but will say it anyway. You are saying it is going to come from Clark County's General Fund and would be an unfunded mandate, but this is the Session the County is pledging its tax revenue for a stadium.

MR. ROGAN:

What is going on with the A's bill, if it passes, would be the issuance of bonds and we are not taking General Fund dollars to participate in the creation of the stadium. It is different than funding these tests, which are taking General Fund dollars to provide for experts' services.

SENATOR NEAL:

What I mean by that is, you are willing to take a risk on something in theory. The risk taken should be for citizens who have been strangled. If we are going to gamble, we should gamble on strangulation victims versus the Oakland A's stadium with potentially 9,000 visitors.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

You do not have to answer because we have not brought that bill forward, nor have we voted on it. Hearing no further callers, I will close the hearing on A.B. 257 and move to A.B. 258.

ASSEMBLY BILL 258 (2nd Reprint): Enacts certain provisions governing the confidentiality of certain personal information of a donor, member or volunteer of a nonprofit organization. (BDR 19-605)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN SHEA BACKUS (Assembly District No. 37):

Assembly Bill 258 seeks to find the appropriate balance between government power and the right to privacy. Assembly Bill 258 would require government entities to keep Internal Revenue Service, Internal Revenue Code (IRC) 501(c) nonprofit information confidential. The bill includes a list of exemptions to this requirement. For example, this bill does not change or weaken any current disclosures required by State campaign finance, nonprofit or corporate registration laws.

In addition, A.B. 258 would prohibit State agencies from collecting sensitive information related to an IRC 501(c) nonprofit's membership, volunteer lists or donor records unless there is a legitimate reason to do so, as outlined in section 2, subsection 3 of this bill.

SENATOR NGUYEN:

What is the fiscal impact?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN BACKUS:

What is proposed in A.B. 258 has been implemented in 15 other states. Over the last five years, there have been no civil suits either to enjoin the State from releasing such confidential information or for any damages. The Assembly Committee on Ways and Means has elected to put the money needed by the Office of Attorney General (AG) for one deputy attorney general and one compliance investigator into reserves in the event the AG realizes they need additional help. The AG could come to the IFC to request those funds amended into the bill.

SENATOR NGUYEN:

Is this something the AG is seeking to investigate? Does this give them the opportunity to come before the IFC to get additional funding if needed?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN BACKUS:

The concerns were more about if litigation comes up, they will need additional staff. Another issue in opposition from a number of cities and counties was a concern they might have to redact information protected in this bill. The bill is limited and straightforward in reference to donor and volunteer lists of nonprofits. Even with a limited amount of information, it was determined to be appropriate to put money into reserves.

Ms. SAUNDERS:

The Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada with our partners, Battle Born Progress, One APIA Nevada, Service Employees International Union, All Voting is Local Action, Planned Parenthood Votes Nevada, and the Nevada Coalition to END Domestic and Sexual Violence support A.B. 258.

Ms. HANSEN:

I support A.B. 258. Senate Bill No. 62 of the 81st Session would have exposed the donors of nonprofits. We continue to be concerned. The panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit reversed a district judge's ruling that Americans for Prosperity Foundation did not need to submit a list of its donors to a state registry. Based on the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, the decision recognized reprisals can take place for those who are politically associated.

This is an important bill to protect those who have diverse ideologies, who have many volunteers and need to be protected from the practices of government.

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MS. CHAPMAN:

The Independent American Party is in support of A.B. 258. We do not need to stop people from participating, volunteering or donating to various groups. We need to encourage them to participate.

DAVID CHERRY (City of Henderson):

I am here on behalf of the City of Henderson and Stephen Wood, the Government Affairs liaison for Carson City, who is in another committee.

We are both in opposition to A.B. 258 because of the severe compliance burden it would place on local governments. We will be caught between requirements to keep information confidential under this bill and to disclose information under Nevada's public records law. Assembly Bill 258 will subject local governments to civil damages including a treble penalty in certain instances along with court costs and attorney's fees.

This bill is broad in scope with vague language. We see litigation as a likely scenario. To guard against this, local governments will need to spend additional time and resources in reviewing records and ensuring compliance, which is the basis for the fiscal note from Carson City and is echoed in the fiscal note submitted by the AG's office. Because this would be a new law, its mechanism would be untested. The AG's office, Carson City and other local governments are concerned that litigation will be the outcome.

The bill's sponsor said there was a small amount of information included in this bill. The definition of what is personal information is on page 8. It is without limitation, any list, record, register, roster or other data of any kind that includes a donation, name, address, or telephone number and directly or indirectly identifies a person as a donor of financial or nonfinancial support, member or volunteer of any nonprofit organization. That is what we will have to look for in our public records.

It takes time to search for those, then redact them. This will put an additional burden on our staff who are required to disclose certain information while also required to protect and keep certain information confidential.

SENATOR NEAL:

What is your public policy purpose again? What are you trying to eliminate exactly?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN BACKUS:

At a high level, A.B. 258 basically protects people who are a nonprofit's donors or volunteers. For example, Planned Parenthood spoke in support of the bill. They had a situation where a list of people who donated or volunteered was negligently or intentionally released to the public. If one of those people worked for a company that did not approve of their employee's support of Planned Parenthood, this information could be used against them.

This is a bipartisan bill. What we are trying to prevent is a situation where information is either released or threatened to be released and used against someone for various purposes.

There are exemptions in A.B. 258 for information secured by a warrant or information intentionally made publicly available. The intent of this bill is not to prevent obvious access to public records.

SENATOR NGUYEN:

Hearing no additional testimony, I will close the hearing on A.B. 258.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

We will move to A.B. 259.

ASSEMBLY BILL 259 (2nd Reprint): Revises provisions governing wages for persons with disabilities. (BDR 39-13)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN TRACY BROWN-MAY (Assembly District No. 42):

Assembly Bill 259 eliminates subminimum wage certificates from the State of Nevada effective January 1, 2028, which is four full years of transition for provider organizations that currently maintain a subminimum wage certificate. It provides time and a transition plan for existing jobs and day training providers who currently serve people with disabilities under the subminimum wage certificate. It requires the DHHS, Aging and Disability Services Division to amend the home and community-based services waiver to include a new service for benefits retention planning, which we have identified as the barrier to many of our people with disabilities pursuing employment.

There are five organizations in Nevada with active subminimum wage certificates from the U.S. Department of Labor, section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938. Together they serve a total of 148 people with

disabilities. Two of those organizations are in the process of transition, which is 125 people, and will leave 3 organizations with 23 people.

It has been a long effort, but we have had great success. We have identified what the barrier is. There is a lack of Medicaid waiver services we refer to as benefits planning, which helps people with disabilities understand how to maintain their federal benefits and still seek employment.

The fiscal note by the DHHS Aging and Disability Services Division and the DHHS Division of Health Care Financing and Policy identified General Fund implications of \$395,728.90 with federal matching dollars totaling \$670,351.10. This will serve 2,221 people on the home and community-based services intellectual and developmental disabilities waiver.

MARY PIERCZYNSKI (State of Nevada Association of Providers):
Many members of the State of Nevada Association of Providers have jobs in day training services. We are in support of A.B. 259.

MS. NIELSEN:
The Assemblywoman and our Council have worked on the bill for a long time. Too often people with disabilities are unemployed, underemployed or paid nearly nothing. We are in support of A.B. 259.

MR. COHEN:
I am in support of A.B. 259.

MATTHEW WILKIE:
I am in support of A.B. 259.

MS. MARTINEZ:
Nevada Disability Peer Action Coalition is in support of A.B. 259.

CHRISTINA QUATTRONE:
I want to support A.B. 259 but have concerns about the language regarding the effective date. I wish the language would have been clearer.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
Hearing no more callers, we will close A.B. 259 and go to A.B. 263.

ASSEMBLY BILL 263 (2nd Reprint): Enacts provisions relating to the transmission of Legionnaires' disease by building water systems in certain healthcare facilities. (BDR 40-125)

ASSEMBLYMAN HOWARD WATTS (Assembly District No. 15):
Assembly Bill 263 seeks to help reduce the transmission of legionella bacteria, which is the cause of Legionnaires' disease, specifically focusing on water systems in certain healthcare facilities.

Legionnaire's disease is a significant illness. It tends to be distributed in larger buildings through cooling towers and other systems. Any water system where water sits can be a potential disease vector. The complications of the disease are particularly severe for folks in healthcare facilities or who have complicating conditions.

In 2018, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) published a requirement to reduce legionella risk in healthcare facilities' water systems by requiring the development of a water management plan.

Assembly Bill 263 seeks to enshrine these CMS policies in State law. It essentially mirrors the CMS requirements to develop these plans in alignment with certain existing standards. Those plans will be developed and carried out by individuals who have had specific training to manage water systems to control and prevent the spread of legionella.

There are concerns about this bill. You will hear it is duplicative. We have aligned it with federal policy, but we are trying to build on it to make sure we have the strongest development and execution of these plans. You will hear concerns that legionella issues start with the main water supply. In southern Nevada, the main water supply is chlorinated, but as water travels throughout the system it can reach other points where pathogens can be introduced. In addition, you will hear this legislation does not go far enough to cover other facilities where Legionnaires' disease outbreaks occur. Building on the existing policies in healthcare facilities is a strong first step.

All the fiscal notes have been removed, but that may not be reflected. With the revised definition of healthcare facilities in section 5, State agencies' fiscal concerns related to the implementation of this bill have been removed.

SENATOR TITUS:

Do you know of any cases in Nevada healthcare facilities? There is federal regulation on Legionnaires' disease. The only cases I can find were two cases at a Las Vegas resort in December of 2022. The water was tested, and the samples confirmed the presence of the disease in the showers and sinks in three rooms. The rooms are undergoing remediation efforts. I cannot find any incidents in healthcare facilities.

ASSEMBLYMAN WATTS:

I do not know of recent cases in healthcare facilities in Nevada. The instances of illness and death in healthcare facilities Nationwide are 20 percent. Given the complications that would occur in someone contracting Legionnaires' disease when residing at one of these healthcare facilities, we should make every effort to drive the number completely down to zero.

SENATOR TITUS:

There is a zero incidence in healthcare facilities but not in the resorts.

JON LELEU (Alliance to Prevent Legionnaires' Disease, Inc.):

We oppose A.B. 263. This bill will bring awareness to Legionnaires' disease, but it does not prevent the disease. Proponents agree Legionnaires' disease does not exist in healthcare facilities. The CMS facilities already have requirements in place for water management programs in these facilities. This bill unnecessarily adds proprietary training and certification, and routine testing requirements. It will add substantial cost.

We agree this is a clean bill as it pertains to fiscal notes for the State. However, it adds substantial costs on private facilities where there are no recent recorded instances of Legionnaires' disease.

An amendment was adopted in the Assembly that removes State hospitals to reduce the fiscal note, but it focuses its intent on private CMS facilities, and UMC in Clark County. We are concerned the amendments violate equal protection. The bill exempts rural hospitals from coverage and does not say why the amendment releases State hospitals from coverage. Proponents have not offered a reason to remove certain healthcare facilities but leave others. We assume the reason is to reduce the fiscal notes and overcome the hurdles of the Senate Committee on Finance and the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means.

This is not a rational reason to treat the healthcare facilities differently. Proponents need to explain why mandatory certification, training and testing for waterborne bacteria in some facilities are necessary and why testing is not required in others.

Informal negotiations on this bill between proponents and healthcare facilities have revealed proponents are offering to do this testing for free. That does not meet the standards required to pass this bill. The Alliance objects to mandatory testing, which is not recommended by the World Health Organization as a control for Legionnaires' disease, nor recommended by the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers, the group that created the regulations. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention does not include it, and CMS regulations on healthcare facilities do not include it.

The Alliance is a national nonprofit with the exclusive mission of combating Legionnaires' disease and reducing cases. Each of you has received a letter ([Exhibit D](#)) detailing substantial issues with this Legislation from the Nevada Health Care Association. This method has been tried multiple times, in multiple states, and at multiple levels, both regulatory and legislative. It has failed every time.

This bill is far too expensive, wastes limited resources and does nothing to prevent Legionnaires' disease. New York has enacted a similar bill and instances of Legionnaires' disease have not gone down. [Assembly Bill 263](#) introduces a criminal penalty for failure to implement these redundant policies. We ask the Committee to vote no on the bill.

PATRICK KELLY (Nevada Hospital Association):

We believe [A.B. 263](#) will unnecessarily increase healthcare costs. Hospitals are required by CMS and the Joint Commission to have water management plans, which we do. We are unaware of any situation where Legionnaires' disease has occurred in a Nevada hospital. For the cost, there is little to no benefit.

GEORGE ROSS (HCA Healthcare):

Federal law already covers these regulations. Hospitals have every legal, moral, and ethical reason to do everything they possibly can to prevent Legionnaires' disease and every other hospital-acquired disease. They are following all federal laws and regulations. We oppose [A.B. 263](#).

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BRYAN WACHTER (Retail Association of Nevada):

The Retail Association of Nevada is concerned that the passage of A.B. 263 will set a long-term policy that will expand to include other areas outside the scope of the bill. We believe the increased cost will outweigh any of the benefits.

During COVID-19, the State has shown our healthcare infrastructure is in place and able to respond to the needs of Nevadans. While COVID-19 was an airborne disease, and this bill contemplates a waterborne disease, we feel Nevada's current infrastructure can meet any needs that might develop. We oppose A.B. 263.

CHRISTINA COTTRELL:

This bill does not make sense. Legionnaires' disease is extremely rare. The bill mentions construction modification and repair work that may affect buildings' water systems. Why would we displace people in nursing homes causing them a financial and health cost? Regarding the water droplets, we live in Las Vegas and do not have humidity. I am opposed to A.B. 263.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

We will close the hearing on A.B. 263 and move to A.B. 310.

ASSEMBLY BILL 310 (1st Reprint): Revises provisions governing affordable housing. (BDR 25-1032)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN DANIELE MONROE-MORENO (Assembly District No.1):

Assembly Bill 310 revises provisions governing affordable housing. It is a measure that creates the Nevada Supportive Housing Development Fund within the Nevada Department of Business and Industry, Housing Division. It has an appropriation of \$30 million over the 2023-2025 biennium with oversight and capacity support by the Governor's Interagency Council on Homelessness to Housing (ICH). It adds an additional \$1.5 million appropriation to the Nevada Housing Division for provider capacity building grants to assist supportive housing partners in facilitating staffing support, training and technical assistance.

CHRISTINE HESS (Nevada Housing Coalition):

This will be Nevada's first ever Supportive Housing Development Fund. The \$30 million will reside in the Housing Division, which is the one-stop shop for

our developers who build this type of housing that only exists in very small amounts in Nevada. This is the housing solution to end homelessness.

It will also define "supportive housing" for the first time in statute. The handout, Nevada Supportive Housing Development Fund ([Exhibit E](#)) talks about A.B. 310. The Corporation for Supportive Housing, a national nonprofit, estimates roughly 7,000 Nevadans need the more intensive housing type, which is supportive housing, to obtain and remain housed. It is costly to keep these Nevadans unhoused. Did you know it costs the same to keep people in the emergency room for nine days as keeping a person in jail for three months and is the same amount to keep a person housed with supportive services for one year? This is good fiscal policy. It is a cost-effective way to provide supportive housing as a solution to end homelessness.

The handout [Exhibit E](#) explains the fiscal priorities and how we see the \$32.2 million in the Fund being used. Some \$30 million will be used for the delivery of services directly linked to housing. These services and the process will be supported by ICH's expertise. Another \$1.5 million will support building long-term capacity. Additionally, the Supportive Housing Development Fund will receive one-shot funding of \$700,000 to measure the outcomes.

We have a couple of sister communities—the Denver Social Impact Bond Program and the Arizona Medicaid Program—that have experienced cost savings with this program. The Denver program noted that after three years of providing their unhoused population with supportive housing and wraparound services, 77 percent of those previously unhoused community members remain stable, housed and part of the community.

There is a fiscal note on A.B. 310 from the Housing Division to administer this program.

SENATOR NGUYEN:

Did you say the \$700,000 one-shot was for program accountability?

Ms. HESS:

Yes.

SENATOR NGUYEN:

What would it cover?

Ms. HESS:

A process for evaluating the awards will be created to track the projects and the people who are served. A report will be compiled with those statistics.

SENATOR NGUYEN:

Who will do this evaluation? Will the Housing Division be compiling the data or someone else?

Ms. HESS:

We envision a third-party will do the reporting.

SENATOR NGUYEN:

Beginning in section 2, subsection 7, A.B. 310 talks about who would be a candidate for using supportive housing, such as someone experiencing homelessness or at an imminent risk of homelessness or unnecessary institutionalization. Who do you anticipate those definitions would cover?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MONROE-MORENO:

What I have experienced in my personal life working in law enforcement is that when a person was supposed to be released from jail and we did not have a place to put them, we held them in jail. We did not want to put them back on the street only to go through the cycle again. This is an example of unnecessary institutionalization.

There are people in hospital settings, who, for whatever reason cannot go to a transitional home or an assisted living home. There are not enough beds in shelters for people in these circumstances. It costs the taxpayer more to keep them in jail or in a hospital than to transition them to supportive housing with wraparound services. Supportive housing helps to keep them from becoming homeless again.

The wraparound services people need are to address behavioral healthcare issues, substance use disorder issues and job training. All of these services help them to be gainfully employed.

Assembly Bill 310 would help people in need become more productive and interactive members in our society.

Ms. HESS:

In Nevada, 80 to 90 percent of renters are paying more than half of their income to rent. These renters are at imminent risk of homelessness and may be facing challenges where a supportive housing setting could be a benefit to them.

SENATOR NEAL:

In the partnership provision of the bill, line 12 in section 1, will this allow for other nonprofits to become a partner and apply for funds? How will funds be disbursed?

Ms. HESS:

These funds will reside with the Housing Division. Nonprofits and developers can apply for these funds. There are already great organizations in our State that build this type of housing.

SENATOR NEAL:

It has been estimated the grant funds will be able to generate around \$135,000 in interest. Will we be able to leverage these funds with federal money?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MONROE-MORENO:

Yes. I worked closely with our federal delegates to put this legislation together to make sure there were matching federal grant dollars available once this funding is in place.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

Will the Housing Division be looking to leverage these dollars as much as possible with private partners in addition to federal funds?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MONROE-MORENO:

Section 3 of A.B. 310 specifically states we will be able to take donations, contributions and grants. I am going after every dollar I can to address homelessness in our State.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

The Housing Division already leverages dollars. I appreciate that this bill includes supportive services.

SENATOR GOICOECHEA:

How much of the \$32 million will go to housing construction?

Ms. HESS:

These dollars will fund the delivery of services directly linked to housing. This bill will not provide funding for capital construction because we have the IFC-approved \$500 million for the Home Means Nevada Initiative. There are many supportive housing projects funded through the Home Means Nevada Initiative wondering how they will fund their services.

There are partners who want to provide supportive housing but are waiting for the passage of this bill to apply. The Housing Division is using low-income housing tax credits through other federal programs for capital construction.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

It was brought to my attention in the language of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023, A.B. 520, if we appropriate \$10 million from the General Fund toward a project, and there is \$5 million in federal funds coming in, the \$5 million does not supplant part of the General Fund for that project. Does this apply?

MR. THORLEY:

I believe you are referring to section 7 of S.B. 504, or the Authorizations Act, which generally requires State agencies to revert funding to the State General Fund if they receive funding from another funding source for the same purpose.

SENATE BILL 504: Authorizes expenditures by agencies of the State Government for the 2023-2025 biennium. (BDR S-1207)

However, the Authorizations Act, approved by the Legislature of this Session and signed by the Governor, included a slightly different language in section 7 than it has in the past. It allows State agencies to come to the IFC and request to be exempted from section 7 in certain instances. The IFC can consider the merits of that request and approve it.

Any State agency that would otherwise be subject to section 7 could seek the exemption.

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DAKOTA HOSKINS (Service Employees International Union 1107):
We support A.B. 310 and believe it will be great for Nevada families and communities.

CADENCE MATIJEVICH (Washoe County):
Washoe County supports A.B. 310. We think you will see a great return on this investment. We are badly in need of these services in our State.

NIC CICCONE (City of Reno):
The City of Reno is in support of A.B. 310.

ARIELLE EDWARDS (Nevada HAND, Inc.):
We are in support of A.B. 310. Supportive housing is needed in our State.

MR. CATHA:
We support A.B. 310.

VANESSA DUNN (Children's Advocacy Alliance of Nevada; Nevada Psychiatric Association; Nevada Public Health Association):
We support A.B. 310.

SARAH ADLER (National Alliance on Mental Illness, Nevada):
We support A.B. 310. It costs \$342,000 for one correctional forensic bed. A supportive housing bed unit costs \$26,000. There is great cost savings in creating this housing.

TOM CLARK (Reno + Sparks Chamber of Commerce):
Me too.

MR. NORMAN:
Ditto.

MENDY ELLIOTT (Southern Nevada Regional Housing Authority; Reno Housing Authority; Nevada Rural Housing Authority):
In southern Nevada, the Housing Authority put out 10,000 applications for vouchers, and 20,000 families applied for a voucher. These services are valuable to these families who need permanent supportive housing. This program and one-shot funding are going to change the lives of many people.

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The housing authorities are excited to be a part of this effort and to work with nonprofit organizations that provide those services.

MR. COHEN:

I am in support of A.B. 310.

STEVE MESSINGER (Nevada Primary Care Association):

We are very proud of one of our members who has shown proof of concept on this housing in Reno. We have seen that supportive housing is an excellent program through our network of primary care associations across the State. This has worked nationwide, and we are excited to bring it into Nevada. We support A.B. 310.

BROOKE PAGE (Nevada Corporation for Supportive Housing; Nevada Housing Coalition)

We urge your support of A.B. 310. This is cost-effective policy legislation that will create the infrastructure we need for ongoing solutions to address our homelessness policy issue. There is 30 years of evidence that proves this model works. We are leaving millions of dollars on the table because we do not have the infrastructure in place. We believe A.B. 310 will put us on a path to ensure we are developing this infrastructure.

MR. WILKIE:

I support A.B. 310.

MS. QUATTRONE:

I support A.B. 310. My father was jailed and went through unnecessary institutionalization beyond his sentence.

MS. MARTINEZ:

We support A.B. 310.

MS. HESS:

I have a letter of support ([Exhibit F](#)) with 111 signers that has been uploaded to the Legislative website for your review. We are ready to put these dollars to work effectively.

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SENATOR GOICOECHEA:

In many rural communities, we also have emergency rooms and jails. The rural communities have the same housing shortage. You can help us get focused on this issue. What we are doing right now is exporting the needs of patients and people in trouble to your areas. We hope we can do something at home to make it better for them.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

I will close the hearing on A.B. 310 and will now hear A.B. 516.

ASSEMBLY BILL 516 (1st Reprint): Revises provisions relating to the Nevada Indian Commission. (BDR 18-1215)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN DANIELE MONROE-MORENO (Assembly District No. 1):

Assembly Bill 516 will create the Nevada Department of Native American Affairs and prioritize the relationship between Nevada's State government and the sovereign tribes of Nevada. The Nevada Department of Native American Affairs will consist of an executive director, the Nevada Indian Commission and the Stewart Indian School Cultural Center and Museum. This new Department will include an additional 3 positions to help provide support to 28 federally recognized tribes in Nevada.

The bill transfers the Nevada Indian Commission and the account for the Protection and Rehabilitation of the Stewart Indian School to the Department. The Commission will provide recommendations and advice regarding the well-being of American Indians in Nevada to the executive director. This new Department is an investment into the future for our Indigenous people in Nevada and will provide support for all the tribes in our State.

The bill provides a legislative declaration clarifying the creation of the Nevada Department of Native American Affairs and the provisions of NRS relating to the Department are not intended to infringe upon the sovereignty of the Indian tribes.

SENATOR GOICOECHEA:

We have another bill that will create liaisons with almost any State agency. Do you see them selecting liaisons or having more of a working relationship because they are a standing agency?

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ASSEMBLYWOMAN MONROE-MORENO:

Yes, we do. We changed the effective date to give the time needed to transition. We have received commitments from those liaisons that they will continue to work with the director and her staff and the new staff to help them be successful in the transition.

WILL ADLER (Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe; Duck Valley Indian Reservation; Duckwater Shoshone Tribe and Reservation):

We are in support of A.B. 516.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

We will close the hearing on A.B. 516 and will now hear A.B. 376.

ASSEMBLY BILL 376 (2nd Reprint): Establishes provisions governing paid family leave for certain State employees. (BDR 23-1053)

TREASURER CONINE:

Assembly Bill 376 provides the opportunity for new parents, people who are suffering a significant disease or those with family members about to go on military deployment to take 50 percent compensation for an additional eight weeks. We are amending NRS 284 in which a State employee may take up to eight weeks of leave at 50 percent pay to do the things I just mentioned. State employees must use their accrued annual leave or take unpaid leave on Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) for these circumstances. While FMLA protects the employees' jobs, it does not provide them any compensation. Our goal is to create a better experience for our State employees. The fiscal note from the Nevada Department of Administration on A.B. 376 is relatively small to initiate some changes to their system.

SENATOR GOICOECHEA:

Would this provision kick in after an employee has exhausted all their sick leave? Would it be better to have half pay begin from the start if it was an extended leave?

TREASURER CONINE:

Employees would use all accrued sick leave except for 40 hours. We wanted to provide a buffer if there was an extended time away needed. The last 40 hours can be used if requested. After using sick leave, an employee could go on this 50 percent leave for the next eight weeks.

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We have modeled this off the FMLA requirements and paperwork. All the standard FMLA federal paperwork would need to be in place prior to the employee using this leave.

SENATOR GOICOECHEA:

Would employees get the half pay and still maintain their 40 hours of sick leave?

TREASURER CONINE:

Correct.

KENT ERVIN (Nevada Faculty Alliance):

This will give extra flexibility to our faculty who are on semester teaching assignments or on a strict probationary timeline.

Ms. DUNN:

We support A.B. 376.

CARTER BUNDY (American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees):

We support A.B. 376.

CAITLIN GATCHALIAN (American Heart Association):

We support A.B. 376.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

We will close the hearing on A.B. 376. We will now hear A.B. 451.

[ASSEMBLY BILL 451 \(1st Reprint\)](#): Revises provisions relating to certain employees in the Executive Department of the State Government. (BDR 23-1085)

AMY STEPHENSON (Director, Office of Finance, Office of the Governor):

Assembly Bill 451 does two things. It allows an employee in unclassified service within the Budget Division of the GFO to be compensated for overtime performed when the employee is doing work relating to the preparation of the Executive Budget report or proposed budget during the period beginning on September 1 of an even-numbered year and ending on January 31 of the following year. It also appropriates \$500,000 from the General Fund to the Nevada Department of Administration, Division of Human Resources

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Management to conduct a comprehensive classification and compensation study. The provisions of this bill in section 1 will expire on June 30, 2025.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
Would you confirm the fiscal note on A.B. 451?

Ms. STEPHENSON:
It is \$500,000 from the General Fund for the compensation classification study.

SENATOR NEAL:
What are you amending in this bill?

Ms. STEPHENSON:
The second amendment will allow an employee in the unclassified service appointed by the superintendent of public instruction as the director of the office for a safe and respectful learning environment to be compensated for overtime.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
I asked her to present this bill as is because I did not know about the amendment until this morning.

Ms. QUATTRONE:
Me too.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
We will close the hearing on A.B. 451, and we will go to A.B. 422.

ASSEMBLY BILL 422 (2nd Reprint): Revises provisions relating to fetal alcohol spectrum disorders. (BDR S-774)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MICHELLE GORELOW (Assembly District No. 35):
Assembly Bill 422 creates a pilot program to serve children diagnosed with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder and provide training for providers of such children to increase the workforce development.

This bill was amended to be implemented if funding is available. It is my understanding there are federal funds available to implement this program, and therefore, the fiscal note has been removed.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

Is this bill written in a manner that we can accept federal grants or other sources of funds without a General Fund appropriation?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN GORELOW:

I took the exact verbiage from the Division request, and they will apply for grants. This will not come out of the General Fund. If for any reason federal funds are not available, then this program will not exist.

Ms. DUNN:

The Children's Advocacy Alliance is in support of A.B. 422.

MR. COHEN:

I support A.B. 422.

MS. MARTINEZ:

Me too.

MS. QUATTRONE:

I support A.B. 422.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

We will close the hearing on A.B. 422 and will open the hearing on A.B. 137.

ASSEMBLY BILL 137 (2nd Reprint): Revises provisions relating to fetal alcohol spectrum disorders. (BDR 40-327)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN GORELOW (Assembly District No. 35):

Assembly Bill 137 expands the applicability of certain existing provisions regarding fetal alcohol syndrome to fetal alcohol syndrome disorders, which will expand the number of people who would be served.

MS. WEEKS:

This bill funds a new benefit for health homes in the Medicaid program, which allows the State to draw down a 90/10 share for the first 8 quarters.

The total computable cost for FY 2023-2024 is \$264,003, of which \$114,642 is General Fund monies. In FY 2024-2025, the total cost is \$561,637, of which \$158,672 is General Fund monies. These amounts include

our system cost, staffing and the new medical services cost. For the 2023-2025 biennium, the total cost would be \$825,640, of which \$273,314 is General Fund monies.

Ms. DUNN:

The Children's Advocacy Alliance supports this bill.

MR. COHEN:

I support A.B. 137.

Ms. MARTINEZ:

Nevada Disability Peer Action Coalition supports A.B. 137.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

We will close the hearing on A.B. 137 and we will hear A.B. 452.

ASSEMBLY BILL 452 (1st Reprint): Revises provisions relating to offenders.
(BDR 16-315)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN SABRA NEWBY (Assembly District No. 10):

Assembly Bill 452 concerns the visitation of offenders in prison and was heavily amended in Senate Committee on Judiciary. The fiscal impact is from the establishment of an ombudsman to help work out any concerns or issues that either offenders or families have with several different issues outlined in the bill.

As a result, in FY 2023-2024, there is an expected \$175,000 impact and for FY 2024-2025, it would be \$350,000. A request for proposal will be done to hire either an outside firm or a nonprofit to process complaints. Director James Dzurenda of the Nevada Department of Corrections believes A.B. 452 will decrease his Department's costs by decreasing the number of complaints that end up in litigation.

TONJA BROWN (Advocates for the Inmates and the Innocent):

We support A.B. 452, but we will remain neutral.

We submitted our conceptual amendment ([Exhibit G](#)) for your consideration. Without our conceptual amendment, it will make parts of A.B. 452 become just like a bill passed in 2011 without funding an ombudsman. Without this amendment, there will be no remedy for State and federal constitutional

violations other than offenders filing more litigation against the Nevada Department of Corrections and the State Board of Parole Commissioners.

The way the bill is written, grievances from years earlier could affect the offender's chances of getting parole or a pardon granted. Past grievances successfully litigated in the courts may not have been removed. The Parole Board and the State Board of Pardons Commissioners consider all disciplinary actions from the time an offender enters prison.

Without our conceptual amendment, the 2007 computer glitch that placed false felony charges will continue to appear in over 1,300 offenders' files. The AG has more than 660 lawsuits pending in the court filed by offenders. How many had false felony charges submitted to the Parole Board and Pardons Board? How many are still pending, and how many will be affected in the future if the ombudsman cannot review the judgment of conviction? Under section 2.5 subsection 6(a), the ombudsman shall not "review, investigate or attempt to resolve any grievance relating to a judgment of conviction" without looking at an alleged false felony conviction located in the Nevada Offender Tracking Information System, Summary Information Notice. Then, the ombudsman must compare it with the District Court's judgment of conviction. The offender's Parole Board and Pardons Board will be negatively impacted, thereby costing the taxpayers years of the offender's incarceration.

Without our conceptual amendment, it is unclear if the 2007 computer glitch was somehow triggered by disciplinary action, and the notice Offender Information Summary results in false felony charges being placed in the notice file, which I believe is based on information contained within the notice file of a former inmate. It is clear people are still being affected by the false felony charges and being denied parole and pardons.

Our conceptual amendment would strengthen this bill and prevent future lawsuits, saving taxpayers money. We are in support of A.B. 452 with or without our conceptual amendment. We plan to reach out to the ombudsman with our concerns and bring it to the Joint Interim Standing Committee.

AYANNA SIMMONS-OGLESBY (Nevada Strong Battle Born):

I am in neutral and echo the previous caller's comments. The conceptual amendment should be considered. We have a moral obligation to all Nevadans.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

We will close the hearing on A.B. 452 and hear A.B. 498.

ASSEMBLY BILL 498 (1st Reprint): Revises provisions relating to public employees' retirement. (BDR 23-1200)

JAIMARIE MANGOBA (Principal Program Analyst):

Assembly Bill 498 as amended revises the contribution rates for a State employee of a participating State agency from a rate equal to that paid by an employer to one-half of the normal cost that is actuarially determined for police officers, firefighters and regular members, depending on the retirement fund in which the member is participating.

The bill revises the employer contribution rate for a participating State agency to be the total contribution rate actuarially determined for police officers, firefighters, and regular members, less the employee contribution rate of one-half the normal costs for State employees.

Assembly Bill 498 as amended further requires the Board of Regents of the University of Nevada to provide a retirement program separate from the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) for members of their professional staff. The bill allows each to contribute up to 17.5 percent of the participant's gross compensation, mirroring the rate in the Executive Budget. This bill becomes effective July 1, 2023.

The total General Fund appropriations are \$190.8 million and Highway Fund appropriations are \$40 million over the 2023-2025 biennium.

Section 9 provides General Fund appropriations of \$58.3 million in FY 2023-2024 and \$63.4 million in FY 2024-2025 to the State Board of Examiners (BOE) for departments, commissions, and agencies of the State. The bill provides General Fund appropriations of \$13 million in FY 2023-2024 to the BOE for any department, commission or agency of the State whose positions are included in the Executive Budget and whose budget accounts have authorized reserves or retained earnings.

It also provides General Fund appropriations of \$12.5 million in FY 2024-2025 for the BOE for any department, commission of agency of the State whose positions are in the Executive Budget and whose budget accounts do not have

authorized reserves or retained earnings and do not receive any General Fund or Highway Fund appropriations.

Section 10 provides General Fund appropriations of \$1.6 million in FY 2023-2024 and \$1.7 million in FY 2024-2025 to the Judicial Department Staff Salaries budget account. Section 11 provides General Fund appropriations of \$3.2 million in FY 2023-2024 and \$3.5 million in FY 2024-2025 to the Legislative Fund. Section 12 provides General Fund appropriations of \$16.6 million in FY 2023-2024 and \$17 million in FY 2024-2025 for the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE). Section 13 provides Highway Fund appropriations of \$19.3 million in FY 2023-2024 and \$20.7 million in FY 2024-2025 to the BOE for departments, commissions or agencies of the State.

MR. BUNDY:

You have heard a lot about staffing shortages and the need to recruit and retain employees. Public Employees' Retirement System contribution differentials between the State and local government is a large part of why we cannot keep our people.

MR. ERVIN:

Assembly Bill 498 is a good long-term policy for PERS and the State. Eighty-five percent of faculty members on the NSHE retirement plan will have contributions fixed at what they would have been without A.B. 498. There will be no direct effect on them; however, the subsequent enactment of A.B. 522 makes A.B. 522 without A.B. 498 more advantageous for employees on the NSHE retirement plan alternative. I put this on the record on behalf of our members.

TINA LEISS (Public Employees' Retirement System of Nevada):
The PERS Board is neutral on this bill.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

We will close A.B. 522 and will hear A.B. 77.

ASSEMBLY BILL 77 (2nd Reprint): Revises provisions governing economic development. (BDR 18-711)

SENATOR ROCHELLE NGUYEN (SENATORIAL DISTRICT NO. 3):

Assembly Bill 77 is sponsored by Assemblyman Steve Yeager who has worked with Senator Heidi Seevers Gansert and the Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED). All are supportive of the changes proposed in this bill.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

Do we know how much has been appropriated?

MR. THORLEY:

The General Fund appropriation can be found in section 13.5 of the bill, page 7. There is an appropriation to GOED of approximately \$250,000 in FY 2023-2024 and an appropriation of approximately \$269,000 in FY 2024-2025. These funds are for operating equipment, marketing, travel costs, website creation and two full-time staff positions to carry out the functions of the Office of Entrepreneurship, which is created in section 6 of the bill.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

I will close the hearing on A.B. 77 and we will hear A.B. 388.

ASSEMBLY BILL 388: Makes an appropriation to the Department of Sentencing Policy for the purpose of funding certain grants awarded by the Nevada Local Justice Reinvestment Coordinating Council. (BDR S-1049)

SENATOR ROCHELLE NGUYEN (Senatorial District No. 3):

Assembly Bill 388 makes an appropriation from the General Fund to the Nevada Department of Sentencing Policy in the sum of \$3 million. The Nevada Local Justice Reinvestment Coordinating Council is made up of prosecutors, defense attorneys and law enforcement. Assemblyman Ken Gray and the Carson City District Attorney have served on this Council.

This is a small amount of funding compared to other coordinating councils around the Country. However, it is needed. Most of these funds will support the Mobile Outreach Safety Teams, essentially a crisis response team that includes a mental health professional.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

We will close the hearing on A.B. 388. We will now hear A.B. 319.

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ASSEMBLY BILL 319 (1st Reprint): Makes an appropriation to the State Department of Agriculture for universal free breakfast and lunch for Nevada pupils. (BDR S-1010)

SENATOR ROCHELLE NGUYEN (Senatorial District No. 3):
Assembly Bill 319 makes a \$43 million appropriation from the General Fund to the Nevada Department of Agriculture (NDA) for universal free lunch and breakfast for Nevada pupils.

SENATOR GOICOECHEA:
How much of the \$43 million is federal dollars, or is that amount the State's share of those not qualifying for federal dollars?

SENATOR NGUYEN:
It is my understanding this is General Fund monies. It goes to the NDA which awards grants to Nevada school districts to provide those meals.

MR. THORLEY:
The federal National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Programs are still operating and are funded by the federal government. Eligible families sign up and the local school districts receive reimbursement from the federal government for meals provided to those eligible students.

This \$43 million would cover free school breakfast and lunch for students who do not qualify under the federal program.

SENATOR GOICOECHEA:
Is this like the program we had during the pandemic where everybody got a free breakfast and lunch?

MR. THORLEY:
Yes.

ALEXANDER MARKS (Nevada State Education Association):
We support A.B. 319.

AMBER FALGOUT (Battle Born Progress):
We support A.B. 319. It is a great investment in our children.

Ms. CHAPMAN:

Noah Webster Education Foundation did an evaluation of the national school lunch program, and this is what they found.

According to the federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the national school lunch program lost nearly \$800 million due to improper payments in 2018, while the school breakfast program lost \$200 million. The OMB calls these programs high-priority programs because of the misspending. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture School Nutrition and Meal Cost Study, the average school meal program operates at a deficit. The study also found the reported cost of offering school meals generally exceeds the federal reimbursements allotted for those meals. It does not appear the Country can afford to provide free school meals to all students regardless of their qualifying status.

According to one PubMed Central study, an estimated \$1.2 billion worth of school food is wasted each year. Skeptics of free meals for all school children fear waste will only continue to rise if universal free school meals are an option. A Cambridge University Press study appears to support those concerns. "U.S. public schools which serve 7.4 billion meals to more than 30 million children represent a prime target for food waste. Previous research suggests food waste in U.S. public schools is substantial in magnitude and value as school breakfast programs participation continues to increase, and universal free school meal programs expand total food waste in such programs is expected to rise."

Whether federal or State dollars, it all comes from the taxpayer. The program is not free. This is a bad idea for all taxpayers. Please vote no on A.B. 319.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

We will close the hearing on A.B. 319, and we will open the hearing on A.B. 454.

ASSEMBLY BILL 454: Revises provisions relating to legal services for indigent defendants. (BDR 14-1067)

MARCIE RYBA (Executive Director, Nevada Department of Indigent Defense Services):

Assembly Bill 454 allows a path for the Department of Indigent Defense Services to obtain funding from the Statutory Contingency Account if the allocation to the Department is insufficient to reimburse our rural counties. The Department is working with our rural counties to bring them up to the minimum standards for indigent defense services as is required by a stipulated consent judgment.

VINSON GUTHREAU (Nevada Association of Counties):

On behalf of our 17-county membership who provide indigent defense services, we are in support of A.B. 454.

MARY WALKER (Douglas County; Lyon County; Storey County):

We think this bill represents a fair and reasonable approach. We support A.B. 454.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

We will close the hearing on A.B. 454, and we will open the hearing on A.B. 515.

ASSEMBLY BILL 515: Provides for the award of tuition assistance and stipends under the Incentivizing Pathways to Teaching Grant Program. (BDR 34-1216)

CRAIG STATUCKI (Interim Deputy Superintendent, Educator Effectiveness and Family Engagement, Nevada Department of Education):

Assembly Bill 515 creates the Incentivizing Pathways to Teaching Grant Program. The language of this bill is required to implement the program and was requested by the Joint Assembly Committee on Ways and Means and Committee on Senate Finance during budget closings for the Nevada Department of Education.

The Incentivizing Pathways to Teaching Program is currently funded by the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund and provides tuition assistance to college students in the last three semesters of their teacher preparation program and stipends for students who are completing their student teaching experience.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
Do we have a fiscal note on this?

MR. STATUCKI:
We do not have a fiscal note. An appropriation was already made in the K-12 Education budget.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
What is the amount of the appropriation?

MR. STATUCKI:
In each year of the 2023-2025 biennium, it is \$6.7 million.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
Hearing no questions or testimony, we will close the hearing on A.B. 515, and we will open the hearing on A.B. 523.

ASSEMBLY BILL 523: Revises provisions relating to education. (BDR 34-1219)

ADAM DROST (Principal Program Analyst):
Assembly Bill 523 is a budget implementation bill and revises certain provisions for the Pupil-Centered Funding Plan (PCFP) based on the action of the Senate Committee on Finance and the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means. This includes revenue, cash flow, the inflation calculation and items related to the Education Stabilization Account, otherwise known as the K-12 Rainy Day Account.

Sections 1 and 4 of the bill cover revenue. It revises the sources of revenue for the State Education Fund to include minor revenue related to the NDA fines and other revenue provided to the State Education Fund but not reflected in NRS 387.1212.

Sections 3 and 5 of the bill provide authorization for cash flow advances from the Education Stabilization Account without the IFC approval and from the General Fund if funding from the Education Stabilization Account cannot provide adequate funding. This also requires the IFC approval.

Sections 2 and 6 of the bill revise the calculation of inflation for the PCFP to reflect a three-year average rather than a one-year calculation. And finally,

section 5 provides various changes for the Education Stabilization Account. This includes increasing the funding cap for the account from 15 percent to 20 percent and allowing the IFC to use funding from the account for any decreases in funding for the State Education Fund.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

Are the increases to the Education Stabilization Account from 15 to 20 percent annually or every two years?

MR. DROST:

It is based on the total appropriations and authorizations from the prior fiscal year. The 20 percent increase would begin on October 1, 2023. That is on page 8 of the bill in section 5.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

In section 5.4 subsection (b), the 97 percent calculation used to determine when money could be borrowed was deleted. Is there a different calculation for funds to be borrowed from the Education Stabilization Account?

MR. DROST:

Section 5, subsection 4, paragraph (b) is related to changing the 3 percent decrease in revenue as in current NRS to allow any decrease in revenue for the IFC to allocate funding from the Education Stabilization Account to make up for any percentage of decrease in revenue.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

Is that a decrease in actual revenue versus a forecast?

MR. DROST:

That is correct for the authorizations. In other words, the non-General Fund revenue.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

Does this go through the IFC, or is it an automatic transfer?

MR. DROST:

It would require the IFC approval to allocate funding from the Education Stabilization Account to the PCFP to make up for the loss in revenue and for the cash advances.

MEGAN PETERSON (Deputy Superintendent, Nevada Department of Education):
I want to clarify on the record that the passage of A.B. 523 establishes a repayment deadline of August 31 when an advance is approved due to a delay in the receipt of revenues in the PCFP account. The State may have conflicts with dates established for the repayment of funds from school districts, which is currently established in law as September 25. As a result, we may not necessarily have the expected revenues to be able to repay the funds on August 31 as established in this bill.

ALEXANDER MARKS (Nevada State Education Association):
Nevada State Education Association opposes A.B. 523. Increasing the cap from 15 to 20 percent would stash away another \$382 million by the end of the 2023-2025 biennium. We also have an issue with the calculation of the rate of inflation as we believe it will shortchange Nevada students in times of high inflation.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

We will close the hearing on A.B. 523, and we will go to S.B. 510.

SENATE BILL 510 (1st Reprint): Makes appropriations for the implementation of certain collective bargaining agreements. (BDR S-1227)

MS. STEPHENSON:

Senate Bill 510 appropriates the difference between what has been approved in the Pay Bill, or A.B. 522, for employees in bargaining units A, E, F, G, H, I, and K and what the Governor has deemed appropriate for any other form of direct compensation for those employees under the five collective bargaining agreements approved by the BOE on May 17, 2023, in accordance with NRS 288.510.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

Is this bill an implementation for those unit agreements approved by the BOE?

MS. STEPHENSON:

Yes, that is correct.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

Just to confirm, these are all the BOE pieces?

MS. STEPHENSON:

These are the agreements approved minus some discrepancies the Governor did not approve. There is a small change.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

How does this fit in with the other Pay Bills we are doing for the 2023-2025 biennium? Are the increases in addition to the various budget bills?

MS. STEPHENSON:

The increases in these collective bargaining agreements match what is in the Pay Bill. There is no difference.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

Is this an additional appropriation beyond what is in the Pay Bill?

MS. STEPHENSON:

Yes. The percentage of the COLA is the same, but this is above and beyond what is in there. The pay is the same. That appropriation has already been made in the Pay Bill. This is for all the other economic items that were negotiated.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

Does the combination of the two bills reflect what was agreed to or proposed for employee pay increases?

MR. THORLEY:

The appropriations in S.B. 510 fund the economic provisions of the five collective bargaining agreements that were not funded in the Pay Bill A.B. 522.

As an example, the Governor's recommended COLA increases were funded in the Pay Bill. All five bargaining units bargained for the exact same COLA increase. Funding for those COLAs is not included in S.B. 510 because it is already in the Pay Bill. However, the collective bargaining units bargained for additional economic payments beyond the COLAs.

Some of the groups bargained for special pay. For example, special duty pay was bargained for by one of the law enforcement groups; and there is canine pay, if they are on canine duty. They get a percentage increase in their hourly

rate. Money to fund things that were not included in the Pay Bill is included in S.B. 510.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

Another example would be for a candidate's level of education.

MS. QUATTRONE:

Section 6 of S.B. 510 talks about any remaining balance of funds that cannot be used for the original intent but can be used for something else. This is wishy-washy, and the timing seems like it might possibly be about elections. I oppose S.B. 510.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

We will close S.B. 510, and now we will hear A.B. 45.

ASSEMBLY BILL 45 (2nd Reprint): Creates a program to repay the student education loans of certain providers of health care. (BDR 18-359)

MR. JIMENEZ:

Assembly Bill 45 stemmed from the Nevada Recovers Listening Tour. The Nevada State Treasurer, former Governor Steve Sisolak, and all of you joined us for over 123 events, over 87 days. Access to a doctor was a common concern among rural and urban communities. We spent countless hours figuring out how we could incentivize new doctors to come to the State. Much work has been done by Senator Julie Pazina and others on residency programs. What we settled on was a student loan repayment program that would attract doctors, and commit them to serving in the communities that need the most help for a certain period. The program will help to repay their student loans.

Assembly Bill 45 creates a program that will be run out of the Office of the State Treasurer. It would cover a wide variety of different providers. To be eligible to participate in the program, a provider would have to be licensed and registered in the State of Nevada. They would have to commit to serving in one of the underserved communities outlined in the bill, and they would have to commit to serving for a period of five years. We would develop a sliding scale methodology for repayment based on the profession. We would pay on a yearly basis to avoid a multiyear payment if circumstances changed and the person needed to leave the State before the end of the term.

There is a 15 percent carve out for counties with populations under 100,000. Functionally, we would take applications from rural providers first if there were enough applications. Next, we would move down the priority list to other communities, which includes our low-English-proficiency communities in southern Nevada and some of the other health disparity areas.

The fiscal details of A.B. 45 contemplate a transfer from the Abandoned Property Trust, which funds \$7.6 million of the Governor Guinn Millennium Scholarship Program; \$1 million of the Grants Matching Fund; and would put \$2.5 million each year into this program. This is an important funding mechanism. If the funding is built into the Abandoned Property Trust, it would mechanically happen every year and would give the providers who participate in the program more certainty that those dollars are going to be there.

There an existing student loan repayment program that serves a more limited number of providers, administered by the UNR School of Medicine. We worked with Dr. John Packham on this bill. We have worked collaboratively with UNR to figure out how both programs could be layered. The UNR program has gone to the Legislature for dollar-for-dollar State and federal match funding each year. That bill looked like it was going to die this Session. We amended A.B. 248 into this bill. Assuming this bill passes, the grant matching dollars for the National Health Service Corps out of the UNR School of Medicine would also be funded in perpetuity.

ASSEMBLY BILL 248: Makes an appropriation relating to health services in underserved areas. (BDR S-964)

SENATOR NGUYEN:

Do other state treasurer's offices administer similar programs, or are these programs administered in other agencies?

MR. JIMENEZ:

State treasurers do a variety of functions. There are several state treasurers who have student loan repayment programs for teachers. Assembly Bill 428 addresses a tuition reimbursement program.

ASSEMBLY BILL 428 (2nd Reprint): Revises provisions relating to economic development. (BDR 18-775)

Another program in the Governor's Office of Science, Innovation and Technology is funded through a grant from the Pennington Foundation. The program had a similar sliding-scale methodology, but it ran out of money and was discontinued.

We have the student loan ombudsperson created in the Eightieth Legislative Session. This position dovetails into work we are already doing regarding student loans.

SENATOR NEAL:

It seems like this program would be better positioned in a different department, maybe the Nevada Department of Education. There are numerous administration duties including deciding which medical disciplines qualify for the program. It seems to me, the Office of the State Treasurer is out of its scope.

I understand the desire to be helpful. Why would we take the abandoned property and create a program to repay up to \$120,000 of student loans when there are several other iterations, like the Graduate Medical Education Program Grants and a tax credit program? Why would the program not be administered through the medical school or some other agency? I have a problem with the expansion of power.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

Just for clarification, was there any discussion about placing this program in a different department or was it because it came up in your tour that you decided to do this in the Office of the State Treasurer?

MR. JIMENEZ:

We had discussions about potential different agencies to administer this program, but when we looked at different funding streams, we determined the Office of the State Treasurer has the bandwidth and experience to do it. We have experience administering the Governor Guinn Millennium Scholarship, which has sent over 760,000 Nevadans to college affordably. This program is the next iteration of the work that the Office of the State Treasurer would like to do.

We have worked with Senator Catherine Cortez Masto's office on this bill to get an IRS determination that money received by the participants will not be subject

to federal income tax. There is an exemption for these types of loan repayment programs.

SENATOR GOICOECHEA:

There is a federal program that does something very similar for Federally Qualified Health Centers. This has worked well in the rural areas if you can get a provider. Will you combine this program with the federal program?

MR. JIMENEZ:

The program you are talking about is the National Health Service Corps and is outlined in the federal tax code. It is operated by the UNR School of Medicine. If we did not bring A.B. 428 forward, that program would have stopped getting funding. Our bill expands on that program. Dr. John Packham at UNR School of Medicine administers the Nevada Health Service Corps Program. He is excited about this legislation because there are certain provider types and certain communities he cannot offer loan repayments. Also, the loan repayment is higher in A.B. 45. We are hopeful the two programs could be complementary. The goal is to get more doctors into communities.

MR. HOSKINS:

We support A.B. 45 and believe it is a great bill to address the nursing shortage pipeline.

LEA CASE (Nevada Psychiatric Association):

We support A.B. 45, specifically section 6 subsection 4 which lists psychiatry as a primary care specialty. The existing student loan repayment programs do not offer enough incentive to keep our residents in Nevada, and we lose about 40 percent of them every year.

MICHAEL FLORES (University of Nevada, Reno):

We support A.B. 45 and are happy we were finally able to collaborate with the Office of the State Treasurer and put them all together.

MR. RODRIGUEZ:

The Nevada System of Higher Education supports A.B. 45.

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MS. MONROY-MARSALA:

The Nevada Public Health Association supports A.B. 45 and appreciates the Office of the State Treasurer's willingness to amend the Nevada Health Service Corps language in the bill as it brings needed stability to this program.

PAIGE BARNES (Nevada Nurses Association):

We support A.B. 45.

MR. MESSINGER:

We support A.B. 45. Our health centers have been a huge beneficiary of the National Health Service Corps and is now incorporated into this bill. We are excited because it expands the provider types, and it creates a stable source of funding.

MS. ADLER:

Nevada Advanced Practice Nurses Association supports A.B. 45. Ditto to what Mr. Messinger said about the marriage with the Nevada Health Service Corps which is vital to the rural areas.

MR. JENG:

One APIA Nevada supports A.B. 45.

CONNOR CAIN (Touro University):

We support A.B. 45.

MS. QUATTRONE:

I would like to echo the Assemblywoman earlier about the Abandoned Property Trust Account. I take issue with that. I oppose A.B. 45.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

We will close the hearing on A.B. 45. Next on the agenda is A.B. 84.

ASSEMBLY BILL 84 (1st Reprint): Provides for the issuance of free annual permits to certain persons for entering State parks and recreational areas.
(BDR 35-471)

ASSEMBLYMAN HOWARD WATTS (Assembly District No. 15):

Assembly Bill 84 as amended will provide all members of Nevada tribes, and Nevada residents who are discharged veterans from our armed services, with an

exception for dishonorably discharged, to gain free entry to our Nevada State Parks. There is an appropriation based on the projected lost revenue from providing free entry for our veterans and Indigenous Nevadans. Lost revenue is in section 1.7 of the bill and projected at \$214,000 in FY 2023-2024 and \$241,000 in FY 2024-2025.

SENATOR GOICOECHEA:

How will Nevada tribal members and veterans gain free admission?

ASSEMBLYMAN WATTS:

We did not specify exactly how to gain access. A tribal ID would be the easiest way for tribal members to qualify for an annual pass.

There are other separate passes related to fees for camping and boating, but this pass would be just for park entry. The pass expires annually and would require proof of qualification each year such as tribal IDs or U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs IDs or discharge papers.

In consultation with the National Park Service, we used their language to include all veteran discharges to be consistent with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs IDs.

SENATOR GOICOECHEA:

To clarify, is this only for park entry permits?

ASSEMBLYMAN WATTS:

That is correct; camping and boating fees are separate.

MR. TANCHEK:

The Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, Shoshone Paiute Tribes, Duck Valley Indian Reservation and the Duck Water Shoshone Tribe support A.B. 84.

JENNIFER LANAHAN (Las Vegas Paiute Tribe; Reno Sparks Indian Colony):

We support A.B. 84.

MS. QUATTRONE:

I support this bill, but I would like it to be expanded to people born in Nevada.

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CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

I will close the hearing on A.B. 84 and will open the hearing on A.B. 119.

ASSEMBLY BILL 119 (2nd Reprint): Creates the Vulnerable Adult Fatality Review Committee. (BDR 38-311)

ASSEMBLYMAN DAVID ORENTLICHER (Assembly District No. 20):

Assembly Bill 119 proposes a committee to study deaths of vulnerable adults when the deaths are suspected to have been caused by maltreatment. The hope is the committee will help us better understand the causes of these deaths and how to reduce them.

The proposal in this bill was initiated by a letter last July 2022 from Jennifer Richards of the Aging and Disability Services Division of the DHHS to the Interim Committee on Judiciary. In her letter, she outlined recommendations for Committee action including a discussion of this kind of review team. In her letter, she noted that Nevada currently has fatality review teams for domestic violence, children, and maternal mortality. Nevada's older adult population is one of the fastest growing in the Country, according to case data from Adult Protective Services.

The proposed committee should assess the opportunity in Nevada to develop a fatality review team that would review deaths resulting from elder abuse. Our goal is to learn about and improve the responses of Adult Protective Services, healthcare providers, law enforcement officers, prosecutors, victim assistance providers and other stakeholders. The results can be used to promote policy changes in government and private agencies, identify gaps and barriers to service for victims prior to death, increase public awareness and help improve the safety and health of Nevada residents.

The sections of the bill define the role of the committee, its responsibilities, and its actions. There is a conceptual amendment (Exhibit H) from the AG to better define its role.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

Is there a fiscal note?

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ASSEMBLYMAN ORENTLICHER:

When we amended it in the Assembly and defined the AG's role, we imposed some responsibilities that generated a fiscal note. We removed those responsibilities to eliminate the fiscal note.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

Is the amendment finished or is it conceptual?

ASSEMBLYMAN ORENTLICHER:

I sent it to Mr. Thorley a couple of hours ago. It says that, within the limits of available resources, the AG may review any case referred by this Vulnerable Adult Fatality Review Committee for the purposes of possible additional investigations of such a case. It also deleted a provision that provided for referral of cases to the AG's office.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

Does this amendment take away the fiscal impact?

ASSEMBLYMAN ORENTLICHER:

We did a previous amendment in the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means that removed the fiscal impact. This was designed to make sure we were not flooding the AG's office with referrals, only with appropriate cases. There is no fiscal impact.

MS. QUATTRONE:

I am in support of A.B. 119. My dad was at a retirement place. While there, he suffered financial exploitation, emotional distress, and food was withheld from him among many other things. I contacted Adult Protective Services and sent them documentation. I never heard back. If this can help other at-risk seniors by having services able to investigate these abuses, I am all for it.

MS. MARTINEZ:

We support A.B. 119.

BETH SCHMIDT (Lieutenant, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department):

The AG's conceptual amendment to A.B. 119 brings the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department to the neutral position.

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CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

I will close the hearing on A.B. 119 and open the hearing on A.B. 125.

ASSEMBLY BILL 125 (2nd Reprint): Revises provisions relating to public safety.
(BDR 43-796)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN SHEA BACKUS (Assembly District No. 37):

Assembly Bill 125 provides for a tribal liaison in the Nevada Department of Public Safety (DPS) to ensure information about missing Indigenous adults is entered into the National Crime Information Center database.

After working with stakeholders, the DPS has an avenue for stakeholders to have access to the database to enter missing persons. In addition, we added that local law enforcement can connect someone reporting a missing person off sovereign land to tribal police or direct them to the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs or the FBI.

For a deeper dive into federal Indian law and criminal jurisdiction, I welcome you to watch the policy hearing held in the Assembly Committee on Judiciary on March 6, 2023.

We have already taken care of the fiscal note in the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means. In S.B. 94, the DPS did one fiscal note for the two bills and the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means allocated the position in this bill.

SENATE BILL 94: Revises provisions relating to tribal liaison officers.
(BDR 18-348)

Ms. LANAHAN:

We support A.B. 125.

Ms. SCHMIDT:

The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department and Nevada Sheriffs and Chiefs worked extensively on this bill. It will help advance the way Nevada will address missing Indigenous persons, and we support A.B. 125.

MR. TANCHEK:

We support A.B. 125.

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CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

We will close the hearing on A.B. 125 and move to a work session.

MR. THORLEY:

This Committee heard several one-shot appropriation Assembly bills and budget implementation Assembly bills. Those will be on the work session now.

Assembly Bill 469 is a one-shot appropriation request from the Governor and included in his budget. The bill appropriates \$4.4 million to restore the balance in the stale claims account created by NRS 353.97. There are no amendments, and no testimony in support, opposition or neutral.

ASSEMBLY BILL 469: Makes an appropriation to restore the balance in the Stale Claims Account. (BDR S-1097)

SENATOR NEAL MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 469.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS CANNIZZARO AND TITUS WERE EXCUSED FOR THE VOTE.)

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Ms. CROCKET:

Assembly Bill 470 appropriates \$41,353 to the State Public Works Division for services related to the Marlette Lake Water System. There were no comments in support, opposition or neutral.

ASSEMBLY BILL 470: Makes an appropriation to the State Public Works Division of the Department of Administration for professional services and filing fees related to water rights associated with the Marlette Lake Water System. (BDR S-1127)

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 470.

SENATOR NEAL SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS CANNIZZARO AND TITUS WERE EXCUSED FOR THE VOTE.)

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MR. THORLEY:

Assembly Bill 471, presented by the Nevada Department of Administration, is a one-shot appropriation requested in the Governor's budget. It appropriates \$3,158 to the State Public Works Division for the replacement of computer hardware and associated software. There was no testimony in support, opposition or neutral and there are no amendments.

ASSEMBLY BILL 471: Makes an appropriation to the State Public Works Division of the Department of Administration for the replacement of computer hardware and associated software. (BDR S-1136)

SENATOR NGUYEN MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 471.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS CANNIZZARO AND TITUS WERE EXCUSED FOR THE VOTE.)

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MS. CROCKET:

Assembly Bill 472 appropriates \$7,163,000 to the Purchasing Division of the Nevada Department of Administration to purchase a warehouse building in Las Vegas to replace leased space. The bill was presented by the Director of the Department and there were no comments in support, opposition or neutral.

ASSEMBLY BILL 472: Makes an appropriation to the Purchasing Division of the Department of Administration for the purchase of a warehouse building in Las Vegas, Nevada, to replace leased space. (BDR S-1137)

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 472.

SENATOR NGUYEN SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS CANNIZZARO AND TITUS WERE EXCUSED FOR THE VOTE.)

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MR. THORLEY:

Assembly Bill 473 is a one-shot appropriation for \$12.8 million and was included in the Executive Budget. The request is for the purchase of replacement vehicles for the Nevada Department of Administration, Fleet Services Division. There was no testimony in support, opposition or neutral and no amendments were presented on the bill.

ASSEMBLY BILL 473: Makes an appropriation to the Fleet Services Division of the Department of Administration for the replacement and purchase of vehicles. (BDR S-1138)

SENATOR NGUYEN MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 473.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS CANNIZZARO AND TITUS WERE EXCUSED FOR THE VOTE.)

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MS. CROCKET:

Assembly Bill 474 appropriates funding of \$11,980, of which \$3,359 is General Fund monies to the Commission on Ethics to replace computer hardware and software. There were no comments in support, opposition or neutral.

ASSEMBLY BILL 474: Makes an appropriation to and authorizes the expenditure of money by the Commission on Ethics for the replacement of computer hardware and associated software. (BDR S-1139)

SENATOR NGUYEN MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 474.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS CANNIZZARO AND TITUS WERE EXCUSED FOR THE VOTE.)

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MR. THORLEY:

Assembly Bill 475 appropriates \$587,000 of General Fund monies for various purposes to the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges and the National Judicial College. It is a one-shot appropriation from the Office of the Governor, Office of Finance and was included in the Executive Budget. There was support testimony from the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges. There was no testimony in opposition or neutral. There were no amendments.

ASSEMBLY BILL 475: Makes appropriations to the Department of Administration for certain activities and technology requirements of the National Judicial College and the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges. (BDR S-1148)

SENATOR NGUYEN MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 475.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS CANNIZZARO AND TITUS WERE EXCUSED FOR THE VOTE.)

* * * * *

MS. CROCKET:

Assembly Bill 476 appropriates \$1.8 million to the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services, Aging and Disability Services Division for various IT and deferred maintenance projects. There is also authorized funding in the bill. It was presented by the Division's IT manager. There were no comments in support, opposition or neutral.

ASSEMBLY BILL 476: Makes appropriations to and authorizes the expenditure of money by the Aging and Disability Services Division of the Department of Health and Human Services for the replacement or purchase of computer hardware and associated software and door locks. (BDR S-1182)

SENATOR NGUYEN MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 476.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS CANNIZZARO AND TITUS WERE EXCUSED FOR THE VOTE.)

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MR. THORLEY:

Assembly Bill 477 presented by the Nevada Department of Transportation is a one-shot appropriation request from the Governor included in his budget. It requests State Highway Fund appropriations of \$22.1 million for the replacement of the Nevada Shared Radio System and authorizes non-Highway Fund funding of \$823,000 for the same purpose. There was no testimony in support, opposition or neutral. There are no amendments.

ASSEMBLY BILL 477: Makes appropriations to and authorizes the expenditure of money by the Department of Transportation for the replacement of the Nevada Shared Radio System. (BDR S-1168)

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 477.

SENATOR NGUYEN SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS CANNIZZARO AND TITUS WERE EXCUSED FOR THE VOTE.)

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MS. CROCKET:

Assembly Bill 478 appropriates \$2,014 of General Fund monies to the State Emergency Response Commission. The bill was presented by the

State Fire Marshal Division. There were no comments in support, opposition or neutral and no amendments were discussed.

ASSEMBLY BILL 478: Makes an appropriation to the State Emergency Response Commission for the replacement of computer hardware and associated software. (BDR S-1166)

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 478.

SENATOR NGUYEN SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS CANNIZZARO AND TITUS WERE EXCUSED FOR THE VOTE.)

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MR. THORLEY:

Assembly Bill 479 is a one-shot appropriation request for the replacement of various IT equipment and software over three sections and presented by the State Board of Parole Commissioners. The total amount of the General Fund appropriation request is \$112,464. There was no testimony in support, opposition or neutral. There are no amendments.

ASSEMBLY BILL 479: Makes appropriations to the State Board of Parole Commissioners for the replacement of computer hardware, software and related equipment and licenses to upgrade a computer operating system. (BDR S-1158)

SENATOR NGUYEN MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 479.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS CANNIZZARO AND TITUS WERE EXCUSED FOR THE VOTE.)

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Ms. CROCKET:

Assembly Bill 480 was presented by Wayne Thorley accompanied by Ms. Stephenson with the GFO to answer questions. The bill appropriates \$25 million to the IFC for allocation to agencies of the Executive Branch of State Government to implement language access plans. The Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities and the Nevada Disability Peer Action Coalition presented comments in support. There were no comments in opposition or neutral and no amendments were discussed.

ASSEMBLY BILL 480: Makes an appropriation to the Interim Finance Committee to allocate to certain State agencies to implement language access plans. (BDR S-1155)

SENATOR NGUYEN MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 480.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS CANNIZZARO AND TITUS WERE EXCUSED FOR THE VOTE.)

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Mr. THORLEY:

Assembly Bill 481 is a one-shot appropriation for \$700,000 from the GFO and included in the Executive Budget. The bill was presented by Tom Burns of the GFO. The appropriation to GOED for the Nevada Main Street Program was created by NRS 231.1536. There was testimony in support by the Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance and Main Street Gardnerville. There was no testimony in opposition or neutral. There are no amendments.

ASSEMBLY BILL 481: Makes an appropriation to the Account for the Nevada Main Street Program. (BDR S-1149)

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 481.

SENATOR NGUYEN SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS CANNIZZARO AND TITUS WERE EXCUSED FOR THE VOTE.)

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MS. CROCKET:

Assembly Bill 485 appropriates \$3,974,486 to the Legislative Fund for annual dues for national organizations, a passenger van and various IT projects. There were no amendments and no comments in support, opposition or neutral.

ASSEMBLY BILL 485 (1st Reprint): Makes an appropriation to the Legislative Fund for annual dues for national organizations, a passenger van and information technology services projects. (BDR S-1141)

SENATOR NGUYEN MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 485.

SENATOR NEAL SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS CANNIZZARO AND TITUS WERE EXCUSED FOR THE VOTE.)

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MR. THORLEY:

Assembly Bill 486 is a one-shot appropriation request from the GFO. This was included in the Executive Budget. The bill was presented by the Nevada Department of Administration. Three sections of the bill contain General Fund appropriations for replacement of computer hardware and software, and the purchase of digitization equipment and technology. The total amount of the appropriation is \$188,262. There was no testimony in support, opposition or neutral. There are no amendments.

ASSEMBLY BILL 486: Makes appropriations to the Division of State Library, Archives and Public Records of the Department of Administration for the replacement of computer hardware and associated software and the purchase of digitization equipment and technology. (BDR S-1130)

SENATOR NGUYEN MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 486.

SENATOR NEAL SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS CANNIZZARO AND TITUS WERE EXCUSED FOR THE VOTE.)

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Ms. CROCKET:

Assembly Bill 492 appropriates a total of \$8 million for various IT items related to the NevadaNet system in NSHE. The bill was presented by NSHE. There was one comment in support and no comments in opposition or neutral. No amendments were discussed.

ASSEMBLY BILL 492: Makes appropriations to the Nevada System of Higher Education for certain information technology leases and equipment. (BDR S-1179)

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 492.

SENATOR NGUYEN SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS CANNIZZARO AND TITUS WERE EXCUSED FOR THE VOTE.)

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MR. THORLEY:

Assembly Bill 493 is a one-shot appropriation request from the GFO that was included in the Executive Budget. As introduced, the bill included \$5 million for a study of the NSHE funding formula. It was amended in the Assembly to appropriate \$2 million from the General Fund to fund the NSHE funding formula study. There was testimony in support from the Nevada Faculty Alliance and no testimony in opposition or neutral. There are no amendments.

ASSEMBLY BILL 493 (1st Reprint): Makes an appropriation to the Nevada System of Higher Education for an interim study of the funding formula for the System. (BDR S-1178)

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 493.

SENATOR NGUYEN SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS CANNIZZARO AND TITUS WERE EXCUSED FOR THE VOTE.)

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Ms. CROCKET:

Assembly Bill 495 appropriates \$17.2 million of Highway Funds to the Nevada Highway Patrol of the DPS for the replacement of various vehicles, equipment, computer devices, and a staffing study. It was presented by the State Police. There were no comments in support or opposition. The Nevada Department of Administration provided comments in response to questions about using Nevada dealers for vehicle purchases. No amendments were discussed.

ASSEMBLY BILL 495 (1st Reprint): Makes appropriations to the Nevada Highway Patrol Division of the Department of Public Safety for the replacement or purchase of vehicles, motorcycles, weapons and certain equipment and a staffing study. (BDR S-1163)

SENATOR NGUYEN MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 495.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT SECONDED THE MOTION.

SENATOR HARRIS:

Is the DPS included in the comprehensive staffing study we plan on conducting for all State employees?

Ms. CROCKET:

I believe they will be included. There is no indication in the bill regarding that study that would exclude them.

SENATOR HARRIS:

Will their positions be studied twice?

Ms. CROCKET:

Potentially.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS CANNIZZARO AND TITUS WERE EXCUSED FOR THE VOTE.)

* * * * *

MR. THORLEY:

Assembly Bill 496 is a one-shot appropriation for an approximate total of \$2.1 million requested by the DPS for costs related to the Joint Emergency Training Institute and the replacement or purchase of computer hardware and associated software, radio equipment and certain weapons. Approximately \$2 million will be an appropriation from General Fund monies with the remainder from the Highway Fund. There was no testimony in support, opposition or neutral. There were no amendments.

ASSEMBLY BILL 496: Makes appropriations to the Department of Public Safety for costs related to the Joint Emergency Training Institute and the replacement or purchase of computer hardware and associated software, radio equipment and certain weapons. (BDR S-1162)

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 496.

SENATOR NGUYEN SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS CANNIZZARO AND TITUS WERE EXCUSED FOR THE VOTE.)

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MS. CROCKET:

Assembly Bill 500 is a supplemental appropriation in the amount of \$70,450 requested by the GFO for a shortfall in FY 2023-2024 for costs associated with preparation of the Statewide cost allocation plan. There were no amendments and no comments in support, opposition or neutral.

ASSEMBLY BILL 500: Makes a supplemental appropriation to the Office of Finance in the Office of the Governor for an unanticipated shortfall related to costs associated with the preparation of the Statewide cost allocation plan. (BDR S-1100)

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 500.

SENATOR NGUYEN SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS CANNIZZARO AND TITUS WERE EXCUSED FOR THE VOTE.)

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MR. THORLEY:

Assembly Bill 502 is a supplemental appropriation request for approximately \$472,000 for an unanticipated revenue shortfall and increased operating costs in FY 2023-2024 from the Division of Public and Behavioral Health, DHHS. There was no testimony in support, opposition or neutral. There are no amendments.

ASSEMBLY BILL 502 (1st Reprint): Makes a supplemental appropriation to the Division of Public and Behavioral Health of the Department of Health and Human Services for an unanticipated revenue shortfall and an increase in operating costs. (BDR S-1104)

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 502.

SENATOR NGUYEN SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS CANNIZZARO AND TITUS WERE EXCUSED FOR THE VOTE.)

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MS. CROCKET:

Assembly Bill 504 appropriates funds totaling \$50,000, of which \$39,123 is General Fund monies for the replacement of computer hardware and associated software, IT peripheral devices, and staff certification costs. There were no amendments discussed, and there were no comments in support, opposition or neutral.

ASSEMBLY BILL 504: Makes appropriations to and authorizes the expenditure of money by the Office of Economic Development in the Office of the

Governor for the replacement of computer hardware and associated software and the costs of office furniture, communication services, certain staff certification and office modification. (BDR S-1140)

SENATOR NGUYEN MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 504.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS CANNIZZARO AND TITUS WERE EXCUSED FOR THE VOTE.)

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MR. THORLEY:

Assembly Bill 505 is a one-shot appropriation request on behalf of the GFO for the Nevada Department of Veterans Services in the amount of \$235,426. Sections 1 through 4 of the bill are for the replacement of computer hardware and associated software, information technology equipment and for the widening of an interior door at the Northern Nevada Veterans Home.

ASSEMBLY BILL 505 (1st Reprint): Makes appropriations to and authorizes the expenditure of money by the Department of Veterans Services and the Veterans Home Account for the replacement of computer hardware and associated software, the purchase of information technology peripheral devices and the performance of certain projects. (BDR S-1143)

The bill was presented by Fred Wagar, Director of the Nevada Department of Veterans Services. The United Veterans Legislative Council provided testimony in support. There is no testimony in opposition or neutral. There are no amendments.

SENATOR NGUYEN MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 505.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS CANNIZZARO AND TITUS WERE EXCUSED FOR THE VOTE.)

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Ms. CROCKET:

Assembly Bill 508 appropriates funding totaling approximately \$5.1 million to the Division of Parole and Probation of the DPS for the replacement of various computer hardware, software and equipment and funding to continue the replacement of the Offender Tracking Information Technology System. The bill was presented by the Division of Parole and Probation. There were no comments in support, opposition or neutral and no amendments were discussed.

ASSEMBLY BILL 508: Makes appropriations to the Division of Parole and Probation of the Department of Public Safety for the replacement of computer hardware and associated software, radio equipment, certain weapons and an information technology system. (BDR S-1164)

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 508.

SENATOR NGUYEN SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS CANNIZZARO AND TITUS WERE EXCUSED FOR THE VOTE.)

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MR. THORLEY:

Assembly Bill 509 a one-shot appropriation for the Investigation Division of the DPS for replacement radio equipment, vehicles, cameras, IT equipment, and associated software and tasers. The total amount funding is \$757,468 from General Fund monies and \$59,635 from the Highway Fund. The deputy chief of the Investigation Division presented the bill. There is no testimony in support, opposition or neutral. There are no amendments.

ASSEMBLY BILL 509: Makes appropriations to the Investigation Division of the Department of Public Safety for the replacement of vehicles, radio equipment, cameras, computer hardware and associated software and certain weapons. (BDR S-1165)

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 509.

SENATOR NGUYEN SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS CANNIZZARO AND TITUS WERE EXCUSED FOR THE VOTE.)

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MS. CROCKET:

Assembly Bill 510 appropriates Highway Funds of approximately \$4.6 million to the Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles for various computer and equipment replacements. It was presented by the Department. No amendments were discussed. There were no comments in support, opposition or neutral.

ASSEMBLY BILL 510 (1st Reprint): Makes appropriations to the Department of Motor Vehicles for the replacement or purchase of computer hardware and software, office furniture and equipment. (BDR S-1176)

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 510.

SENATOR NGUYEN SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS CANNIZZARO AND TITUS WERE EXCUSED FOR THE VOTE.)

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MR. THORLEY:

Assembly Bill 511 makes a General Fund appropriation in the amount of \$16.2 million to the Division of Public and Behavioral Health in the DHHS budgets. There was no testimony in support, opposition or neutral. There are no amendments.

ASSEMBLY BILL 511 (1st Reprint): Makes appropriations to the Division of Public and Behavioral Health of the Department of Health and Human Services for the replacement of computer hardware and associated software, the replacement of office furniture and equipment and deferred maintenance projects. (BDR S-1184)

SENATOR NGUYEN MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 511.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS CANNIZZARO AND TITUS WERE EXCUSED FOR THE VOTE.)

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Ms. CROCKET:

Assembly Bill 512 appropriates a total of \$18 million in General Fund and authorizes funding of approximately \$35.7 million to the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services for various IT projects including the continuation of the Child Support Enforcement Information System modernization. It was presented by the deputy administrator of the Division. There were no amendments discussed. There were no comments in support, opposition or neutral.

ASSEMBLY BILL 512: Makes appropriations to and authorizes the expenditure of money by the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services of the Department of Health and Human Services for certain information technology upgrades and projects. (BDR S-1185)

SENATOR NGUYEN MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 512.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS CANNIZZARO AND TITUS WERE EXCUSED FOR THE VOTE.)

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CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

We will close the work session and hear A.B. 138.

ASSEMBLY BILL 138 (1st Reprint): Provides Medicaid coverage for certain types of behavioral health integration services. (BDR 38-332)

Ms. CASE:

Assembly Bill 138 requires the DHHS, Division of Health Care, Financing and Policy to amend the State Plan for Medicaid to include collaborative care codes. These codes are active in 23 other states.

Eighty percent of people see their general practitioner for mental health concerns. Most general practitioners are confident in prescribing antidepressant or anti-anxiety medication. Once outside that realm, people need to consult with a psychiatrist or substance use specialist. That is what this bill covers. Medicaid does not pay or reimburse for that expertise. This would allow a care consultant, psychiatrist or substance use specialist and a general practitioner to be paid for their work. Assembly Bill 138 would allow these practitioners to bill Medicaid.

There are currently two similar programs in Nevada using grant funds. Those programs are the High-Risk Pregnancy Center in Las Vegas and the Pediatric Access Line program. The High-Risk Pregnancy Center provides consultation on substance exposed or addicted pregnancies. The Pediatric Access Line program provides psychiatric consultations to primary care pediatric clinicians.

ABBEY BERNHARDT (National Alliance on Mental Illness, Nevada Chapter):
I struggle with bipolar disorder and my father struggled with mental illness and substance abuse. I support A.B. 138.

MS. MONROY-MARSALA:
The Nevada Public Health Association supports this bill.

MR. NORMAN:
The Nevada Coalition of Legal Service Providers represents many kids in foster care who have been substance exposed. We support A.B. 138.

MS. ADLER:
The Advanced Practice Nurses Association supports this bill. They are primary care providers throughout our State and this bill could assist them in serving their patients.

MR. MESSINGER:
The Nevada Primary Care Association supports A.B. 138.

JESSICA FERRATO (American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, Nevada Section):
We support A.B. 138.

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JIMMY LAU (Dignity Health-St. Rose Dominican Hospital)
We are in support of the bill.

Ms. MARTINEZ:
We urge the Committee to pass this bill.

Ms. QUATTRONE:
As someone who suffers with major depressive disorder, complex post-traumatic stress disorder and psychotic depression, I support this bill.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
I will close the hearing on A.B. 138, and we will open the hearing on A.B.139.

ASSEMBLY BILL 139 (1st Reprint): Revises provisions governing certain demographic information collected by governmental agencies. (BDR 19-122)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN BRITNEY MILLER (Assembly District No. 5):
Assembly Bill 139 requires an additional category be added to race or ethnicity questions for any governmental agencies that already collect racial or ethnic data. We are requesting a category for Middle Eastern North African (MENA).

There are 22 countries in the Arab League that represent the Arab world. Arabs are the largest group in the Middle East and North Africa. This area covers Persians, Kurdsmen, Chaldeans, Assyrians, Armenians, Berbers, Turks and Israelis. The issue is, as an Arab who may be from Morocco or Egypt, when asked to fill out census or racial data, your option would be African or African American. When you identify culturally as an Arab and have checked African or African American, you are considered a Black American. A person may be an Arab from Lebanon and legally in the United States; Lebanese people are considered White. The White option is considered White European. Lebanon is in Asia, so technically Asian.

We have a huge population of people who cannot be accurately counted because the forms only allow for African, White, or Asian and not how the person identifies. Federal funding through census counts comes in for dozens of different governmental services. Nationally, the census says there are 2.5 million Arab Americans. A neighborhood survey from the Arab American Institute shows the number increases to 3.7 million when people have

the option to identify as Arab. Nevada itself has experienced a 42 percent increase in Arab Americans in the past two decades.

We want to accurately count everyone Statewide so we can receive all the federal funds and support we need for everything from health care to language access.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:
Are people from Israel considered Jewish?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MILLER:
Coming from Israel, you are still considered in the Middle East. The largest group of people are Arabs, but certainly not everyone is Arab. The MENA category would encompass everyone from the Middle East and North Africa.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:
Is it geographic versus ethnicity?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MILLER:
Yes, but in that geography, we do share a community.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:
I have a friend from India who gets frustrated because he categorizes himself as White, but he is from India. Does the federal government have any other categories other than White, Asian, Black, Hispanic? Is this just for Nevada or has it been established by the federal government?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MILLER:
We have been trying to get this category on the census for the last few decades. The President wanted this issue studied again. The U.S. Office of Management and Budget is working on this, and we will get an answer in 2024 whether it will be changed for the 2030 census.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:
Should India become a category?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MILLER:

Yes, because Asia is a huge continent from the Middle East to Southeast Asia. People from India and Pakistan identify as South Asian, but at this point there has not been a category for them.

MR. JENG:

Last month, our organization sent in public comment to the federal side as the OMB is looking to update race and ethnicity statistical standards including the MENA category. This bill is aligned with the national trend. As a community advocate working in direct services, grant writing and policy recommendation, we know accurate and timely disaggregated data results in our community receiving its fair share of benefits, services and resources. We are not leaving federal funding on the table. This is great and we are in full support.

MS. MARTINEZ:

Ditto Mr. Jeng's comments. We are in support of this bill.

MS. PERSAUD-ZAMORA:

Silver State Voices supports A.B. 139.

MS. QUATTRONE:

I support A.B. 139. The same thing happened with Italian people back in the 1950s.

JAYSON DAGHER:

I support A.B. 139. This bill has been a decades-long fight to create a category for people like me and Assemblywoman Miller. I am a proud Lebanese American. This is the first legislation in Nevada addressing people who look like me, speak like me, and people who are American like me. This bill makes us visible and allows us to address issues in our community such as health issues, access to jobs and more.

It is estimated there are over 30,000 Nevadans of MENA descent, but we do not know that for certain because there is no data. How can we know one another and tackle issues in our community without the right information? Thank you to our champion Assemblywoman Miller for working to reduce the fiscal note to make this a fiscally responsible bill.

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CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:

We will close the hearing on A.B. 139. Any remaining bills will be heard tomorrow. We are adjourned for the evening at 9:51 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Dee Chekowitz-Dykes,
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Senator Marilyn Dondero Loop, Chair

DATE: _____

EXHIBIT SUMMARY				
Bill	Exhibit Letter	Introduced on Minute Report Page No.	Witness / Entity	Description
	A	1		Agenda
	B	1		Attendance Roster
A.B. 128	C	22	Jermareon Williams Western Resource Advocates	Support Letter
A.B. 263	D	48	Jon Leleu / Alliance to Prevent Legionnaires' Disease	Letter with Comments from Nevada Health Care Association
A.B. 310	E	50	Christine Hess / Nevada Housing Coalition	Handout: Nevada Supportive Housing Development Fund
A.B. 310	F	55	Nevada Housing Coalition	Letter of Support
A.B. 452	G	61	Tonja Brown / Advocates for Inmates and the Innocent	Conceptual Amendment
A.B. 119	H	79	Assemblyman David Orentlicher	Office of the Attorney General Conceptual Amendment