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Roxanne Boyce, Librarian, Boulder City High School, Clark County School District  
Testimony before the Senate Committee on Human Resources and Facilities on AB-407  
April 28, 2003

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen of the Senate Committee on Human Resources and Facilities, my name is Roxanne Boyce. I am librarian at Boulder City High School Library.

I am speaking today in support of AB-407.

I believe AB-407 is a wonderful idea. Many high school students in Las Vegas do not have easy access to public libraries after school and on weekends. Currently, all students statewide who have a computer at home have access to online databases purchased by the State of Nevada. These databases provide students with access to information 24 hours a day, seven days a week. I believe strongly in online libraries. I would like to see the State of Nevada purchase additional online databases for an even wider variety of reference information.

I realize that many students and adults do not have a home computer with Internet access. There does need to be a library within close proximity to adults and students where they may search online for information and check out books. Not all information sources are available online. There is still a great need for the reference and fiction books contained within school and public libraries.

Due to the support of Dr. Hardy, Boulder City High School and the City of Boulder City jointly opened the Boulder City High School library to students and the public on school days for two years from 2:40 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. The City of Boulder City Parks & Recreation Department funded the staffing requirements of this project. One adult library aide and one student technical aide were hired to keep the library open after the school day ended. The purpose of this arrangement was to give the public and students access to computer workstations and books. The Boulder City public library was in the process of building a new facility, and was closed during construction. The school library experienced no problems with this program and found the project worthwhile. Many adults used the school library's online computers, but very few choose to check out any books from the school collection because the school library doesn't contain adult fiction books, nonfiction titles of adult interest, or many periodicals. This year, the after school program was discontinued because the new public library is in very close proximity to the high school and there are adequate online computer workstations at the public library. However, I would highly recommend that school libraries be opened to the public after school hours in those areas where public libraries are not easily accessible.

My concerns regarding opening school libraries after school hours and on the weekends are:

1. **Funding**
2. **Staffing**
3. **Security**

**Funding:** Collection funding needs to be considered by the legislature in that high school libraries are curriculum based. High school libraries have very few adult fiction titles or nonfiction books that would be of interest to adult library patrons. The high school budget does not allow for the purchase of materials that do not support Nevada high school curriculum. High school libraries would find it impossible to serve the interests of both public and high school populations.

As an example of funding issues, I would like to tell you about Boulder City High School library. Boulder City High School is a small high school serving 700 students. The library budget is \$4.65 per pupil or \$3,255.00 per year. Please note that library book budget funds must also purchase periodicals (magazines & newspapers). The average cost of a high school circulating book is \$22.00, while the cost of a high school reference book ranges from 75 to 140 dollars. The Boulder City High School library has funds allocated to purchase less than 150 new books each year. The Boulder City High School library collection is very old due to many years of inadequate funding. Four years ago, the *average* copyright date of library books in Boulder City High School was 1967. Significant fund raising efforts have been ongoing for the past four years to address this situation.

**Staffing:** School libraries would need to have two staff members available for after school and weekend hours. In the case of the Boulder City after school program, the Boulder City Parks and Recreation Department paid for one library adult aide and one student technical expert to staff the program. The legislature needs to address how after school library program staff would be funded. Existing school and public library budgets are insufficient to staff projects such as these.

**Security:** Security is also a concern if school libraries are kept open into the evening hours. Schools in Las Vegas would need adequate security on campus to ensure the safety of library patrons and staff. Many Las Vegas public libraries have security personnel in place during evening hours now. This would also be a need for school libraries.

**Computer Access:** Most high school libraries in Clark County School District have only 15 workstations. This is insufficient for a typical high school class using the library and certainly would not meet the needs of patrons during extended library hours. There should be a minimum of 32 patron library workstations available in each high school library. Again, funding is the issue.

**Thank you.** I feel that allowing the public access to high school libraries is a good, needed idea. I fully support the concept of AB407, but please, consider adding a funding component to AB407, making implementation feasible. I appreciate the opportunity to comment on this issue today.