

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
OF THE  
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

**Seventy-Third Session  
February 21, 2005**

The Committee on Health and Human Services was called to order at 1:32 p.m., on Monday, February 21, 2005. Chairwoman Sheila Leslie presided in Room 3138 of the Legislative Building, Carson City, Nevada, and, via simultaneous videoconference, in Room 4401 of the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, Las Vegas, Nevada. [Exhibit A](#) is the Agenda. All exhibits are available and on file at the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Ms. Sheila Leslie, Chairwoman  
Ms. Kathy McClain, Vice Chairwoman  
Mrs. Sharron Angle  
Ms. Susan Gerhardt  
Mr. Joe Hardy  
Mr. William Horne  
Mrs. Ellen Koivisto  
Mr. Garn Mabey  
Ms. Bonnie Parnell  
Ms. Peggy Pierce  
Ms. Valerie Weber

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

None

**GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:**

Assemblyman Bob McCleary, Assembly District No. 11, Clark County  
Assemblyman Mark Manendo, Assembly District No. 18, Clark County

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Barbara Dimmitt, Committee Analyst  
Joe Bushek, Committee Attaché

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Philip Mangano, Executive Director, United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, Washington, D.C.

Lisa Foster, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor, State of Nevada

Chuck Fulkerson, Executive Director, Office of Veterans Services, State of Nevada

Kelly Marschall, Client Service Manager, Social Entrepreneurs Inc., Reno, Nevada

Paula Haynes-Green, Regional Homeless Service Coordinator, Clark County, Nevada

Janet Berry, Judge, Second Judicial District, Reno District Court, Reno, Nevada

Ginny Lewis, Director, Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles

Anna Marie Johnson, Director, Nevada Legal Services, Las Vegas, Nevada

Leroy Pelton, President, Southern Nevada Advocates for Homeless People, Las Vegas, Nevada

**Chairwoman Leslie:**

[Meeting called to order and roll called.] Due to the presentations in A.B. 84, which we want to hear today, we're going to reschedule A.B. 13. We'll reschedule that, though, probably next week.

[The following presentations dealt with many of the issues in A.B. 84.]

**Assembly Bill 84: Makes various changes concerning homeless persons.  
(BDR 40-810)**

We'll go ahead and get started with Mr. Mangano. He is an appointee of President Bush. Reading his biography before the meeting, although I don't have it in front of me, he has a quite impressive record on homelessness and, in fact, is an abolitionist. He can tell us a little bit more about that, but the way I understood his biography, he's in favor of abolishing homelessness and believes we can get the resources to do that.

**Philip Mangano, Executive Director, United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, Washington, D.C.:**

[Distributed [Exhibit B](#).] Today, I think it was a historic day here in Nevada, with the Governor signing the executive order creating the Nevada Interagency Council on Homelessness. We've been working in partnership with states across the country. Our first level of partnership was, of course, back in Washington, and I bring you greetings from Washington. Back in 2003, President Bush reactivated the Interagency Council on Homelessness, which had been dormant for six years. As a part of that reactivation, he appointed me to head it up, and part of the work of the council is to bring together all of the federal agencies. Right now there are 20 federal agencies partnered in Washington. We meet regularly at the White House, and the efforts of that work are to make the federal resources more available and more accessible to homeless people.

[Philip Mangano, continued.] But if there's one thing we've learned in 20 years on this issue of homelessness, it's that no one level of government can get this job done alone. Not here in Carson City, not in Nevada, and we've learned that we can't get the job done in Washington alone, either.

And the work needs to be a partnership of every level of government. To make tangible those partnerships, we've asked governors to join with us in creating state interagency councils on homelessness. And now 50 governors out of 54—because we include the territories—have moved forward in a tangible expression of partnership with us to create state interagency councils on homelessness. The efforts of those state interagency councils mirror what we're doing in Washington, that is, bringing together state agencies and state secretariats to make state resources more available and more accessible on the issue of homelessness. That's insufficient in the partnership. Every level of government needs to be involved and so, we've also worked with localities. There are now 177 mayors and county executives including some here in Nevada, including the mayor of Las Vegas. The mayor of Las Vegas and the county executive in Clark County have joined with us in creating 10-year plans to end chronic homelessness.

Across our country, 177 mayors and county executives, 50 governors, and 20 federal agencies all partnered to the same intent, and that intent was originated in the President's 2003 budget message to Congress and reiterated in his 2004 and 2005 messages to Congress. And that message is this: A new marker has been put before us in this country, and that is to end the homelessness of those who are the most vulnerable, the most likely to be complexly disabled, the most likely to be on our streets, and, frankly, the most likely to die on our streets. That's the intent.

[Philip Mangano, continued.] The President asked us, as a nation, to end that profile of homelessness in this country. The researchers call that population "people experiencing chronic homelessness." And what the researchers determined was that though this population is often seen in the media, and it is seen often by those of us who go at various times to shelters and homeless programs, actually that portion of the homeless population only represents between 10 and 20 percent of all homeless people but, in fact, consumes more than half of all the resources that are devoted to homelessness.

And in specifically targeting that population to end their homelessness, the researchers have told us that we would then release resources to be dedicated to other populations of homeless people, including non-disabled homeless people, as well as homeless families. So the efforts in Washington are not only to ensure that the federal agencies are working together, but to ensure that there's a national strategy that brings together a larger partnership of governors, mayors, and county executives to get the job done. And so that's what we're doing, but even that partnership is not enough. The public sector, all partnered together, needs to work in conjunction with the private sector—with the business community, with downtown business associations, with the chambers of commerce, with the United Way, with homeless providers and advocates, with hospital administrators—all who are impacted by the issue of homelessness. And so the partnership that we're framing is not only every level of government, but it's every sector in our society, public and private, partnered together to get the job done.

And one important member of that partnership, of course, is homeless people themselves. They're, after all, the customer, the consumer of all of these efforts to plan and to partner. In planning activities that are going on across the country, homeless people have been directly involved as well. Now, it would be one thing to simply talk about such partnerships and to talk about the abolition of that particular form of homelessness, chronic homelessness.

Our efforts are in need not only in the planning and partnership, but obviously new resources are necessary. And I'm happy to report to you that for the fourth consecutive year, the federal government has made more resources available on the issue of homelessness than ever before. Record funding levels specifically targeted to homelessness have been made available for four consecutive years, and in the President's 2006 budget message to Congress, he asks for another increase in resources targeted to homelessness. In fact it's an 8.5 percent increase in the federal budget, and as you know, discretionary domestic spending didn't go over 1 to 2 percent for most activities in the budget. Yet, on homelessness the increase is 8.5 percent to a record level of over \$4 billion. It's

the first time that \$4 billion or more has been committed to the issue of homelessness.

[Philip Mangano, continued.] Additionally, these record levels of funding have been very good for your state, Nevada. In fact, compared to last year, this year you received 134 percent more in funding, and in the last four years, Nevada has received in excess of \$23 million, specifically targeted to homelessness, not only from HUD [United States Department of Housing and Urban Development]—and there are HUD officials here with me today, from the Housing and Urban Development in Washington—but also Veterans Affairs and Social Security Administration have made specific homelessness-oriented grants to Nevada.

Now, we're putting our resources where our rhetoric is in Washington. And that's part of the partnership. That's the tangible expression of the partnership that we have with you. But the partnership needs to have new understandings, because the researchers tell us that even though we've had our sleeves rolled up on this issue and devoted billions of dollars over the last 20 years, the researchers tell us there are more homeless people and more homeless programs than ever before. So the thinking needs to be a new thinking. We've certainly long understood our moral, spiritual, and cultural obligations on the issue of homelessness. We learned those when we were small children, and of course we were reminded of those by the faith-based groups that were mustered here on the steps of this building today. Led by a Methodist bishop and by a youth choir, parishioners, clergy people—not only Methodist, but from a variety of different faiths—and an ecumenical gathering, they remind us of the moral and spiritual obligations that we have.

But, in fact, recent research indicates to us that we have another obligation on this population, another reason to respond, and that is an economic reason, an economic responsibility. Cost-benefit analysis on the population experiencing chronic homelessness across our country indicates the financial impact and consequences of not attending to this population. I have already mentioned that this population, 10 to 20 percent, consumes half of the resources that we dedicate to homelessness, but a study done in Seattle indicated 1200 chronic homeless people consumed, in one year, \$12 million worth of health-related resources in Seattle. Another study in my home city of Boston indicated that 119 chronic homeless people, in five years, had 18,000 visits to the emergency rooms of the primary care hospitals in the greater Boston area.

Perhaps the most striking indication and the most instructive one for us is the study done in San Diego. We all know San Diego. They're constantly bragging about their 330 days of sunshine there. It has become a mecca, as we all know,

for retirees, vacationers, and homeless people. For years those homeless people were accommodated by the good citizens of San Diego. They slept on the beaches, slept in the parks, slept on the streets. The general perception in San Diego, among government folk and the citizenry, was that this population did not cost very much to the public purse. After all, they slept outside, begged often for what they ate and drank. The perception was they didn't cost very much. Finally, in the late 1990s, when a critical mass of homeless people appeared on the streets and in the parks and on the beaches of San Diego, they decided they would do a study. They engaged the University of California at San Diego to do a study. And to the credit of that university, they followed just 15 chronic homeless people for 18 months, and I say "to their credit," because in my travels across the United States, and I've traveled quite a bit, I have yet to visit a city, large or small, suburb, or even rural area, where there weren't at least 15 people on the streets. So it's a study that we can pay attention to.

[Philip Mangano, continued.] They followed those 15 people for 18 months. And what they discovered was that the notion in San Diego that these folk were not costly to the public purse was completely erroneous. And, in fact, what they discovered was quite the opposite, that these were some of the most expensive people in San Diego to the public purse. Why? They discovered that these 15 people in those 18 months had nearly 300 entrances into the emergency rooms of the community hospitals, often taken by ambulance, accompanied by EMTs [emergency medical technicians] for multiple-day stays. But they didn't measure just that. They also followed these 15 people into the behavioral health system, substance abuse, and mental health services. They also discovered the cost of law enforcement interventions on the streets related to these 15 people and to the cost of temporary periods of incarceration.

When they de-siloed all of those expenses—and I think that's what's critical: we've often looked at homelessness in snapshots and single systems. What they did in San Diego was they de-siloed all the expenses and aggregated them. And when the university did that, they discovered that those 15 people, over those 18 months, cost the City and County of San Diego \$3 million. And as you know, the long division on that is that the average cost for each person was \$200,000. The policymakers in San Diego thought: If we had rented oceanside penthouse condominiums, provided servants to those folk, it would have been a less costly intervention. What, of course, they learned in San Diego is what cities and states are learning all over our country. The old ad hoc, siloed crisis interventions that form the status quo of our response to homelessness are less effective and more expensive. And I say less expensive because what caused the policymakers and the citizenry of San Diego the most chagrin in that study—and you would think \$200,000 per person would be a source of great chagrin—but in fact what they were most concerned about was that, after that

18 months, after the \$3 million expenditure, after \$200,000 on average being expended on each person, those folk were in the same condition and same situation and, often, in the same place that they were at the beginning of the 18 months.

[Philip Mangano, continued.] So in San Diego, they decided that they needed to proceed in a different way, that the old status quo wasn't working, that it was more expensive and less effective. And in fact, they found great solace and great intelligence in a old quote by Einstein. I don't know much about his scientific theories, but he had great insight into public policy and to human nature. What Einstein reminded us was this: He said that a certain sign of insanity is to do the same thing over and over and over again, expecting different results. Well, in San Diego, they recognized that they were crazy in doing the same thing over and over again, expecting some other result but, in fact, always achieving the same result of a more expensive and less effective intervention for people experiencing chronic homelessness. That's why states and cities across our country are creating management and business plans on this issue, plans that are data and research-driven, performance-based, and results-oriented, and they're paying attention to prevention. They're making a deeper investment in prevention activities, just as in Washington. We're making a deeper investment in prevention activities. Our whole intervention strategy of simply intervening in the lives of people once they became homeless, what that really meant was we were simply continuously bailing the leaking boat of homelessness, that some moved out, others moved in. We saw that for 20 years. It was an endless loop of homelessness.

And what we've decided in Washington is that we're elevating prevention to be equal to intervention, that we need to invest more, pay more attention, do more planning around the prevention of homelessness. People leaving our mental health, substance abuse, foster care systems, who are tumbling into homelessness. People leaving prisons and jails. So in his 2006 budget, just as in the two previous budgets, the President has called for more resources to be invested in getting better outcomes out the backdoor of prisons and jails, better outcomes for young people, aging out of foster care, and better outcomes for those folk who need primary and behavioral health care. Now, that's the kind of planning that's going on. It's business-oriented.

Why are these plans being accepted? I remember when I was at the U.S. Conference of Mayors, we decided that the spirit of our partnership, the spirit of our planning was this. And I was representing this administration in Washington, and you know that it has a very significant "R" after its name. Well, I met with the leadership of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, which that year was Mayor Menino from Boston, an old friend of mine, Mayor Daley from

Chicago, and then-Mayor Willie Brown from San Francisco. They all have very significant "Ds" after their name. We met together because we were forwarding two resolutions to the U.S. Conference of Mayors to support our efforts to partner with cities, to create 10-year plans, and to support our efforts to end chronic homelessness in the next decade. What we agreed on, and this is the spirit of what we're doing, that on this issue of homelessness, that partnership trumps partisanship. On this issue there is no "D" or "R." We're simply Americans partnering to end a national disgrace, and that's the spirit with which we then subsequently went to the National League of Cities and National Association of Counties. They endorsed resolutions supporting the war to end chronic homelessness in the next ten years. That spirit helps us; it's a spirit of non-partisanship to get the job done. It doesn't matter if the idea has an "R," "D," or "I," or "G" after it. If it's an idea that gives results, then we're interested in incorporating the effort.

[Philip Mangano, continued.] The other thing that allows us to create these ten-year plans is that there's the new research. It's the cost-benefit analysis that's going on that indicates we're already expending a disproportionate amount of resources on this population, that we could do better in planning for this population and adopting some of the new technologies. This is the other aspect which allows our ten-year planning process to move forward. We're no longer simply in the status quo of homelessness. New technologies have been developed, new strategies, new housing strategies, supportive housing, that ensures that vulnerable people, when they're placed in housing, have the support services that they need to support them in their housing.

We've learned the lesson of deinstitutionalization of 30 years ago and 20 years ago and a decade ago, when we moved people out of the back wards of mental institutions out into the community and a well-intended effort to do away with the inhumanity that existed in those back wards. We moved them out of the back wards. Literally hundreds of thousands of people were moved out of those back wards and into a community they had a residential placement, but in very few places in the country did we provide those support services that folk needed to keep taking their meds, to get access to deeper resources, to do referrals for them. And so all over our country, those people decompensated in place, no institutions to catch them any longer they fell to the streets, and we tracked pervasive street homelessness in our country to that era of deinstitutionalization, a well-intended policy that had the unintended consequence of creating street homelessness all across our country.



**Chairwoman Leslie:**

Mr. Mangano, we have about five more minutes and I know we have some questions. I don't want you to leave without us getting to talk to you, so if you could give us your wrap-up.

**Philip Mangano:**

Sure. Finally, we're attempting to develop a standard of expectation around this issue. What we're looking for is visible, measurable, quantifiable change on our streets and our communities and especially in the lives of homeless people. We're attempting to create opportunities to leverage resources from state government, from federal government, from the private side. For example, in southern Nevada, they just created the Southern Nevada Regional Homeless Trust, which is privately-oriented but attempting to leverage public resources into the efforts to create housing for homeless folk, where bringing together an equation that is political, plus research and data, plus partnerships, plus a housing-centered set of strategies and moral impetus, will be the equation to get the job done. Finally, some are skeptical and some are cynical about the capacity to end chronic homelessness in this country in the next ten years. Some say we can't do it. The voices tell us that it won't work, that everything has been tried before, that you're putting good money after bad, that it's all just a drop in the ocean.

As we all know, those voices have been around for a long time in our country's history. They've uttered their cynical and skeptical voices on every social advance that we've made. They told the abolitionists they were naïve, the suffragists that they were foolish, and the civil rights activists that they were wasting their time. As we know now, slavery is history, suffrage is extended, and civil rights expanded. Those voices of cynicism and pessimism about social advancements were wrong back then, and they're wrong now. The time has come for another social disgrace in this country to come to an end, so that all citizens, in all of our cities, in all of our states will be known by a single name: Neighbor. And to be treated as one. And I think Nevada is positioned to potentially lead the way on this in terms of the activities of this Legislature and, especially, the activity of the Governor today in signing the state interagency council executive order, and the work that's being done in cities and counties to develop ten-year plans. So I'm very happy to be with you, and I'm appreciative of the work that you're doing and the work that this Committee is doing as well. Thank you very much.

**Chairwoman Leslie:**

Thank you, sir. We appreciate you being here today. I had a couple of questions. You had said that Nevada's getting 134 percent more in federal funding, and I'm wondering if you have the dollar amounts for us, because

Nevada—I don't know if you realize—we're always ranked 50th or 51st in terms of the amount of federal money we bring back per citizen. So we're always skeptical when we hear big percentages because it's not hard to get a 134 percent increase in Nevada, because usually we're at the bottom. So do you have the actual dollar amounts for us?

**Philip Mangano:**

First of all, I want to reassure you you're far from the bottom on this. And my HUD colleagues have those numbers, and I'm certain that they'd be happy to share them with you during this hearing or after this hearing, but you're far from the bottom of the list on this.

**Chairwoman Leslie:**

The other thing is, in terms of President Bush's 2006 budget, I understand that your materials that you handed out here say that there's a \$1 billion cut from the Section 8 rent assistance program. Can you comment on that? I've done a lot of work professionally in this area. I know, certainly, we have needs in mental illness. Substance abuse is rampant in our state. We have a lot of problems, but usually what a homeless person needs first is a home. The Section 8 waiting list in the Reno area, where I'm from, is usually 200 to 300 people at a time. If you've ever had a substance abuse or illegal act on your record, you can't get in, period. So is it really true that we're going to see some federal cuts in that program that's so underfunded?

**Philip Mangano:**

No. I'm happy to bring you good news on that front as well. Actually, the administration, for 2006, has asked for a \$1 billion increase in the Section 8 program. Last year Congress restored about \$1.5 billion. It almost made the Section 8 program whole by the end of the legislative year, and in this year's budget for 2006 the President has proposed a \$1 billion increase in Section 8 to ensure the program is whole going forward. In addition to those resources, as I've mentioned, over \$4 billion is committed and targeted to homelessness specifically, which is an 8.5 percent increase, and additional resources are targeted specifically for the prevention of homelessness, as I mentioned, among those leaving prisons and jails, aging out of foster care, and who have substance abuse and primary health care. So I'm happy to bring you that good news.

**Chairwoman Leslie:**

That would be good to know from our local HUD officials too what that's going to mean on our waiting list. So we'll get that from them also.

**Philip Mangano:**

That's why they're here.

**Chairwoman Leslie:**

We'll get it from them. Other questions for Mr. Mangano? Dr. Mabey.

**Assemblyman Mabey:**

You mentioned prevention. I wanted to know, in your opinion, what's the number one thing we could do to prevent homelessness?

**Philip Mangano:**

It's interesting. I worked a great deal in Massachusetts—my home state—on the issues of homelessness. What we came to realize is just what I said in my testimony, which is we were simply bailing a leaking boat, that we were very effective in getting federal, state, and philanthropic resources to move people out the back door of homelessness, but we weren't paying attention to the front door where people were coming in. When we did research on that, we discovered that discharge planning is a key strategic element in preventing homelessness—discharge planning from state systems of care, from systems of mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment, foster care, from prisons and jails, that not enough attention was paid at that critical moment of transition from a system that provided a bed to the discharge, which often resulted in a person not having a bed. We discovered, for example, in Massachusetts, and this bears out pretty much across the country, that one in every four persons released from prison or jail has no place to go when they're released. One in every four.

There will be 680,000 people released from prisons and jails in each of the next three years in our country. Think of one in every four of them not having a place to go. That's why the President is investing to get better outcomes from that system. We also discovered that there's been some research on foster care in our country, and that some current research indicates that one in every three young people who go into foster care go on to experience homelessness at some point in their life.

So, we're looking at discharge planning to ensure that the transition back into the community is an appropriate one that is residentially based, and that's why the President has called for more resources to be invested for those coming out of prisons and jails and aging out of foster care, specifically because the research is telling us that many of those folk are at risk of homelessness upon discharge. And frankly, one of the other places that we're looking at it is in discharge from military service. Unfortunately, we know 23 percent of all homeless individuals are veterans. We're attempting to make certain that we

pay attention to that, especially for veterans coming out of the Afghani and Iraqi theaters, that we, in fact, have resources in place for them, and part of the resource is to do a better job in the discharge of folk from military service. So if anything could be kind of distilled to one arena, especially for people experiencing chronic homelessness, it would be looking at discharge planning protocols and improving them for people coming out the back door of systems. For too long there's been an engagement by the back door of other systems to the front door of homelessness. We need to do a disengagement there and get better options for people. Ultimately, we've discovered it's less expensive.

**Chairwoman Leslie:**

I know you have an appointment you need to keep with the Governor. Lisa, did you want to make a few comments on behalf of the Governor?

**Lisa Foster, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor, State of Nevada:**

[Distributed [Exhibit C](#).] Just a couple of statements. As Mr. Mangano talked about, the Governor has signed an executive order which creates the Nevada Interagency Council on Homelessness. I just wanted to touch briefly on what the Council's charge is going to be, and I've given copies of that executive order. First of all, the Council is created to coordinate and focus the State's efforts to address the challenge of homelessness in Nevada. They are asked to provide an integrated approach and promote cooperation amongst agencies, nonprofit groups, and private businesses. They're asked to work with the U.S. Council, Mr. Mangano's group, to develop a 10-year plan, as he talked about, to address chronic homelessness. They'll work and incorporate the recommendations of the Homeless Policy Academy Workgroup, which has been in place for a while in Nevada, and it will consist of 20 members of private business, nonprofit organizations such as United Way, state agencies, local governments, and one person who is or who has been homeless. The 20 members will be appointed by the Governor. The statewide meetings will be conducted primarily through videoconferencing, and the group will be encouraged to seek private donations, and at the end of every year they are to present the Governor with an annual report of their work.

I have Mary Liveratti here with me in the audience. She'll be the key staff person for this council. Thank you for conducting the Day on Homelessness. The Governor is very sensitive to this issue, and he's proud and pleased and he can help coordinate an effort to address this growing problem.

**Chairwoman Leslie:**

Any questions? I don't see any. Chuck Fulkerson, I'll call you next. I know you have an appointment to get to from the Office of Veterans Services.

**Chuck Fulkerson, Executive Director, Office of Veterans Services, State of Nevada:**

[Distributed [Exhibit D.](#)] I am here with members of the Nevada Veterans Service Commission to put a veteran face on this real tragic problem facing our society along with lots and lots of other faces of our disenfranchised citizens. The ability to get an ID at no cost would greatly increase the homeless veterans' opportunity to avail themselves of getting VA [United States Department of Veterans Affairs] benefits that's now lost to them because they don't have that. And this will go a long way to helping getting veterans benefits.

The Veterans Administration, the only federal agency dealing with homeless veterans, is resourced to provide assistance to only about 20 percent of the half million homeless veterans population in the nation today. A recent survey by the National Coalition of Homeless Veterans in Washington D.C. shows that 33 percent of all homeless men are veterans. Returning veterans from the current wars around the world are seeking help for mental health problems, housing, employment training, and job placement assistance, and they are beginning to swamp and strain the community-based homeless budgets now. The need far exceeds the available resources. More than 15 to 35 percent of combat veterans will experience some form of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. I might add that this particular problem is a long time in coming out. The average age for a Vietnam veteran to seek help in this area was 18 years. There are many more that are 30 years out and still just now visiting that, and the veterans coming out of the current war are going to be much higher. The complete NCHV [Nevada Coalition for Homeless Veterans] study is attached for your information, and thank you for your past support.

**Chairwoman Leslie:**

Any questions? I know our state is the same as all states with the high incidence of veterans who are homeless, so we thank you and the other veterans here today for your service and for coming to testify on this, and we'll definitely keep you in mind as we proceed with the hearing on this bill today. At this point, we'll move back to our scheduled agenda with the presentation on the statewide homeless count.

**Kelly Marschall, Client Service Manager, Social Entrepreneurs Inc., Reno, Nevada:**

[Distributed [Exhibit E.](#)] The data I'm going to present covers northern Nevada and the balance of the state. I would like to start by just describing what the continuum of care is. As Mr. Mangano was discussing, the dollars—one small pot of dollars—we receive from HUD are directly in response to an application that we write based on our strategy to address homelessness, so we write the continuum of care strategy application for both the balance of the state and for

northern Nevada. What I can tell you is that the amount of funding we received, notification of three weeks ago for our past application process, was \$2,033,000 for northern Nevada and \$800,000 for the balance of the state. Part of how we are eligible for those funds is that we write an application that includes a point-in-time count, and HUD requires that we actually conduct a point-in-time count of the sheltered and unsheltered. They call it a "homeless census." What they're trying to do is to find out, for that one 24-hour period of time, how many people are homeless. Either in the street or in some sort of sheltered housing. HUD mandated this year for the first time that count take place the last week in January. And I'm pleased to announce that all three continuua counted on the same date. So we actually have a 24-hour point-in-time count of the homeless. At this point it's preliminary data. Those numbers will adjust slightly. But we have that for our state for the very first time ever.

[Kelly Marschall, continued.] So we conducted the count on January 27, and both the balance of the state and northern Nevada conducted the count using the same methodology. In essence, the count includes a street count, which is literally laying out, in grids, a targeted geographic area, and having teams of two or more getting up early in the morning—as, actually, your Chairman will tell you since she participated in the northern Nevada count—and scan a particular area, whether it be the river corridor, railroad tracks, the downtown area, based on the particular geography of the area being counted. We had some challenges, obviously, counting in rural Nevada, and in fact had to employ, at a volunteer level, the services of the sheriff's department and emergency rooms to ask them to help us with the count. That being said, though, a street count was in fact done in Elko, Fallon, Douglas, and Carson City, as well as numbers turned in by the sheriff's departments in the other jurisdictions and the balance of the counties.

It's important to note that people want to know what the answer is to the question of how many homeless are there in Reno or how many homeless are there in Nevada, and it's important to understand the different data sets that we're presenting here, because it paints a more comprehensive picture and also gets at some of the reasons that people are homeless. So we do the street count, as I mentioned. We also do a provider survey. There are people who are homeless that are currently in an emergency shelter, for example, or they're in transitional housing or 14-day substance abuse treatment program, or they've just been admitted to the Northern Nevada Adult Mental Health system. And so we do a provider survey for that same point in time to try and capture those folks that may be housed someplace but are yet still homeless. So that's the second component of the count.

[Kelly Marschall, continued.] The third component, which does not really relate to HUD but is something that we deemed in Nevada to be very important, is a count of the weekly motels. That's those persons and families who are living in weekly motels often not designed to house a family; they don't have a kitchen, don't have sufficient plumbing, for example. We consider those the underhoused because HUD does not include them as homeless. So we don't add those numbers, but we present those numbers, because we think that if you're going to focus on prevention, that's actually a really important target area. Those folks are literally a week away from the street. They're often the working poor.

So in addition to those three sets, for the first time this year we did targeted homeless interviews. We conducted 90 interviews with people who were living on the streets to try to find out some additional information: Are they chronically homeless? What led them to homelessness? What services do they need? Did they come from California, or did they become homeless in Nevada? So we ask those kinds of questions as well. That gave us a snapshot not only of the chronic homeless picture, but also to try and get a sense of how many people were veterans, how many were people with disabilities.

As I mentioned, undercounting is really the primary limitation of this kind of methodology, and so what you can be assured is that these numbers are very conservative. Every effort has been made to avoid duplication, and for that reason I would say these are a snapshot but not the complete picture of homelessness. The numbers are likely to be very much higher.

First, I'll present the results for the balance of the state. You actually have several documents in front of you. One is yellow and one is blue. That's to differentiate the two different continuua. The blue sheet is a narrative summary of the data results to this point for the balance of the state. So in terms of the street count, on January 27, the rural or balance of the state plan included law enforcement, community activists, volunteers, social service providers, and mental health coalition members going out and conducting this count in their various communities. In addition, Carson City had arranged for an aerial survey. But if you recall January 27, early in the morning, it was fogged in so they did not get off the ground until 1:00 p.m. that day. So we didn't get very good numbers from the aerial part of the survey, which is kind of critical in the balance of the state, because there are just so many areas where you really can't walk from a point to a point and count homeless.

So the street count results for the balance of the state included 82 males, 18 seniors, 67 chronically homeless, 18 females. In addition, the providers—those folks that were sheltering individuals and families in a variety of settings—

counted over 3,400 persons. That included 351 individuals and over 3,000 persons that were considered family, meaning an adult and at least one child in either emergency shelter, permanent housing, or transitional housing.

[Kelly Marschall, continued.] Of those 3,400, 154 were deemed to be chronically homeless. The definition of "chronically homeless" is someone who has a disabling condition and has been homeless for over 12 months or has had four incidents of homelessness in the past three years. So 154 people fit that definition, and of those, the providers counted 17 veterans.

If you look at the 3,000 people who were in a family—and this was something that was very different between the balance of the state and northern Nevada—the majority of those families are single female head-of-household families with children, and you see the comparison of 200 males to 709 females. These single mothers are, in fact, receiving services. That's how we were able to count them. So they were at a domestic violence shelter or emergency shelter or they were coming in to a county social services agency for TANF [Temporary Aid for Needy Families] or food stamps, and that's how we were able to identify them and identify that they were, in fact, receiving services.

That being said, a high number of them also—as we said, 154—were chronically homeless, meaning that they're either having repeated incidents of homelessness or they've been homeless for over a year and they have a disabling condition.

In the motel count in the balance of the state—and I will note that this was the first time a motel count was done; we've done the count seven times in northern Nevada—the motel providers are the hardest to bring along. They're kind of afraid of providing that data. They're concerned about what's going to happen if they actually acknowledge that they have pregnant women and homeless families living in their motels, so I think this number is extremely low for the balance of the state, because this was the first time that we did outreach to the motel providers. That being said, there were 254 singles and 145 members of families. There were 109 folks that we counted as long-term residents, meaning they had been living in that weekly motel for over a year.

Now, looking more specifically at that 145 that made up the families in motels, there were 26 adult males, 37 adult females, and a total of 82 children. Seventy-four of those children were ages 6 to 17, so they're going to school. Seventy-four of those kids are actually attending school, and then you had an additional eight children who are ages 0 to 5.



[Kelly Marschall, continued.] Of the 90 homeless interviews that we did, 40 of them were with balance of the state street folks. The ages ranged anywhere from 20 up to 70. We asked them why they were homeless, and over half of them said lack of or loss of a job, not having stable employment, or no access to an employer as the major reason that they were homeless.

We asked them what services they needed in order to address their homelessness and they said housing—exactly what you said, Chairwoman. They need a place to stay—Section 8 transitional housing, emergency shelters, and they needed medical assistance. This was a much more disabled population than in northern Nevada.

I'm going to move on now to the northern Nevada data. This covers Reno, Sparks, and Washoe County. Again, doing the street count, 178 people were counted on the street that day. As I said, we've done this count seven times; that was the highest number we've ever counted on the street. We've done the count in January and never had a number like this. We actually had comparison data from three years ago in January. That number was a third of this number.

One hundred sixty-one were males; seventeen were females. I'm very happy to report that for the very first time in doing this part of the count there were no children on the streets. Previously, we have counted children on the streets.

In addition, the providers counted 2,252 persons; 529 of them were in emergency shelter. Eighty-five were in transitional housing, and over 1,600 were in permanent supportive housing. And the males far exceeded the females for all three of those categories. In addition, we counted who was turned away, and 57 people were turned away because there was no room. There was nothing available for them. An additional 82 were turned away because they didn't meet the eligibility requirements for a particular facility. For example, if it's a substance abuse chemical dependency unit and they have a mental illness and they're not taking their medication, they would not get admitted into that emergency setting or transitional setting.

When we asked them about the services they most needed, they indicated housing again—shelters that accommodate families—medical care and jobs. And that's not in a hierarchy. All of those numbers came out evenly in terms of their needs.

The provider survey, specifically in terms of the emergency shelter, indicated that there were 401 single individuals; 311 of them were males. One hundred twenty-eight were people and families, and as I mentioned previously, 154 chronically homeless.

[Kelly Marschall, continued.] In terms of the motel count, there were over 4,000 individuals living in the motels in that given night; 885 of them are long-term residents, meaning they have lived there for over a year. There were about 2,000 single individuals, including 16 pregnant women. There were 988 members of families, including 437 children, and there were 200 seniors living in the motels.

Looking more closely at those families in the motels, there were 82 children that had been long-term, with 30 of those children aged zero to five—children who had literally been born and had lived in the motel all of their life. Three hundred fifty-five children who had been in the motels less than 12 months, with 211 of those children aged zero to five. That tells you those are the number of families that have just moved from an apartment, most likely into a motel because they could no longer make their monthly rent and are now living week-to-week.

And as I mentioned, many of the families are actually multi-parent families in northern Nevada and both are working. Of the 90 interviews we did, 50 were in Northern Nevada. Eighty-eight percent of those interviewed were male, versus 12 percent female. Thirty percent of folks interviewed that day were veterans. The ages ranged 18 to 79, with 43 as the mean. Twenty-two, or 45 percent, of those individuals said that they either had a physical or mental disability.

In terms of the primary cause of homelessness, again, they said an ability to pay rent because they didn't have a job, or there was a job loss, or they had some sort of money management problem. Fifty percent indicated that a job would have prevented them from being homeless and 70 percent of them were actively looking for work, often working as day laborers. Almost half of them had been homeless for less than 12 months, and most—this was very surprising to us—had become homeless in Nevada.

When we speak about discharge planning, this was a very interesting statistic. Fourteen percent of them said they were homeless because they had been discharged from some sort of facility out onto the street. And this is ironic, because all three of the jurisdictions noted hospitals, mental health institutions, or prisons have discharge policies that prevent them from discharging individuals onto the street and yet, 14 percent of them had, in fact, said that was the circumstances that led to their homelessness.

And just to share with you what we think are some preliminary trends, two-income families are increasingly using motels for homelessness in northern Nevada, while an alarming number of single women with children are living in motels in the balance of the state. We've already mentioned that children are starting to grow up in motels in Nevada. One of the good pieces of news is that

youth in the balance of the state are linked to services. They're getting to school. They're getting social services, even if they're homeless, which is less so in northern Nevada. Kids that go to Reno often can be runaways. They do couch surfing; they're harder to find and harder to link to services.

[Kelly Marschall, continued.] Veterans are more likely to be found in northern Nevada than the balance of the state. That makes sense, because the VA Hospital's there. So, there are some services that are available there. And seniors, both in motels and on the street, are increasing. Those numbers went up this count for seniors.

I mentioned that the street count was the highest that we had ever conducted in seven counts in northern Nevada. A large number of those interviewed were chronically homeless. They request and receive the fewest amounts of services. We actually ask them, "what services have you used or asked for in the last 30 days?" And they would say, "A shower." That's the service. So there's some sort of disconnect in terms of getting them the services they need. And, again, they list jobs, housing, and rental assistance as their greatest needs.

Now, to get back to answering the question of how many homeless are there, what you can do is take the street count and the provider count, and you can add those numbers together and say that is a conservative estimate of the number of people who are homeless. Again, we don't include the motel count in that, although personally, in both of the continuua, they believe those individuals are homeless as well, but for HUD's purposes we don't include them in the count. And so, in northern Nevada, you can see that that number combined is 2,430, and in the balance of the state, it's 3,527.

Again, you have those summary sheets in front of you, and I believe you have a copy of my presentation. I'd be happy to answer any questions you have at this time.

**Assemblyman Horne:**

Ms. Marschall, on your numbers—and they probably don't get this specific—but one of my concerns is the foster children who age out. Has anybody ever attempted to try to calculate those now young adults? Because I saw a figure in there where you had the age group of 18 to 70, whatever that was, but they would fall into that if you count them. But the question may not be asked. I was in foster care, then I turned 18 and out of school. Now I'm in the street or I was sleeping on my friend's couch for a couple of months. It seems like that's a segment that may be getting overlooked in our homeless population.

**Kelly Marschall:**

I do believe that is getting overlooked. We get a portion of those numbers. If the children are in what's called a children in transition or homeless youth program and have been identified by the different providers, then we will get a section of those numbers, but what we don't get are exactly the population that you described, which is a kid that may not be going to school anymore, that's living at a friend's house, and then ends up on the street.

**Assemblyman Hardy:**

Kind of reverting back to our previous presentation where we talked about 10, 20 percent of the homeless with special needs that we would like to free up so we free up that other 30 percent of the funds, as it were. Did you get a feel in this count for those kinds of people who are the hard-core need medicine, need a place, need supervision—as opposed to the total number? I don't see that broken out.

**Kelly Marschall:**

The percentage of chronic homeless varied between the balance of the state and northern Nevada, in terms of the continuum. What we were trying to get at for the first time were those 174 that were on the street. That's who we targeted for the interviews. Fifty of those folks actually came in and were interviewed. And of them—I don't have the number in front of me, I think it's in here, though—there was a percentage that was deemed chronically homeless. Let me see if I can find that for you.

**Assemblyman Hardy:**

While you're looking can I ask you to be thinking are those the people that you could look at and—pardon the expression—make a diagnosis that there was a mental health issue involved and, therefore, you had a feel for what the mental health condition was that would respond to the council that we're talking about?

**Kelly Marschall:**

A number of them, I actually participated in the interviews. I was at the site where we were doing the interview. If you'll allow me to be anecdotal for a moment: we had never done this before. So we were on First Street in Reno, right across the street from a park where most of the homeless will congregate during the day. We had put out flyers and talked to service providers and said we were going to have incentives. We had gotten all these jackets donated from Patagonia. We had warm food and Thermoses filled with instant soup with water, and we had folks from the local health district there providing flu shots and TB [tuberculosis] and pneumonia vaccinations. And we opened our doors and nobody came. So we actually had to pick up jackets, go out into the street,

and talk to folks. And after a while they started trickling in, and we finally got to the number of 50. The thing that pulled them in the most was the medical services. That's why people came. They can find a meal and usually they can find a coat, but they were there for the medical services. So that was one thing that was interesting to us. Of those 50, I would say at least half of them had either, by their own description, a substance abuse problem, or they said that they were disabled or had a mental illness.

**Assemblyman Hardy:**

Twenty-five out of the 150?

**Kelly Marschall:**

One hundred fifty-four, right.

**Assemblywoman Parnell:**

I have a question about those living in the motels. I haven't taught for four years, but when I was teaching, I was really beginning to see an increase in that population with our students. I've noticed in Carson City that we seem to have a number of motels who appear to me as though that's what they have become. My concern is: who is watching over the people in these units? Oftentimes they don't look like they're being kept up, and I worry about the health conditions. Is it the city health person that is assigned the task of going in to ensure the living conditions are appropriate, or is that an area we need to look into? But I have a great concern about that. It's a sad place to be anyway, and then for someone to almost take advantage—and I fear that's the case in some cases—I think that makes it all the more tragic.

**Kelly Marschall:**

Assuming I had an area of expertise, I think probably answering the city health regulations wouldn't be in my purview. What I will say from the social service provider perspective the homeless youth programs—the folks that are trying to keep kids in school—are providing some safety net of oversight, just in terms of trying to ensure that folks have actually heat and running water, and perhaps a hot pot, so that they can actually make soup or something within those units. But we really truly believe that these folks could be considered homeless. They're literally sheltered but extremely underhoused.

**Chairwoman Leslie:**

I think Government Affairs is going to have a bill along that lines. We want to make sure that Paula has a chance to tell us about Las Vegas. We'll hold the questions and give her the opportunity, and open it back up again.

**Paula Haynes-Green, Regional Homeless Service Coordinator, Clark County, Nevada:**

I'm pleased to be here to speak in support of A.B. 84, because we're well aware of how difficult it is for homeless people to transition from homelessness to self-sufficiency if they are not even able to prove who they are in order to access services. Let me go back a little bit to the count. Ms. Marschall has explained to you a great deal about how it's done. It's slightly different in southern Nevada because some of the issues are different. First of all, we do a count starting at 10:00 p.m. on January 26 and go through until about 3:30 a.m. or 4:00 a.m. in the morning on January 27. That is because there is so much activity that it becomes very difficult to identify who is homeless and who is not at any other time.

We were not able to do the type of interview that they did in the northern part of the state. One was done in 1999 but not since then, so we don't have those same types of breakdowns. However, in the count we did this time, the rough numbers are about 13,000, and we also believe that that is a substantial undercount. What that included is one of the groups that HUD [United States Department of Housing and Urban Development] does not include, those would not be numbers that would go to HUD. That is approximately 7,000 people that live doubled up in households because they cannot afford to pay rent. In fact, one of the realities of the situation we have in this country today is that there is no place in this country that if you make minimum wage, you can afford to pay rent. So you have families doubled up, two and three in a household. That's a major problem. And in southern Nevada the problem is increasing, because we are looking at housing that has appreciated 50 percent in the last 12 months.

We are looking at major and frequent condominium conversions, which takes out that stock, and as we look at all of these wonderful high-rise projects that are planned for this community, the reality is we're looking at very expensive housing. So what you have is fewer people who can purchase. Those that can are going to be purchasing condominiums that have been converted. So the stock of affordable housing is drastically going down. We have to look at all of those issues and what that dynamic is when it comes to what is the impact on homelessness going to be and how many more homeless people are we going to have because of displacement due to the lack of affordable housing.

One of the things that is going on in southern Nevada is under the Southern Nevada Regional Planning Coalition Committee on Homelessness, which is chaired by Thom Reilly, the County Manager, and all of the municipalities on the Committee, as well as the Metropolitan Police Department, the North Las Vegas Police Department, the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, the Clark County School District, and Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health. They

have been charged with developing a plan, which is part of my responsibilities as the coordinator, to address homelessness. And when we talk about how this plan works, we look at prevention, of course. But we also look at not just discharge planning. We look at people who had an accident and can't work for three or four months or who get laid off, and if there were a system where they would have rental assistance for longer periods of time to recover, to get another job, they would not become homeless, or if they need utility assistance. These are all major issues that can end up with someone being on the street.

[Paula Haynes-Green, continued.] In developing this plan we conducted a number of focus groups in November and December. One of the major things that came up was, "We don't have ID and we don't have ID to get ID," which starts a vicious circle. We also talked to people who had been working and who had an injury, two or three months they were on the street. I met on Friday with a gentleman who is part of the bricklayers union and he said a full third of that population, at some point, sleeps in their trucks between jobs. Homelessness is not something that doesn't happen on a regular basis to regular people who work. And it is something we all pay for and is a major issue to be addressed.

Under the Committee on Homelessness, we also were able this year to set up a homeless trust. Mr. Mangano mentioned that, and we were very excited about that. That was approved by the Coalition Board on December 9, and the first contribution to it came in last week, on the 17th, from the Las Vegas Walk of Stars, who has volunteered to give \$750 for every star they unveil.

The point is: it wasn't a huge amount of money, but it began the process of people who call and say, "I really care about this issue. What can I do?" So whether someone is a major donor or a small donor, they can do something to help take up the cause of ending homelessness in this country.

There was a question asked about the continuum of care and funding. I will give you those figures, because I have those. We did have an exceptionally good year. The southern Nevada continuum was awarded \$5.9 million. That's the largest award in the history of the continuum. The application was actually for a little over \$4.3 million, but because of the housing bonus and the way the continuum worked together this year in terms of some people taking one year funding on renewals and others taking two and others taking three, we were able to get a really substantial award. So there are things that are moving forward there. There are many challenges. As everyone says, I'm sure, that sits before you, the biggest challenge is lack of resources. This year the Committee on Homelessness also committed \$329 million in General Fund money between all the jurisdictions to make sure that there was an inclement weather program, which provided day shelter from the heat last summer, and winter emergency

shelters. So far no one has been turned away, which is kind of amazing. And for those of you who are in the north, snow is not such a rare occurrence. But for those of us in the south, it's somewhat of a shock. A couple days that it snowed the shelters were filled, but we were able, with the coordinated effort, to have another location for anyone who showed up so that they would not have to sleep outdoors.

[Paula Haynes-Green, continued.] A number have asked a couple of questions, and this has to do with youth, which is a really serious issue. Anyone who is a parent knows that when your child's 18, you don't just say goodbye. In fact, a whole lot of them are there when they're 25. So, to think that young people who have become part of a system because of some breakdown in their family system would be better prepared to fend for themselves at 18 than those who have had a family structure, it's lacking in any type of common sense. But one of the things we're doing to find out how many of those young people end up homeless, in terms of long-term and intergenerational homelessness, is through the Homeless Management Information System. For any who are unaware of that, it's the computerized system to track people accessing the homeless care system. One of the questions that will be asked by anyone coming in is were you homeless before the age of 18, and we'll get some idea of what that population is. But we're really concerned about that population, because we end up with an awful lot of lost potential from people not going forward and doing all that they might otherwise do, and we also end up with generation after generation of people who are also homeless.

**Chairwoman Leslie:**

Thank you for your testimony, and congratulations on that award. Am I right in remembering that one of the reasons Las Vegas didn't get the money before was because you didn't have a point-in-time count?

**Paula Haynes-Green:**

Yes, the last point-in-time was in 1999. However, we did do one in 2004, in April, in order to get ready for that application. At that time, the number was 7,887, and here we are in January with a substantially higher number. Some of that may be due to a better ability to count those doubled up individuals, but whatever the case is, it is a growing problem and it is really a tragedy.

**Chairwoman Leslie:**

The Internet is a wonderful thing, because after we had that little discussion with Mr. Mangano, somebody sent me an article from the *Las Vegas Sun* where you're quoted quite prominently about the cuts in the Section 8 housing and how the money that we're getting now makes up for just about half of what



was cut, and there are more cuts slated for 2006. Does that all sound right to you?

**Paula Haynes-Green:**

Well, I did not hear anything about increased funding until today. I am very relieved to hear that if that is going to be the case, because what we looked at was approximately 4 percent cut to the 2004 funding, which really cut it back, or, rather, froze it at the 2003 level. And in southern Nevada there are waiting lists that are two years long, and they simply stop adding people to the waiting lists because there's no possible way to serve those people.

**Chairwoman Leslie:**

That's what happens in Reno too. I'm glad I wasn't making that up. I have copies here for the press, if you want to track down Mr. Mangano. You might want to clarify that the increases don't even make up for the previous cuts.

**Assemblyman Mabey:**

Just a question concerning the families of these homeless people. Do you make an effort to try to find their parents or their brothers or their sisters or their grandparents? Seems to me like they've got to have a family somewhere that hopefully could take these people in.

**Paula Haynes-Green:**

Well, for those young people that enter the foster care system, family reunification is always a goal. And if it's not that immediate family, it's some other next-of-kin, even if it's in another state; so there's an effort to do that. Also, even if you've got someone just about to mature out of the system, you still want to try to hook them up with family, because they need that link, because that familiar link is what makes them part of the family of man and feel connected. So it's always a very important thing, but sometimes it is very difficult. When we were doing the focus groups as we worked on this plan, we went to a service provider that deals with unaccompanied youth. There were some young people there that had been on their own since they were 12- and 13-years-old.

I talked to three young women there. One was 17, one was 18, and one was 20, and they talked about being on the street when they were in their very early teens and, somehow, they had all managed to stay together. So it's a major, major problem.

**Assemblyman Mabey:**

Seems to me, though, they would have a big brother or a sister. They are like the prodigal son that, hopefully, could go home and find their parents or their

grandparents or their aunts and uncles. Are we making an effort not just with the kids, but with anyone to find their families?

**Paula Haynes-Green:**

I think quite a bit of effort is made, but there are also very limited resources and there are a lot of kids, and then sometimes you contact families and they simply are not interested or receptive. Many times, the family falling apart is because the family is dysfunctional and there's no real parent figure. It's not really functional for kids to go back to.

**Kelly Marschall:**

I would like to add there's a program in northern Nevada called HELP [Homeless Evaluation Liaison Program], which is a collaboration of the City of Reno Police Department and the Washoe County Sheriff's Office. And there are two officers who are out stationed at the Greyhound bus station, and they literally are authorized to both link homeless individuals to resources within the community if they don't want to go home, but if they do have a place to go home to, these two officers actually work to contact the family and then will subsidize the bus trip back to get them home.

**Chairwoman Leslie:**

We heard from one of those officers last week. Ms. Pierce, a quick question, and Mrs. Angle. We need to move on because we need to get to Mr. McCleary's bill sometime today.

**Assemblywoman Pierce:**

On the issue of teenagers being homeless, I saw the statistic earlier, but isn't it true most teenagers become homeless because their home is brutal and abusive? It's not that teenagers become homeless because their mother won't let them wear black lipstick. It's considerably more serious and they make the choice because the streets are safer than their home with their family and the people with whom they share DNA.

**Kelly Marschall:**

Yes.

**Assemblywoman Angle:**

I guess I want to go back to the motel situation. I guess, maybe, I need to kind of preface this a little bit. I grew up in a motel, but my father owned the motel. That's where my family lived and that was our family business, so I didn't consider myself homeless at all, and we had lots of families that came in because their mothers were getting divorces and they were trying to establish a residency so they could get that divorce and get on home. So I'm just

wondering, when you did this count of the motels, how much of that you encountered or any of it, and were you counting people like my family who lived there? And also, just to another point on the people under 18, I didn't see that you had anyone under 18, but I know they're out there living on the river under 18 and they're runaways, a lot of them. I was just wondering if you encountered that as well.

**Kelly Marschall:**

Specifically about the motel count, I think your point is well taken, and my guess is that in your family's business, you had a kitchen, you had plumbing, and it was a housing environment. What we have had to do to get these motel count numbers is really work with the motel providers, and as I mentioned we had tremendous resistance in the beginning, because they weren't certain why we were counting and what we wanted to do with that information.

What I can tell you is that in northern Nevada, this time we had 85 percent participation. This is voluntary participation by the motel owners. And generally what we do is go out to the motel, we mail out the survey to the provider with an explanation of what we are trying to collect, and we let them know the date we'll come by to collect it and offer assistance if they would like help filling it out. But as you would know, they know best who is in their facility, and so we don't ask them how many people are staying here tonight. We literally ask them, "How many adult males are staying here that are not here traveling, that you think are actually residing here, that this is their place of residence right now?" And they make that estimation. They're the ones that actually go over their registers and say to us, "There are two women who are pregnant. You know, both of them are in abusive relationships and had to get out of that relationship when they found out they were pregnant," for example. So it's not a total number of these are how many folks are in those weekly motels. This is truly the motel providers who, by the way, have often said to us, "You know, we could really use some referrals for you. We have folks who need to get on food stamps or who would really benefit from job training. Can we connect you?" So we actually have formed a partnership, if you will, with the motel providers.

I can't say the same thing for the balance of the state because this is the first time we've done it, so they're still pretty weary and we didn't have as high of a response rate. But it's a subset of their total numbers, and it's based on their estimation in response to targeted questions about homelessness.

**Chairwoman Leslie:**

Having seen a lot of those motels myself, and the kids playing in Dumpsters in the parking lot where drug deals go down, I think it's very appropriate that you have those in your count.

Judge Berry would like to talk to us today about Homeless Court.

**Janet Berry, Judge, Second Judicial District, Reno District Court, Reno, Nevada:**

[Distributed [Exhibit F](#).] It is and it may sound like kind of a weird concept, but it's actually a very innovative sort of reverse therapeutic court. There are 11 cities in the United States that have this court. Most of them are in California. There's one in the state of New Mexico.

It is an extremely innovative concept in that it addresses many of the issues that you've been discussing. And interestingly, you've all been asking about the children in the motels, the underhoused homeless, and in discussing these counts, what fascinated me was none of these folks said to the people who were counting, "I'm afraid of the law. I'm afraid of getting arrested." And yet, as I sit here today, I promise you all day long the reason these folks are afraid of the count and afraid of you and afraid of the government and terrified of me is because many of them have active warrants for their arrest. We call them in my industry "frequent flyers." They're folks who go in and out of the jails anywhere from 10 to 50 times a year. Now, I'm very bad at numbers and counting, so I don't know what the fiscal impact is, but I would suggest to you it's extraordinary, because we book them in on warrants, and the currency of these warrants is anywhere from two to ten days in jail. And we, as a system, literally pay the homeless to be in jail to incur their punishment. We used to charge it off 15 years ago at \$25 a day, so if their fine was \$100, they'd spend four days. Now that we're spending an average of \$30,000 a year to warehouse prisoners, we're giving them \$100 per day against their criminal activity, their punishment. So they come in for two or three days, they're back on the street, and we do what we've always done, and we get what we've always gotten.

I learned about this homeless court concept when I attended an ABA [American Bar Association] sponsored homeless court program in San Diego. I met a gentleman by the name of Steve Binder, who started this concept about ten years ago, I guess, when San Diego realized how much money they were spending on the homeless. But actually I learned recently that our own Justice Nancy Becker started this concept in Las Vegas over 20 years ago, when she was a municipal court judge and saw the same things I see as a judge, and that is the same handful of people using our resources.

[Judge Berry, continued.] What we know, as judges, is that this population of inmates is really afraid of the criminal justice system, and they oftentimes are not physically or even mentally capable of coming to court. So when they get a ticket for trespass, what we call "dine-and-dash," urinating in public, sleeping in the park, they just don't show up and we issue a warrant and we arrest them.

The homeless court concept is an opportunity for the homeless who often find their circumstance marked with helplessness and hopelessness. They can come to a homeless court and it gives the homeless help and hope, and it is a promise that if you will agree to access the services of some of the talented people who are here in the courtroom—many who you've heard from, our own Officer [Jeff] McCutcheon, our HELP officer, Anne Cory of United Way, our Salvation Army crew of volunteers—if the homeless folks will work with them and access services, including federal disability benefits for their mental illness, veterans benefits, in exchange they can sign up for the homeless court.

Now, the rules are this: It can't be a violent felony offense. It has to be a misdemeanor, a nonviolent offense. It can't be domestic violence; It can't be DUI. What these folks do is they literally work their punishment off outside of our jails, so it's a win-win because they have to work toward betterment. And what we see in the homeless courts is in achieving these goals, they end up building hope. They get help and they build hope.

At the end of the process they see the judge, and the judge is presented with the accolades of the work that the homeless people have done. And in exchange for that—it's kind of like bankruptcy court—the court then says we will dismiss your warrants for trespass and dine-and-dash because you have done 100 hours of community service, including mental health treatment, obtaining medical treatment, going to the Children's Cabinet, getting parenting classes, working on getting your identification, getting a job, and pursuing housing. So the homeless court improves access. It provides critical services. It builds community collaboration and reduces court and jail costs. And the Court goes to the homeless. They don't come to us. We go to them. We bring our system of justice to them to provide them justice. So, in my view, it's an extremely innovative court, and I have spoken to many of the stakeholders who would have an interest in this, including the chair of our County Commission, Bonnie Weber, our mayor, Bob Cashell; City Attorney Patricia Lynch, who would be the lead prosecutor in this area because we'll see most of these folks in the downtown corridor; and Chief Judge James Van Winkle of the Reno Municipal Court. Our own Peter Breen, who presides over the mental health court, has agreed, if we are able to create this court, he will preside over the court because we see this as the mental health court being the safety net.

[Judge Berry, continued.] Just to give you some anecdotal background as a judge, I share many of the views that you've heard here about children in the motels. And one of the things that hit me about our resources is that in the last year I've presided over several murder trials, but in two of them, the key eyewitnesses to the murder were misdemeanants who had warrants. In one case they were folks who were living in their car, and they were really torn because they were folks who had a traffic citation for failure to register the car because, of course they couldn't afford to because they're living in it. And so they're running from the law and they can't work. They witness this murder and they say, "We couldn't come forward." They fled, and for three days law enforcement kept saying, "Please come forward." Now, if we had a homeless court, they could have come to the court and they could have said, "This is our worry. If we get arrested, our home will be impounded. Our car will go into impoundment, and then we're really homeless." So they don't come forward. And eventually they did, because law enforcement did the right thing and worked with them and assured them they wouldn't be arrested.

In the homeless court, the issue with these folks on the street is that they are brutalized. They're embattled. They're living moment to moment, and the thought of being taken into custody for judges, it is okay. You do one day in jail you do five days in jail; who cares? But for them, it is the end of their existence as they know it. Their shopping cart full of their stuff is gone. If they have a car and three kids living in it, the kids go into foster care, the mom's in jail for two days, and the car is impounded, gone. And so as a criminal justice system, we exacerbate the problems that continue to bring them into the system. So the homeless court is geared to build trust with these folks, to provide services and to use our tax dollars in the most efficient and optimal way we can, because I promise you, we're going to see them back over and over again.

So I found the court to be a very exciting, innovative concept. I think that there isn't too much of a downside to it if we can create it, and it will provide one more community collaboration. And in the second murder case I mentioned, I was astounded to find that two of the eyewitnesses were little girls. One was eight and one was ten. And the two little girls and their mother were in a small "no-tell" motel deal as two folks got into a dispute. One of them literally crashes through the door, and the other shooter comes in right behind him unloading this gun and killing this guy in the presence of these two little girls. This is their home, and this is where they are. They live day-to-day, and that's the environment that they're in. This type of court, it's my hope that they will have a venue where they can come to and say, "I want a better life. How do I deal with these warrants?" And as we've seen in mental health court and drug court, even when they have the tiny achievements of getting their warrants cleared up—and in doing so they're paying their fellow citizens and the currency of

work of working to improve their life—and each step they take is a win for them. So at the end of the process, they stand before an authority figure and that authority figure validates the work that they've done and hopefully, with our providers, we provide that safety net, and for the very seriously ill we can transfer them or move them into the mental health court and provide further safety net. So I'm happy and pleased to be here and present this concept to you, and I'm happy to answer any questions you might have.

**Chairwoman Leslie:**

Do you need any authorizing legislation to implement the homeless court, or can you do it, I think you described, with an interlocal agreement between the municipal court and the prosecutor and the district court?

**Judge Berry:**

Correct. I see the leader in this area is going to be the Reno Municipal Court and Patricia Lynch of the City Attorney's Office. They would be the prosecutors. And I believe that Judge Breen will help connect the jurisdictions. So I think we're going to be okay in working with that. I've had a great opportunity to visit with Ginny Lewis of the Department of Motor Vehicles, and she has educated me on what we can and can't do by way of identification. But one of the steps I'd like to see us take, because the identification piece is key—you have to understand, on the streets, anybody who has any kind of identification, it is a substantial currency. Identity theft is the number one crime in the United States right now, and it is a destructive, horrific crime. So Ginny Lewis reminded me of that and reminded me of the importance and the integrity we have to keep in issuing identification cards.

But one of the things that Ms. Lewis assured me of is if we create this homeless court, she will work closely with the homeless court, and one of the first things we'll do with the homeless client is start working toward obtaining a certified birth certificate from the state where they were born, and that will probably take a month or so. And that document, again, will be another one of the homeless court "carrots" to keep them in their treatment, their therapy, and doing things for their children, because if they successfully complete their treatment they can obtain a lawful identification, and Director Lewis has assured me she will work with us to help us achieve that goal as well.

**Chairwoman Leslie:**

We're going to have her come up here in a few minutes and talk to us some more about that. Thank you very much Judge Berry, and good luck with your court.

**Assemblywoman McClain:**

I was just curious. Are there any plans to maybe institute something like this in the south too? Have you talked to any of the leaders down there?

**Judge Berry:**

I have. I talked to Judge Cedric Kerns. I believe he is your judge and, actually, president of the Nevada Judges Association. He's very interested in this program, and I have sent all the materials to him. Cedric and I are good friends and we'll work on this project together, but we thought, perhaps, if we pilot it in more of a small venue, we can work out the wrinkles.

**Chairwoman Leslie:**

Let's go ahead and open officially the hearing on A.B. 84.

**Assembly Bill 84: Makes various changes concerning homeless persons.  
(BDR 40-810)**

**Assemblyman Bob McCleary, Assembly District No. 11, Clark County:**

Unfortunately—and I want to apologize in advance—I came here with bringing this bill, Assembly Bill 84, to you as an interim study, and I want to apologize to this Committee and apologize to those present in this room. I wish I were bringing forth a list of recommendations to fix this problem. I don't have them. I'm very sorry about that. I feel guilty about that. There are a lot of people that are here supporting the homeless today, and I've felt that frustration from them. Why another study? Very good suggestion. I'll tell you what, I'll leave it to this Committee. If you would like to change this bill to make it more concrete, I would certainly give it to you to do that. I trust your judgment on that.

I wanted to tell you also that this bill does not come out of some great high insight that I had. It comes out of guilt. I live in North Las Vegas, about five blocks from our main homeless shelter facility. And for years I drove by it. I've seen the hundreds of people in line for dinner at night and the endless people walking the streets. And I've always turned my head and looked away or thought about something else. I can remember this, too, thinking, "They really ought to do something about this." In my second term I'm thinking, "Well, maybe I should do something about this."

That's where I got, and that's as far as I got. I knew that my conscience was bothering me. I knew something had to be done about this, and I didn't know any better than to ask for an interim study. I know that there are a lot of different types of people. We've heard a lot of that today that are out there that



are homeless, and for different reasons. I don't think it's like when we were kids it seemed like it was the "winos," the old stereotypical homeless person, who was there because of substance abuse problems. I mean certainly, there are those out there. But, I have actually met people that were not in that category and were homeless. I've been dealing with a gentleman; he's lived in my neighborhood. He lives on Eastern Avenue between Owens Avenue and Bonanza Road. I frequent that on my way to the freeway. I see him almost every morning, panhandling for some change.

[Assemblyman McCleary, continued.] About a year and a half ago, for whatever reason, I just thought I'd pull over and talk to him. And I got to know him; his name is Elliott. And it's kind of funny. I'm embarrassed to admit I never came out of my car. I've always pulled up to him in a parking lot and talked through the window and say "How are you doing, Elliott? You need anything; can I help?" I built up kind of a relationship, but he's really the reason I started thinking about this, because he doesn't have a substance abuse problem. I think he's mentally handicapped to some extent; if I had to guess, his mental age, I'd say, he's about 12. I'm not an expert, so I'm not really in a position to do that. But he's very simple minded. He does smoke tobacco. But most of the time I see him, he takes the change he gets—in nickels, dimes, and quarters—and goes to 7-Eleven. He loves Coca-Cola. He drinks a two-liter bottle of Coke—sits there at the bus stop and drinks that—and loves that, and whatever food he gets. He seems to do okay. He's lived there for about 12 years. I kid you not—he lived there since my kids were little. My kids knew him. And thus this study.

As far as the study, let's not study what causes homelessness. I think that's kind of a moot point at this juncture. I think we need to work on finding a way to better coordinate both our public and private services that are available to these folks, to make sure that we're doing the best we can with the resources that we have, which are obviously limited as these good folks have testified to us earlier, but make sure we're doing the very best we can. There are a lot of good charitable organizations willing to help and have been helping, and I want to make sure we're coordinating these better, as efficiently as possible.

I also realize that there are a lot of homeless people who would qualify for various government programs, whether state or federal, but there are some challenges. First of all, they don't know where to go to ask the questions. They don't have a residency, and a lot of these programs will require residency. And they don't have identification. So I want to find a way to get around these issues so that the people that do qualify for food stamps, for housing, for some type of health care, can get these things. And I tell you what I'd really like to take credit for the ID suggestion, but it wasn't mine. I started with the study, and your Chairwoman today, and as well as David Parks, had suggested this

language be put in this bill, and I agree with them. I'm glad they did. I will give them credit for that.

[Assemblyman McCleary, continued.] Another issue I want to briefly touch upon, and I hope it's not taken the wrong way—it's very challenging anymore to come off of a freeway on the Strip. You're getting off on Flamingo Road, on your way heading to the Strip, and almost inevitably at every exit, some homeless person out there is panhandling for change. I'm not trying to say, "Let's get them off the street," but I'm concerned about what image it's giving our tourists that come to Nevada. What do they think about us with so many homeless people out there panhandling for change? Even on the Strip now there are people asking for help. I'm not saying, "Let's chase them off." I'm saying, "Let's address the problem." Let's fix it. Let's get them off the street, let's find some temporary housing. Let's get them identification, let's get them back to work. If they need substance abuse counseling and such, let's take care of these people.

In conclusion—I hope this doesn't sound too corny, but I think about this: every one of those homeless people was a baby at one time and was in their mother's arms. That mother looked down at that baby, loved that baby, and had the highest hopes and aspirations for it. And they're people, and something went wrong somewhere, and they need help. We have a moral obligation to help these people, and I hope you'll do something. I trust this Committee. I trust your judgment. I've given you a bill here that you can do anything you have to do to do right by these people. I trust your judgment. And with that, I'm willing to accept any questions.

**Chairwoman Leslie:**

Thank you, Mr. McCleary. Before we do, we're getting short on time; we want to move along today. Mr. Manendo, did you want to add something?

**Assemblyman Mark Manendo, Assembly District No. 18, Clark County:**

I'm also a member of the Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth. This is something very near and dear to me, and we work very hard. I have spoken to our executive director, Kathleen Boutin, who lives in District 29, and wanted to lend our support for anything we could do as far as an interim committee. I didn't hear all of the presentations. I'm sorry; I had other things I had to be doing today, but I didn't hear a lot about the homeless youth. There are a lot of homeless youth in this state, and we worked very hard to get the Safe Place going in southern Nevada. I see now we have it in northern Nevada, and those things take a lot of time and a lot of effort.

[Assemblyman Manendo, continued.] The Partnership for Homeless Youth is a nonprofit organization, and we do a lot of work with our homeless youth. And we realize that there are a lot of kids, and whether they're couch surfing or whether they're living in a car with their folks or if they're in a weekly, and they don't know where their next meal is going to be or home is going to be, they're people too. We need to address the issues. We hear a lot of bickering from the municipalities in southern Nevada, Madam Chair, and that has to stop. Whether we bring them to the table and find a way to do whatever it is possible, but I'm lending my support, and I know the Partnership For Homeless Youth would like a seat at that table too, Madam Chair. We thank you very much for your time.

**Chairwoman Leslie:**

The Committee members have expressed a lot of concern today about youth. I just wanted you to know that's come up a number of times today. Are there any questions for our colleagues before we release them? I don't see any.

What we're going to have to is split this bill at some point here, because we need to send the interim study to Mrs. Koivisto's committee which has jurisdiction. For those who don't know our process in the audience, interim studies are heard in our Assembly by the Elections, Procedures, and Ethics Committee, which is chaired by Mrs. Koivisto, and are usually held until the end as we negotiate with the Senate over which interim study will be funded. So part of the bill will need to go there. The part that we would like Ms. Lewis to comment on is the ID cards and since, undoubtedly, there will be a fiscal note attached should that part of the bill move forward that would have to go to the Ways and Means Committee. We don't want to hold up Mrs. Koivisto in the interim study, so we'll probably split the bill some how. We're all most interested in hearing what you think about the provisions in the bill that waive the fees for homeless people.

**Ginny Lewis, Director, Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles:**

Regarding the fiscal note, we just received this on Friday so we've not completed it, but I have a couple of thoughts as I read this bill. First of all, it is very specific as far as a duplicate driver's license or identification card, and I think the Committee may want to consider expanding that to originals. There's no guarantee that these people are already in our system. For those who are not homeless beginning in Nevada—who have just become transients here—I think we need to expand those provisions.

The bill references NRS [*Nevada Revised Statutes*] 483.410, which is the driver's license portion, as well as 483.180, I believe. I just want to make it clear to the Committee that there is another fee that is charged that I don't believe, the Legislature has the authority to waive. That is a \$2.25 fee, which is

a contractual fee which we have with Digimark, our vendor for the actual production of the card. So that fee, unless there's an appropriation to make up for that, would have to stand. So I believe the bill is strictly just the original or duplicate on an ID card or a driver's license.

[Ginny Lewis, continued.] There's been a lot of discussion today about identification, and I've had extensive conversations with Judge Berry. We are not in any position to compromise the ID card that the State of Nevada issues. It's a very, very sensitive issue in this country. We are working closely with all jurisdictions in the United States as well as our partners in Canada, and there's a lot of federal legislation right now. And as you all know, the state-issued card or driver's license is the most commonly used form of identification, getting on an airplane, getting social services. So the documents that we accept as a form of identification are critical, and not something we can compromise. Clearly Nevada doesn't want to be the weakest link, and we're proud of the standards we have set for the required identification, and feel that our license is accepted around the country. There are many states that we don't accept their driver's license as a primary form of identification.

I just want to get that on the record that it is very important, and I think if, as we go down this path with the homeless, and if getting them a piece of identification is something we can do, I think they all know the state in which they were born. And so there is a way through vital statistics in each one of those states to get them a certified birth certificate. Not a hospital birth certificate, but state issued. Once they have that, then we can help them, and we can give them a true form of identification. So there are ways without compromising the documentation that we accept today.

**Chairwoman Leslie:**

The way the bill is drafted, as I understand it, is to waive the fees. That would only be for Nevada, of course. If somebody was from out of state, maybe we could set up a matching fund with donations to pay for the out-of-state fees, but my understanding of the way the bill is drafted is it doesn't change the requirements of the documentation that you need. It just waives the fees so that money is not an issue. Is that your reading also?

**Ginny Lewis:**

That's also my reading, yes.

**Chairwoman Leslie:**

You're satisfied with that portion of it. You just don't want us to go any further. It's kind of a preemptive strike?

**Ginny Lewis:**

That's correct. Just as I said initially, my thought is you might want to expand this to include original identification, not just duplicates, in the event that they're not already in the Nevada system.

**Chairwoman Leslie:**

We'll definitely note that. We haven't heard from the providers today and maybe, if we have a few minutes, we'll call some of them up and if we move this part of the bill on to Ways and Means, that's something we'll need to know what is the cost. I don't know how you can do a fiscal note without a better idea of how many people we're talking about. Is that your feeling too?

**Ginny Lewis:**

Some of the numbers I heard today are 18,000, if you want to do very conservative statewide. Now, the question is; how many of those people are going to come into this process and want to become identified? It's hard to say. Any fiscal note we prepare will probably be on the high side.

**Chairwoman Leslie:**

That's what I want to avoid. I don't want you doing one for 18,000 people. So let us work with you to try and get a reasonable number, not an 18,000 number.

**Ginny Lewis:**

That's reasonable.

**Chairwoman Leslie:**

Any more questions for Ginny? Seeing none, we'll go down to Las Vegas where people have been waiting patiently for a couple of hours. I have three people signed in. Let's get these people on the record, if they are indeed still in support of A.B. 84.

**Anna Marie Johnson, Director, Nevada Legal Services, Las Vegas, Nevada:**

I'm here to support A.B. 84. Nevada Legal Services every year is one of the organizations that coordinates the annual stand-down for the homeless, and at the stand-down we always have a booth that we man where people who are attending the stand-down can come and ask us any type of legal question that they may have. The most frequently asked question this year was, "What do I do to get identification? Mine was stolen, and I don't have the money to get new identification and get it replaced." The only thing that we can do is try to make referrals to charities around the city that may have funding available to help the individual receive an ID replacement. The stories that we were getting were, "I need my ID in order to go down and apply for housing assistance." "I

need my ID to go down and be able to apply for Medicaid for my child." "I need an ID to go down and apply for food stamps so I can feed my family."

[Anna Marie Johnson, continued.] Not having a personal identification does become a matter of home and support and life and death for these families, because they are not able to receive the services that they need. I have one client that we're assisting right now. His name is Ronald Silly; he's 43 years old, and he was living in an encampment along Maryland Parkway. He was a victim of a mugging crime. All his belongings were kept in his backpack, and as part of the crime his backpack was stolen, and all of his ID went—his driver's license; he had a copy of his certified birth certificate; he had a Social Security card—and we're trying to assist him. And the only thing we can do right now is get the forms and walk him through the process of applying for all of these IDs, and we've been working with his church in getting some assistance in raising the funds to pay for the various replacement IDs, and it's a small amount to most of us. It's only about \$50 to get the replacement IDs, but it's a huge barrier if you're living on the street and have nothing.

Right now we've filled out all the applications and the most important one is the certified copy of your birth certificate. If you can get a certified copy of your birth certificate, you can get everything else. That's the starting block. And we sent in the application for his certified copy of his birth certificate and they sent it back to us saying, "I'm sorry, you need a photo ID." We just were hitting our heads against the wall. We sent a letter explaining he was asking for his birth certificate because he had his ID stolen and he didn't have copies of it. Right now we're trying to get around his having a photo ID by sending in our advocate's copy of her photo ID, saying, "I'm his legal advocate. I'm born in this state; here's my photo ID. Would you please give us a certified copy of his birth certificate?" But this is a large problem. Most of the people that we talk to are not born in Nevada; they're born in other places. So it's a matter of trying to hook them up with services in their home states to get certified copies of their birth certificates. I think if you're looking at people who will need a waiver of a fee from Nevada, I think it's a small number of homeless, but it is a matter of life and death to the individuals who do need to get their ID.

**Chairwoman Leslie:**

I'm going to ask the other people to be just very brief because we are going to lose our Committee members, and we need to take a vote today. If you have something new to add, please do.

**Leroy Pelton, President, Southern Nevada Advocates for Homeless People, Las Vegas, Nevada:**

I first became concerned with the homeless problem in 2001 when there were a large number of people encamped on the street at Foremaster Lane and Main Street, which could be seen out the window from where I'm sitting right now in the Grant Sawyer Building. The numbers swelled to about 200 people out there. These people were being neglected by the local government, by the county government, and there came a point when then they were being abused. The cycle of neglect and abuse is quite common. The people out there are eventually declared to be a health hazard. The streets have to be cleaned and they have to be chased from the streets. Anger grows toward the homeless people. They're targeted for arrests for jaywalking. They might be jailed. Many have been. Well, that night, on Palm Sunday in 2002, we witnessed these people being chased from these streets. We relocated them somewhere else in an empty lot, and in the morning, that was Saturday night. And in the morning, Palm Sunday, they were chased again by police.

That was in 2001. Today, in 2005, you could look in a different direction, just a few blocks from Grant Sawyer Building, and there are again many, many people sleeping out in the streets and being neglected. As a matter of fact, the number of emergency shelter beds has been reduced here in Clark County from last winter to this winter. The reduction has been about 100 beds, so we're actually going backwards rather than forward. We acknowledge that there's been a change in the terms of the regional structure. We're happy. We support the establishment of a regional homeless coordinator position, where we probably support much of the rhetoric that goes into the talk of 10-year plans. We're all supportive of that, but then there's the reality on the ground. And we believe that there's a moral obligation on the part of the state, as well as the local government, to benefit the homeless in at least some minimal ways to ensure their survival, and that this is not a matter of charity. This is a matter of justice, of benefiting all the people in the state of Nevada, and we've been concerned, especially in Clark County.

I just want to briefly tell you of what we have proposed—Southern Nevada Advocates for Homeless People. We have proposed that the state government contribute .2 percent of its annual expenditures for the direct provision for homeless people to shelter them and to provide other programs for them. In southern Nevada, we need many more outreach social workers than we have now. And we're talking about direct provision for the homeless. Of course, we know that the mental health issues in this state, as well as other social services issues, are in very bad shape of being underfunded, but mental health services can be used by not only homeless but other people also. We're not including that in the .2 percent. But we're saying that .2 percent should go towards

things like expanding the shelter space, building day centers so that homeless people have somewhere to go during the daytime, and supporting the outreach social workers. And we say that not only the state government, but also Clark County government and all the local city governments, should each pledge to give .2 percent of their annual expenditures.

**Chairwoman Leslie:**

Mr. Pelton, could we have you give those recommendations to a staff person in the room down there, because we would like to take those up at a different hearing. We're going to lose our members here, because we're past the time allotted. I need to stop you here, but we would really like to see those recommendations, and we'll invite you back to another hearing.

**Leroy Pelton:**

I gave to it the staff member here. Thank you very much.

**Chairwoman Leslie:**

I do apologize to the people up here in Carson City also that we're not going to have time to hear from. It's my intention to bring this bill back, hopefully as soon as Wednesday. If our staff can do that, with a Committee bill probably for the interim study, Mr. McCleary, we'll send it on to Ms. Koivisto so it can be heard in her committee. We'll keep the jacket of A.B. 84 with this other item of the ID cards, and then this Committee can decide whether we want to change that or just take it to the floor and re-refer it to Ways and Means for more work, but we're definitely not done with this issue but we need to stop at this point today. [Chairwoman Leslie closed the hearing on A.B. 84.]

**Assembly Bill 41: Makes appropriation for operating expenses of mental health court in Clark County. (BDR S-812)**

We need to give this Committee more time. I think we need to recommend two hours is not enough on these complex social issues. But at this point, let's go to the work session. We have A.B. 41 which we heard last week, Mr. Horne's bill on the mental health court. Mr. Horne, do you want to explain the amendments? I'll start while he's looking for that because I know many of you have to go. You should all have it in front of you. There are two amendments. Anyway, we want to amend Section 2, page 2 to provide that the funds appropriated by the bill be sent to the Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services of Division of Mental Health, rather than to the Administrative Office of the Courts. We talked about that last week. We also want to further amend Section 2, page 2 to provide that these funds are for the "support," instead of



the operating expenses, of the mental health court. Is that your understanding, Mr. Horne?

**Assemblyman Horne:**

Yes, Madam Chair. And this amendment, as I stated in my testimony, is only to mirror what the current practice is up north. The bill draft was initially done incorrectly the first time. There was a correction on it.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN McCLAIN MOVED TO AMEND AND DO PASS  
ASSEMBLY BILL 41.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PIERCE SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

On Wednesday, we'll be taking up bills from the interim study on children youth and families dealing with foster care.

**Assembly Bill 13: Revises qualifications of State Welfare Administrator of  
Welfare Division of Department of Human Resources. (BDR 38-239)**

Not heard.

**Chairwoman Leslie:**

This meeting is adjourned [at 3:39 p.m.].

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

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Joe Bushek  
Transcribing Attaché

APPROVED BY:

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Assemblywoman Sheila Leslie, Chairwoman

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**EXHIBITS**

**Committee Name:** Health and Human Services

**Date:** February 21, 2005

**Time of Meeting:** 1:32 pm

<b>Bill #</b>	<b>Exhibit ID</b>	<b>Witness</b>	<b>Dept.</b>	<b>Description</b>
	A	*****	*****	Agenda
	B	Philip Mangano	United States Interagency Council on Homelessness	The Interagency report on homelessness
	C	Lisa Foster	Office of the Governor	Executive Order regarding homelessness
<u>A.B. 84</u>	D	Chuck Fulkerson	Office of Veterans Services	Memo regarding veteran homelessness
	E	Kelly Marschall	Reno Area Alliance for the homeless	Executive Summary and power point presentation
	F	Janet Berry	Homeless Court	Outline of homeless court program