

**MINUTES OF THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCES AND EDUCATION**

**Seventy-third Session
February 16, 2005**

The Senate Committee on Human Resources and Education was called to order by Chair Maurice E. Washington at 1:35 p.m. on Wednesday, February 16, 2005, in Room 2135 of the Legislative Building, Carson City, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, Room 4412, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada. [Exhibit A](#) is the Agenda. [Exhibit B](#) is the Attendance Roster. All exhibits are available and on file at the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Maurice E. Washington, Chair
Senator Barbara K. Cegavske, Vice Chair
Senator Dennis Nolan
Senator Joe Heck
Senator Bernice Mathews
Senator Valerie Wiener

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Senator Steven Horsford (Excused)

GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:

Senator Maggie Carlton, Clark County Senatorial District No. 2

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Marsheilah D. Lyons, Committee Policy Analyst
Leslie K. Hamner, Committee Counsel
Bob Atkinson, Senior Program Analyst
Cynthia Cook, Committee Secretary

OTHERS PRESENT:

Thelma Clark, Silver Senator, National Silver Haired Congress, Nevada Silver Haired Legislative Forum

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Lona Domenici, Coordinator, Nevada Silver Haired Legislative Forum
Dr. Keith Rheault, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of Education
Douglas C. Thunder, Deputy Superintendent for Administrative and Fiscal Services, Department of Education
Daniel J. Klaich, Chief Counsel, System Administration Office, University and Community College System of Nevada
Dr. Trudy Larson, Assistant Chancellor, System Administration Office, University and Community College System of Nevada
Dr. Christine Chairsell, Interim Vice Chancellor, Academic and Student Affairs, System Administration Office, University and Community College System of Nevada
Tyler Trevor, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, University and Community College System of Nevada

CHAIR WASHINGTON:

Senate Bill 23 was passed by the Committee on Monday, February 14, 2005. We need to rescind our actions, and re-refer the bill to the Senate Committee on Judiciary. There has been concern from financial institutions, the Office of the Secretary of State and those worried about identity theft.

SENATE BILL 23: Authorizes certain persons with physical disabilities to use signature stamps under certain circumstances. (BDR 38-690)

SENATOR MATHEWS:

What are the concerns? The Office of the Secretary of State sends out data with their stamp.

CHAIR WASHINGTON:

I think the concern is about voting. The concerns can be better handled in the Judiciary Committee.

SENATOR CEGAVSKE MOVED TO RESCIND THE PREVIOUS ACTION
TAKEN ON S.B. 23.

SENATOR HECK SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS NOLAN AND HORSFORD WERE ABSENT FOR THE VOTE.)

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SENATOR CEGAVSKE MOVED TO RE-REFER S.B. 23 TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY.

SENATOR HECK SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS NOLAN AND HORSFORD WERE ABSENT FOR THE VOTE.)

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CHAIR WASHINGTON:

I will entertain a motion for the Committee to request a bill draft for a measure to bring Nevada into compliance with the federal Keeping Children and Families Safe Act of 2003.

SENATOR CEGAVSKE MOVED TO REQUEST A COMMITTEE BILL DRAFT FOR A MEASURE TO BRING NEVADA INTO COMPLIANCE WITH THE FEDERAL KEEPING CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SAFE ACT OF 2003.

SENATOR HECK SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS NOLAN AND HORSFORD WERE ABSENT FOR THE VOTE.)

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CHAIR WASHINGTON:

I will entertain a motion for the Committee to request a bill draft for a measure to prescribe a program of career and technical education.

SENATOR CEGAVSKE MOVED TO REQUEST A COMMITTEE BILL DRAFT FOR A MEASURE TO PRESCRIBE A PROGRAM OF CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

SENATOR HECK SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS NOLAN AND HORSFORD WERE ABSENT FOR THE VOTE.)

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CHAIR WASHINGTON:

I will entertain a motion for the Committee to request a bill draft for a measure to implement provisions to require health insurers to admit onto their panels any provider of health care who is willing to accept their terms and conditions.

SENATOR MATHEWS:

I have a bill that duplicates this measure.

CHAIR WASHINGTON:

We will not act upon this measure. The Committee now has five bill draft requests (BDR) remaining.

We will open the hearing on BDR 33-428.

BILL DRAFT REQUEST 33-428: Makes various changes concerning protection of certain significant historical resources. (Later introduced as [Senate Bill 81](#).)

SENATOR CEGAVSKE MOVED TO INTRODUCE BDR 33-428.

SENATOR HECK SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS NOLAN AND HORSFORD WERE ABSENT FOR THE VOTE.)

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CHAIR WASHINGTON:

We will open the hearing on BDR 33-399.

BILL DRAFT REQUEST 33-399: Revises provisions governing Comstock Historic District Commission. (Later introduced as [Senate Bill 82](#).)

SENATOR CEGAVSKE MOVED TO INTRODUCE BDR 33-399.

SENATOR HECK SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS NOLAN AND HORSFORD WERE ABSENT FOR THE VOTE.)

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CHAIR WASHINGTON:
We will open the hearing on S.B. 31.

SENATE BILL 31: Revises provisions relating to Nevada Silver Haired Legislative Forum. (BDR 38-447)

SENATOR MAGGIE CARLTON (Clark County Senatorial District No. 2):
I will give you an overview of some of the requests the Silver Haired Legislative Forum has offered. The bill authorizes the president of the forum to be able to excuse absences from the meetings. The bill removes the statutory requirement that the meetings, if held, be held in different areas of the State. The seniors would like flexibility in handling issues concerning funding and travel. By allowing the president to excuse the absences, it would no longer be necessary for the Nevada Commission on Aging to reappoint members to the forum. The forum is also requesting the bill be amended to allow the forum to submit their annual report to the Commission and the Governor before September 1 of each even-numbered year. The law currently provides the report be submitted before July 1. Presently, the forum must approach individual legislators to get a BDR, and they would like to be able to ask the Commission for five different requests.

CHAIR WASHINGTON:
Is it currently in statute the forum can request five BDRs?

SENATOR CARLTON:
No. The forum is requesting that option. Currently, each member of the forum must come to their individual legislator to request BDRs. They have found that to be difficult. The forum representatives came to me saying they were having a problem getting BDRs introduced and that is why I am sitting here.

CHAIR WASHINGTON:

There may be a concern. Current statute allows only legislators and agencies to request bills.

THELMA CLARK (Silver Senator, National Silver Haired Congress, Nevada Silver Haired Legislative Forum):

We are requesting the new language in S.B. 31 on page 2, lines 3 and 6, because some members who were ill had to be reappointed by the Nevada Commission on Aging.

SENATOR CEGAVSKE:

The language concerning three consecutive meetings was put in because, in other forums, there have been so many meetings missed that members did not have information needed when they returned. Might it be better if we put more days in, or do you believe just having the president being able to excuse, depending on the circumstances, is preferable?

MS. CLARK:

We had two members this year who were very ill and missed three meetings. They then had to be reappointed by the Commission. Their Senator had to request the Commission to reappoint them. It would be easier for us to be able to excuse them.

SENATOR CEGAVSKE:

Perhaps we should ask legal for language stating if there is an exception, the president could make that exception.

CHAIR WASHINGTON:

Ms. Hamner, does the bill give the president the authorization to determine whether the absentee is excused or unexcused?

LESLIE J. HAMNER (Committee Counsel):

You are correct. The bill would authorize the president to excuse the member.

MS. CLARK:

The language on page 2, lines 20 and 21 is necessary because the locations where the meetings are held do not always have the technical abilities for videoconferencing. Members could not hear each other and the meetings were not productive.

MS. CLARK:

We would also like to not be under the provisions of chapter 241 of *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS) during the Legislative Session.

CHAIR WASHINGTON:

Do you not wish to comply with the open meeting law?

MS. CLARK:

We comply with it all the time during our regular meetings. However, during the Legislative Session, the forum and their committees need to meet without complying with NRS 241.

CHAIR WASHINGTON:

I suspect that is something that is not obtainable. Since you are a public body, the public should have the opportunity to be present at all of your meetings.

LONA DOMENICI (Coordinator, Nevada Silver Haired Legislative Forum):

I need to mention my position as an employee of the Legislative Counsel Bureau prohibits me from supporting or opposing any specific measures. Within the forum, there are committees to monitor each of the Legislative Committees, and report back to the forum. I think Ms. Clark is saying there is insufficient time for those committees to comply with NRS 241.

MS. CLARK:

We request the Nevada Commission on Aging may select up to five recommendations as BDRs for transmittal to the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB).

CHAIR WASHINGTON:

We will schedule this bill for a work session. We will deal with the proposed amendments to address your concerns and needs at that time.

SENATOR WIENER:

I want to ask counsel a question concerning the request by the forum regarding NRS 241 compliance. If, for example, four members of the forum meet, not under the umbrella of a committee, does that still constitute an open meeting requirement?

Ms. Hamner:

It does, since they are deliberating and making decisions and making policy recommendations.

DR. KEITH RHEAULT (Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of Education):

I have with me Douglas C. Thunder. He will offer a presentation on the Nevada Plan and the Distributive School Account (DSA), which we are calling DSA 101.

DOUGLAS C. THUNDER (Deputy Superintendent for Administrative and Fiscal Services, Department of Education):

Since the action of the 1967 Legislature, the Nevada Plan has been the means by which the State supported the educational costs of the local school districts. I have distributed a handout that describes the DSA and the Nevada Plan ([Exhibit C](#)). I will present the first part of the handout along with a PowerPoint presentation.

DR. RHEAULT:

It looks as if there will be \$140 million to revert to the General Fund at the end of the year. I think the reason is because of the increased local sales tax and property tax that is a part of the Nevada Plan. That reduces the overall State general appropriations. Over the past two years, because of the high increases in sales tax and property tax, that is where that reversion comes from.

MR. THUNDER:

When the economy goes in the other direction, we may receive less sales tax than was projected. That is when we come before the Legislature and ask for supplemental appropriations.

CHAIR WASHINGTON:

How many different taxes are actually used to set the funding per pupil?

MR. THUNDER:

I believe the chart on page 8 of [Exhibit C](#) answers your question. On the property tax bill there are two line items for school tax. One is for 75 cents and one is for capital projects debt service.

CHAIR WASHINGTON:

As the Legislature deals with setting a limit on property taxes, most districts are probably close to the cap. What is the possible result of that?

MR. THUNDER:

Districts that have an enrollment of over 25,000 students can go up to 50 cents per \$100 of assessed valuation for capital projects. The other level is the districts can only borrow up to 15 percent of the total assessed value in the county. I believe one or two districts are approaching that, but that has generally not been a real barrier. I think the other limit is all of the property tax rates in the counties are capped at \$3.64 per \$100 of assessed valuation. Most of the counties are committed to servicing their debt, so other governmental agencies are going to have to work together to assure that cap is met.

SENATOR CEGAVSKE:

When you calculate the per-pupil funding, can you identify those taxes and fees in Nevada used to calculate the funding and those that are not. My understanding is class-size-reduction and bonding monies are not used in calculating the per-pupil funding.

MR. THUNDER:

If you are talking about expenditures per pupil, that includes everything except capital projects, debt service and adult education. It is called current expenditures for kindergarten through Grade 12 (K-12). Class-size-reduction money is in that calculation.

SENATOR CEGAVSKE:

Are we including kindergarten in the calculation?

MR. THUNDER:

The effort has been made by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) to make sure that all expenditures, with the exceptions that I mentioned, are included. When you look at expenditures per student that are generated by NCES, they should be comparable from state to state.

SENATOR CEGAVSKE:

The Legislative Counsel Bureau prepared a paper for me, and class-size reduction was an item that was not included in the per-pupil funding.

MR. THUNDER:

One point I should make is if you are looking at revenues per pupil, that is going to be different than expenditures per pupil. Revenues per pupil include all revenue. Every dollar approved by the Legislature that goes to school districts and used for students is included.

The chart on page 4 of [Exhibit C](#) describes the debt-service payments incurred by the issuance of bonds.

SENATOR CEGAVSKE:

I believe there are several bills relating to nutrition in the schools. When we prepare to address them, I would like you provide a list of what each of the school districts is doing for the nutrition program. Also, we have not received from the districts an accounting for the monies received from vending machines and fast food restaurants.

MR. THUNDER:

When we report expenditures, these funds are also included in expenditures per student.

DR. RHEAULT:

I think there is confusion because the Legislature requires us to keep separate track of the Class-Size Reduction (CSR) fund from the DSA basic guarantee per student. When we submit to NCES, they combine all of the sources. That is why you will see \$6,500 per student in Nevada, while our DSA guarantee amount is \$4,300.

CHAIR WASHINGTON:

Under special revenue funds on page 5 you have No Child Left Behind, Nutritional Education and others. Some of these are federal and some are State programs. Is that correct?

MR. THUNDER:

Yes. I can provide a full list of all the special funds

SENATOR CEGAVSKE:

I did present a paper prepared by LCB that estimated the per-pupil funding for Clark County would be \$8,800 and \$8,600 statewide. That was also recalculated and redistributed by Nevada Policy Research Institute.

BOB ATKINSON (Senior Program Analyst, Fiscal Analysis Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau):

There is confusion about the numbers of which we are speaking. Something Mr. Thunder refers to as revenue, meaning revenue to the school district, we refer to as expenditures, because we think of it as the basic support per-pupil number. In the past there has been confusion. When we talk about the guaranteed basic support per student in the DSA being in the neighborhood of \$4,500, we are speaking of a portion of the money the school districts have to spend on each pupil. Other revenues make up other pieces. When you see numbers in the newspapers about the national average being approximately \$7,000 per pupil, that figure is the equivalent of all of the pieces being rolled together. You cannot compare our basic support guarantee amount to the numbers you see in the paper for expenditures per pupil. Expenditures per pupil include everything and the basic guarantee amount just applies to the amount of the Nevada Plan that is guaranteed by the State.

CHAIR WASHINGTON:

As I understand this, the Nevada Plan is the basic support and the numbers reported in the press are everything lumped together.

MR. THUNDER:

The basic support amount is intended to be approximately 80 percent of what the districts are going to expend. The additional 20 percent primarily comes from the 50-cent property tax and the other locally generated taxes, not a part of the Nevada Plan. Specifically excluded are capital projects, as are all property items purchased for use by the schools with a life longer than one year.

DR. RHEAULT:

A chart on page 30 of the booklet, Nevada Education Quick Facts, illustrates Nevada's expenditure per student versus the United States average ([Exhibit D](#)).

MR. ATKINSON:

I will clarify one other point. Earlier in the testimony regarding where class-size reduction fits into the picture, I realized that Mr. Thunder was speaking of total expenditures. The earlier question by Senator Cegavske related to the basic support number. The question and answer did not address the same things, and they were both right. The basic support guarantee does not include the class-size-reduction numbers.

CHAIR WASHINGTON:

If full-day kindergarten is implemented, would that number be included in the basic support or the overall total?

MR. THUNDER:

It would depend on how the program is implemented. If it is set as a categorical-type program, it would be kept separate. The total amount is going to be included, but as far as being a part of the basic support-per-student amount, that would be in question. If it is determined full-day kindergarten be treated as all other grades, currently kindergarten enrollment is weighted at 60 percent of full enrollment count, then it would be increased to full weighting. That increase would be built in. It would be strictly determined by how the Legislature crafts the program.

MR. ATKINSON:

If we consider the Governor's recommendation during the previous Legislative Session, he recommended we put approximately \$24 million in a separate line item to provide full-day kindergarten for about 30 percent of the kindergarteners in the State. That would not have been a part of the basic support guarantee. It would be like the remediation programs or any of the other additional programs we fund outside of the basic support guarantee. As Mr. Thunder said, if the intent is to treat kindergarteners as full-time students, then they would be in the full-enrollment count.

CHAIR WASHINGTON:

The current Governor's budget mentioned \$100 million, not specifically set for full-day kindergarten. It was earmarked for remedial programs and other educational programs.

MR. THUNDER:

The proposal was put into a new budget account, by itself, called the School Remediation Trust Fund. Constructed in that manner, it would not become a part of the basic support per student. If everything were all rolled in as one, it would become a part of the guaranteed basic support per student.

CHAIR WASHINGTON:

Is there any indication that the number arbitrarily out there now, estimated to be \$72 million for full-day kindergarten, is to be extracted from the \$100 million?

MR. ATKINSON:

The \$72 million estimate is for full-day kindergarten. The Remediation Trust Fund is to be used for school improvement. If I understood the State of the State Address, the indication was full-day kindergarten was an allowable use of the \$100 million. The \$50 million each year would not be a part of the basic support, but when the districts received that money and spent it, it would be a part of the expenditures per pupil, at that point, and it would raise that number. If we talk about the \$4,500 number for the basic support guarantee and \$7,000 number for expenditures per pupil, it would raise the \$7,000 number, not the \$4,500 number. It is not a part of the guaranteed support per pupil.

DR. RHEAULT:

We do not yet have the specifics, but the \$100 million would fund K-6 school improvement. It is going to be based on school district improvement plans and school improvement plans. The only district that includes full-day kindergarten in their improvement plan is Clark County. It would be an allowable expense to be used to meet school improvement, based on the school district assessment. There are about 18 different types of items addressed in local school district improvement plans and full-day kindergarten is just one of them.

MR. THUNDER:

[Exhibit E](#) is the package for funding of schools in Nevada. The expenditures are reported to the federal government, and are used when calculating national averages. Debt service, capital projects, expenditures for adult high school programs or any non-K-12 expenditures are excluded. That is the number reported by NCES. This exhibit is an attempt on my part to describe all the sources of revenue that flow to school districts.

CHAIR WASHINGTON:

Are the categories mostly legislative policy changes that are enhancing or increasing your itemization?

MR. THUNDER:

Each category represents separate programs that have received legislative approval. We need to keep them separate in order to report what has happened in each of those areas.

CHAIR WASHINGTON:

Do you ever categorize between federal mandates, such as No Child Left Behind and programs we have passed here in the State Legislature?

MR. THUNDER:

Most of these programs are ones you have requested us to implement. Some of them are based upon applications from school districts.

CHAIR WASHINGTON:

There may be three categories: federal, state and local.

MR. THUNDER:

I have not touched on the federal programs at all. I would like to point out that last session, when the possibility of a program arose, it was suggested funding it out of the DSA instead of out the General Fund. Actually there is no difference. The DSA is part of the General Fund. If you establish a program and decide to fund it from there, it is going to be an automatic increase in the amount the General Fund is required to contribute.

SENATOR MATHEWS:

As I was looking at [Exhibit E](#), I noticed the slot machine tax. Is that all slot machines?

MR. THUNDER:

I believe the slot machine revenue is split with the University and Community College System of Nevada (UCCSN). It is on all slot machines. We receive between \$36 million and \$37 million a year from that source.

CHAIR WASHINGTON:

The calculation to compute per-student funding for the all of the United States places Nevada in 29th place when all expenditures are included. The calculation using only the DSA ranks Nevada 44th in the nation.

MR. THUNDER:

The first number has to do with total revenues, which includes capital expenditures. We lead the nation in capital expenditures, but when you look at what is actually spent on the educational process, we do not rank very high. One of the reasons the second calculation excludes capital expenditures and debt service is because if you report both of them you are double reporting. You

are paying through the debt-service process what you already bought. In most parts of the country when a school is built, it lasts for many years. That would show a big spike for one year and then it would dwindle. This is an attempt to come up with a statistic that reflects what is happening consistently across the nation.

CHAIR WASHINGTON:

We will now open the hearing on Senate Bill (S.B.) 32.

SENATE BILL 32: Makes various changes relating to qualifications for free tuition and loans for certain students at institutions of University and Community College System of Nevada. (BDR 34-158)

DANIEL J. KLAICH (Chief Counsel, System Administration Office, University and Community College System of Nevada):

I am here to introduce Dr. Trudy Larson and Dr. Christine Chairsell.

DR. TRUDY LARSON (Assistant Chancellor, System Administration Office, University and Community College System of Nevada):

I am here to support S.B. 32. This is one of the bill drafts submitted by the college system which would change the residency requirement to 12 months before free tuition is offered. With over 100,000 students in the system, and with continued growth each year, there are huge challenges around the State to be able to keep up the growth. An influx of students from out of state would increasingly tax our institutions. There are caps in enrollment in California colleges, and our relatively low registration fees are attractive to students who might want to stay here for six months. We endorse the concept that the purpose of the higher education system in Nevada is to serve the students and families of Nevada residents. The change in the statute to a 12-month residency requirement will bring Nevada in line with all our western counterparts, and ensure we will have space for Nevada students.

DR. CHRISTINE CHAIRSELL (Interim Vice Chancellor, Academic and Student Affairs, System Administration Office, University and Community College System of Nevada):

We believe taxpayers need to know on whom we are spending tax dollars. Line 3 on page 2 of the bill defines resident. Matriculation is defined by the Board of Regents. The bill increases the residency requirement from six months to twelve months before matriculation. Employees of the system, members of

the armed forces and other special persons deemed necessary by the Board of Regents would be exceptions. We recognize there is a concerted effort in Nevada to increase the nursing population; the Committee may wish to keep the requirement for nursing students at six months.

SENATOR HECK:

Regarding members of the armed forces, how will you define that? Does it mean anybody who is active or in the reserve?

DR. CHAIRSELL:

It is covered under certain conditions that are further enumerated in our policy; for example, a former member of the armed forces who is relocated from Nevada and returns. We consider an individual who locates to Nevada for the purpose of having full-time employment or to establish a business, as a resident right away. This also covers teachers.

SENATOR CEGAVSKE:

I am concerned about requiring a longer residency requirement for nursing students.

MR. KLAICH:

There is a consensus among the regents to leave the residency requirement for nursing students at six months.

SENATOR MATHEWS:

How does the "good neighbor" policy fit into this proposal?

DR. CHAIRSELL:

We do have a good neighbor policy that is outside of this proposal. Those students pay special tuition and the registration fee. Depending on the type of institution they attend, they get a reduced amount.

SENATOR MATHEWS:

I am wondering if the good neighbor policy might be cheaper than reducing the time for students in terms of residency.

DR. CHAIRSELL:

Most of the students who enroll under the good neighbor policy do not try to become residents. It is an excellent program. I believe they still pay more than a resident.

CHAIR WASHINGTON:

How does the Board of Regents define matriculation?

DR. CHAIRSELL:

It is defined as the first day of class.

SENATOR CEGAVSKE:

Are we doing things like raising the tuition and considering this residency issue because of space? Also, does this bill need to be tied to the community colleges?

DR. CHAIRSELL:

There are many things that cause pressure for UCCSN. One statistic that frightens us is, in the next 15 years high school graduates are going to increase by 120 percent. The national average is 10 percent. The second fastest growing state is Arizona. If we become an easy-access state, we fear what our responsibility is to the taxpayers of Nevada. We must make sure this is a rigorous process and people are coming to Nevada to become residents. If they have a full-time job, we consider them residents right away.

CHAIR WASHINGTON:

With economic development, one of the concerns is always higher education, and making sure it is accessible. Will this issue choke efforts to have businesses relocate here?

DR. CHAIRSELL:

I do not think so. We are liberal with the folks that move to Nevada and have full-time jobs. An individual relocating either to begin a business or work for a business will be given residency.

CHAIR WASHINGTON:

So these efforts are basically to catch those who migrate to access the system without establishing any type of residency.

With the increase of high school students who are going to be graduating, have you projected how many will use the Millennium Scholarship?

DR. CHAIRSELL:

It is difficult to project. We are sending the message to 7th graders indicating the core we have established and the need to take certain courses at certain times. We have been very vocal about this in the hope these students will take the rigorous core curriculum in their high school years. In 2010, core curriculum will be an eligibility requirement for the scholarship. If there are 120-percent graduation increases in the next 15 years, it is nearly certain a lot of students will be enrolling in the colleges.

CHAIR WASHINGTON:

I believe it would be a great disadvantage if we lost the Millennium Scholarship.

DR. CHAIRSELL:

I think something that has not been said is we must look at the population of students coming to us in Nevada. It certainly embodies everything I love about Nevada. Many of these students are the first in their families to go to college.

CHAIR WASHINGTON:

In tracking the students who are going to be graduating, do you have statistics to find out how many of those students stay in Nevada and become taxpayers? I believe that would be an interesting statistic to offset the cost of the scholarship.

DR. CHAIRSELL:

Since the program is only five years old, it would be premature to do that now. Technology has not been funded in our budget at this time. In order to do that kind of tracking and accountability in the future, we are going to have to make sure the integrity of our technology is such that we can accomplish those types of studies.

SENATOR MATHEWS:

When I asked that question in the Senate Committee on Finance meeting last week, we were told the Family Education Rights Privacy Act (FERPA), precluded such tracking. I thought that was not true. I asked for specific information about minorities. We were told the UCCSN had such information. Do you have that information?

DR. CHAIRSELL:

Yes we do. I have Tyler Trevor here, who does a lot of counting of the Millennium Scholars.

TYLER TREVOR (Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, University and Community College System of Nevada):

I just produced that information for Susan Moore, Director of the Millennium Scholarship Program, Office of the State Treasurer. It will be on your desk soon. However, I can tell you the ethnic distribution of the Millennium Scholars almost mirrors that of the general population of UCCSN. There is a slight difference for African-Americans, who represent 7.1 percent of the UCCSN general population and 4.7 percent of the Millennium Scholars.

MR. KLAICH:

We will be glad to provide to all members of the Committee a report written by the Institute for Higher Education Policy. It is titled "The Investment Payoff" and is a state-by-state analysis of the economic and social benefits of higher education. I think it answers some of your questions on a more general basis. It is a scientific approach to many of the things we have stated anecdotally.

CHAIR WASHINGTON:

We would appreciate that. We always look at the costs, and we need to be aware of the benefits.

SENATOR CEGAVSKE:

Is UCCSN willing to let the community colleges be the remediation monitor, and will the money flow to the community colleges?

DR. CHAIRSELL:

In 2006, State funds will not go to the universities for remediation. The money will go to the community colleges. The universities will manage continuing education.

SENATOR CEGAVSKE:

For the community colleges, there is no grading or passing if they take the remediation course. It is not a pass or fail. I am concerned about that.

DR. CHAIRSELL:

I will tell you community colleges know how to do remediation. They know how to place students. I think we will have some discussions on our placements as well, using the American College Testing Assessment and the Scholastic Assessment Test. I am not a fan of using those scores. It has only been since last year we have had mandatory placement in math. We are trying to strengthen our placement procedures and not look at students as a group but as individuals. The University of Nevada, Reno received a National Science Foundation grant for local high school students to be able to test their readiness for mathematics courses thanks to an online program that will allow them to take placement tests. Students can access it and take it to see where they stand. You, as legislators, have a two-year window to fund. As academics we have a five-year window to implement many of our issues.

SENATOR CEGAVSKE:

The students I spoke to who went to the remediation program felt it was not beneficial to them. I have some real concerns. They said they learned more in an actual class once they got to the university than in the remediation.

CHAIR WASHINGTON:

I believe remedial courses speak for themselves. The students are deficient in certain areas and the courses are to bring up the student. They can get a pass or fail grade when they attend their regular classes. If they are then passing, that reflects the remedial course has done its job.

SENATOR CEGAVSKE:

The concern was each of the individuals stated the remedial course was not designed for the area they had failed. They had to sit through everything, where maybe they did not have a problem with three-quarters of it. It is just an area of concern.

DR. CHAIRSELL:

That is why we probably need some additional summer bridge programs, to reintroduce certain concepts the student had not been working with for a year. The UCCSN is out in front of others in that they do the placement exam, and then another diagnostic exam, so they can ascertain skills. They have an accelerated remedial class that encompasses two semesters of remediation in one semester. We have also created two college level courses in English that will provide the student with extra help. They are five- or six-credit courses.

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CHAIR WASHINGTON:

We will close the hearing on S.B. 32. There being no other issues before us today, this meeting of the Human Resources and Education Committee will now adjourn at 3:30 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Cynthia Cook,
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Senator Maurice E. Washington, Chair

DATE: _____