

SENATE BILL NO. 247—SENATORS WIENER, HORSFORD,
WOODHOUSE, TITUS, SCHNEIDER, AMODEI, CEGAVSKE,
HECK, LEE, MATHEWS AND WASHINGTON

MARCH 12, 2007

JOINT SPONSOR: ASSEMBLYWOMAN PARNELL

Referred to Committee on Human Resources and Education

SUMMARY—Creates the Nevada Youth Legislative Issues Forum.
(BDR 34-52)

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

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

AN ACT relating to education; creating the Nevada Youth
Legislative Issues Forum; prescribing the membership,
powers and duties of the Forum; and providing other
matters properly relating thereto.

Legislative Counsel's Digest:

1 **Sections 3-5** of this bill create the Nevada Youth Legislative Issues Forum,
2 consisting of 21 members who are enrolled in grades 9-12 in public schools or
3 otherwise eligible for enrollment in public schools but enrolled in a homeschool or
4 private school. Each Senator appoints a member to the Forum. **Sections 6-10** of this
5 bill set forth the powers and duties of the Forum. The Forum must hold at least two
6 public hearings each school year, review issues of importance to the youth in this
7 State and submit an annual report of the activities of the Forum. In addition, the
8 Forum may, within the limits of available money, hold meetings during a regular
9 session of the Legislature to advise the Legislature on proposed legislation
10 concerning the youth in this State. The Forum may also conduct seminars for the
11 benefit of its members relating to leadership, government and the legislative
12 process. Finally, the Forum may submit requests for the drafting of three legislative
13 measures which relate to matters within the scope of the Forum.



* S B 2 4 7 *

1 WHEREAS, The United States is facing a population of youth
2 that is disengaged and lacks the necessary knowledge, skills and
3 dispositions to participate in and carry out civic duties; and

4 WHEREAS, In the 2004 presidential election, 53.1 percent of
5 Nevadans over 25 years of age voted, compared with 38.4 percent
6 among Nevadans 18 to 24 years of age; and

7 WHEREAS, The lack of voter turnout for citizens who are 18 to
8 24 years of age is often attributed to cynicism toward the political
9 process, disillusionment with politics, voter apathy and a lack of
10 acknowledgment by the media and politicians of issues involving
11 youth; and

12 WHEREAS, Most governmental services are designed with input
13 and participation from the people being served; however, young
14 people under the age of 18 are not allowed to vote and are often left
15 out of the democratic process; and

16 WHEREAS, Several issues are important to the youth in the
17 nation as well as the youth in this State, including, without
18 limitation, education, employment opportunities, participation in
19 state and local government, a safe environment, the prevention of
20 substance abuse, emotional and physical well-being, foster care and
21 access to state and local services; and

22 WHEREAS, Research shows that the programs designed for
23 youth which are most effective at promoting positive outcomes are
24 framed in terms of the constructive assets the programs seek to build
25 rather than the negative behaviors the programs seek to avoid; and

26 WHEREAS, There is a growing need to reverse the trend of
27 apathy by engaging our youth directly with policymakers in a
28 manner that will provide genuine opportunities for our youth to
29 acquire civic knowledge and develop the skills necessary to
30 participate fully in a democratic society; and

31 WHEREAS, Within the past 5 years, Maine, New Mexico,
32 Washington and New Hampshire have enacted bills that create a
33 Youth Issues Forum, which institutionalizes the participation of
34 youth in the policy-making process in those states; and

35 WHEREAS, The creation of a Youth Issues Forum offers
36 policymakers an opportunity to learn from youth as well as provides
37 a meaningful opportunity for youth to learn about the policy-making
38 process; and

39 WHEREAS, By providing an avenue for participation, this State
40 will provide our youth with an opportunity to understand the ideals
41 of citizenship and to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to
42 participate in effective government and appreciate the value of
43 American democracy; now, therefore,



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

Section 1. Chapter 385 of NRS is hereby amended by adding thereto the provisions set forth as sections 2 to 9, inclusive, of this act.

Sec. 2. *As used in sections 2 to 9, inclusive, of this act, "Forum" means the Nevada Youth Legislative Issues Forum created by section 3 of this act.*

Sec. 3. 1. *The Nevada Youth Legislative Issues Forum is hereby created, consisting of 21 members.*

2. Each member of the Senate shall appoint a person who meets the qualifications for appointment set forth in section 4 of this act.

3. After the initial terms:

(a) Appointments to the Forum must be made by each member of the Senate before June 30 of each year.

(b) The term of each member of the Forum begins July 1 of the year of appointment.

4. Each member of the Forum serves a term of 1 year and may be reappointed if the member continues to meet the qualifications for appointment set forth in section 4 of this act.

Sec. 4. *To be eligible for appointment to the Forum, a person must be a resident of the senatorial district of the Senator who appoints him and must be:*

1. Enrolled in a public school in this State in grade 9, 10, 11 or 12 for the school year in which he serves; or

2. Exempt from compulsory attendance pursuant to NRS 392.070, but otherwise eligible to enroll in a public school in this State in grade 9, 10, 11 or 12 for the school year in which he serves.

Sec. 5. 1. *A position on the Forum becomes vacant upon:*

(a) The death or resignation of a member.

(b) The absence of a member for any reason from two consecutive meetings of the Forum, unless excused by the Chairman of the Forum.

(c) A change of residency of a member which renders that member ineligible under his original appointment.

2. A vacancy on the Forum must be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term in the same manner as the original appointment.

Sec. 6. 1. *The Forum shall elect from among its members, to serve a term of 1 year beginning on July 1 of each year:*



(a) A Chairman, who shall conduct the meetings and oversee the formation of committees as necessary to accomplish the business of the Forum. The Chairman must be:

(1) Enrolled in a public school in this State in grade 9, 10 or 11 for the school year in which he serves; or

(2) Exempt from compulsory attendance pursuant to NRS 392.070, but otherwise eligible to enroll in a public school in this State in grade 9, 10 or 11 for the school year in which he serves.

(b) A Vice Chairman, who shall assist the Chairman and conduct the meetings of the Forum if the Chairman is absent or otherwise unable to perform his duties.

2. The Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau:

(a) Shall provide administrative support to the Forum.

(b) Shall, in the event of a vacancy on the Forum, notify the appropriate appointing authority of such vacancy.

(c) May accept gifts, grants and donations from any source for the support of the Forum in carrying out the provisions of sections 2 to 9, inclusive, of this act.

Sec. 7. 1. The Forum shall:

(a) Hold at least two public hearings in this State each school year.

(b) Simultaneously teleconference or videoconference each public hearing to three or more prominent locations throughout this State.

(c) Evaluate, review and comment upon issues of importance to the youth in this State, including, without limitation:

(1) Education;

(2) Employment opportunities;

(3) Participation of youth in state and local government;

(4) A safe learning environment;

(5) The prevention of substance abuse;

(6) Emotional and physical well-being;

(7) Foster care; and

(8) Access to state and local services.

(d) Conduct a public awareness campaign to raise awareness about the Forum and to enhance outreach to the youth in this State.

2. The Forum may, within the limits of available money:

(a) During the period in which the Legislature is in a regular session, meet as often as necessary to conduct the business of the Forum and to advise the Legislature on proposed legislation relating to the youth in this State.

(b) Form committees, which may meet as often as necessary to assist with the business of the Forum.



1 (c) Conduct periodic seminars for its members regarding
2 leadership, government and the legislative process.

3 3. The Forum and its committees shall comply with the
4 provisions of chapter 241 of NRS.

5 4. On or before June 30 of each year, the Forum shall submit
6 a written report to the Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau
7 and to the Governor describing the activities of the Forum during
8 the immediately preceding school year and any recommendations
9 for legislation. The Director shall transmit the written report to the
10 Legislative Committee on Education and to the next regular
11 session of the Legislature.

12 **Sec. 8. The Forum may:**

13 1. Request the drafting of not more than three legislative
14 measures which relate to matters within the scope of the Forum.
15 Each request must be submitted to the Legislative Counsel on or
16 before July 1 preceding the commencement of a regular session of
17 the Legislature unless the Legislative Commission authorizes
18 submitting a request after that date.

19 2. Adopt procedures to conduct meetings of the Forum and
20 any committees thereof. Those procedures may be changed upon
21 approval of a majority vote of all members of the Forum who are
22 present and voting.

23 3. Advise the Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau
24 regarding the administration of any appropriations, gifts, grants
25 or donations received for the support of the Forum.

26 **Sec. 9. The members of the Forum serve without**
27 **compensation. To the extent that money is available, including,**
28 **without limitation, money from gifts, grants and donations, the**
29 **members of the Forum may receive the per diem allowance and**
30 **travel expenses provided for state officers and employees generally**
31 **for attending a meeting of the Forum or a seminar conducted by**
32 **the Forum.**

33 **Sec. 10.** 1. Each Senator shall appoint a member to the
34 Nevada Youth Legislative Issues Forum created by section 3 of this
35 act to an initial term commencing on August 1, 2007, and expiring
36 on June 30, 2008.

37 2. The Forum shall hold its first meeting not later than
38 October 1, 2007. At the first meeting of the Forum, the members of
39 the Forum shall elect a Chairman and a Vice Chairman who hold
40 those positions until June 30, 2008.

41 3. After the initial terms of office, sections 3 and 6 of this act
42 govern the terms of office of the members of the Forum.

43 **Sec. 11.** 1. This section and section 10 of this act become
44 effective upon passage and approval.



1 2. Sections 3 and 4 of this act become effective upon passage
2 and approval for the purpose of appointing members to the Nevada
3 Youth Legislative Issues Forum and on July 1, 2007, for all other
4 purposes.

5 3. Sections 1, 2 and 5 to 9, inclusive, of this act become
6 effective on July 1, 2007.

