

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 a request for the drafting of one legislative
13 measure which relates to matters within the scope of the Forum.

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



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

4 WHEREAS, The lack of voter turnout for citizens who are 18 to
5 24 years of age is often attributed to cynicism toward the political
6 process, disillusionment with politics, voter apathy and a lack of
7 acknowledgment by the media and politicians of issues involving
8 youth; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

36 WHEREAS, By providing an avenue for participation, this State
37 will provide our youth with an opportunity to understand the ideals
38 of citizenship and to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to
39 participate in effective government and appreciate the value of
40 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, taking into consideration any recommendations made by a member of the Assembly, appoint a person who submits an application and meets the qualifications for appointment set forth in section 4 of this act. A member of the Assembly may submit recommendations to a member of the Senate concerning the appointment.*

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. 1. *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:*

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

(b) *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.*

2. *A person who is eligible for appointment to the Forum may submit an application on the form prescribed pursuant to subsection 3 to the Senator of the senatorial district in which the person resides for appointment or reappointment to the Forum.*

3. *The Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau shall prescribe a form for applications submitted pursuant to this section, which must require the signature of the principal of the school in which the applicant is enrolled or, if the applicant is exempt from compulsory attendance pursuant to NRS 392.070, the signature of a member of the community in which the applicant resides other than a relative of the applicant.*



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

2 (a) *The death or resignation of a member.*

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

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

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

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

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

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

18 (2) *Exempt from compulsory attendance pursuant to NRS*
19 *392.070, but otherwise eligible to enroll in a public school in this*
20 *State in grade 9, 10 or 11 for the school year in which he serves.*

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

24 2. *The Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau:*

25 (a) *Shall provide meeting rooms and teleconference and*
26 *videoconference facilities for the Forum.*

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

29 (c) *May accept gifts, grants and donations from any source for*
30 *the support of the Forum in carrying out the provisions of sections*
31 *2 to 9, inclusive, of this act.*

32 **Sec. 7. 1. The Forum shall:**

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

35 (b) *Simultaneously teleconference or videoconference each*
36 *public hearing to two or more prominent locations throughout this*
37 *State.*

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

40 (1) *Education;*

41 (2) *Employment opportunities;*

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

43 (4) *A safe learning environment;*

44 (5) *The prevention of substance abuse;*

45 (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.

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

(d) Employ a person to provide administrative support for the Forum or pay the costs incurred by one or more volunteers to provide any required administrative support.

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

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

Sec. 8. The Forum may:

1. Request the drafting of not more than one legislative measure which relates to matters within the scope of the Forum. A request must be submitted to the Legislative Counsel on or before July 1 preceding the commencement of a regular session of the Legislature unless the Legislative Commission authorizes submitting a request after that date.

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

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

Sec. 9. The members of the Forum serve without compensation. To the extent that money is available, including, without limitation, money from gifts, grants and donations, the members of the Forum may receive the per diem allowance and travel expenses provided for state officers and employees generally



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1 *for attending a meeting of the Forum or a seminar conducted by*
2 *the Forum.*

3 **Sec. 10.** 1. Each Senator shall appoint a member to the
4 Nevada Youth Legislative Issues Forum created by section 3 of this
5 act to an initial term commencing on July 1, 2008, and expiring on
6 June 30, 2009.

7 2. The Forum shall hold its first meeting not later than
8 October 1, 2008. At the first meeting of the Forum, the members of
9 the Forum shall elect a Chairman and a Vice Chairman who hold
10 those positions until June 30, 2009.

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

13 **Sec. 11.** This act becomes effective upon passage and
14 approval.

