

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON ELECTIONS, PROCEDURES, ETHICS, AND
CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS**

**Seventy-Fourth Session
May 10, 2007**

The Committee on Elections, Procedures, Ethics, and Constitutional Amendments was called to order by Chair Ellen Koivisto at 3:58 p.m., on Thursday, May 10, 2007, in Room 3142 of the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 4406 of the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada. Copies of the minutes, including the Agenda ([Exhibit A](#)), the Attendance Roster ([Exhibit B](#)), and other substantive exhibits are available and on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau and on the Nevada Legislature's website at www.leg.state.nv.us/74th/committees/. In addition, copies of the audio record may be purchased through the Legislative Counsel Bureau's Publications Office (email: publications@lcb.state.nv.us; telephone: 775-684-6835).

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Assemblywoman Ellen Koivisto, Chair
Assemblyman Harry Mortenson, Vice Chair
Assemblyman Chad Christensen
Assemblyman Ty Cobb
Assemblyman Marcus Conklin
Assemblyman Ed Goedhart
Assemblyman Ruben Kihuen
Assemblywoman Marilyn Kirkpatrick
Assemblyman Harvey J. Munford
Assemblyman James Ohrenschall
Assemblyman Tick Segerblom
Assemblyman James Settelmeyer

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Assemblywoman Heidi S. Gansert (excused)



GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:

Senator Mike Schneider, Clark County Senatorial District No. 11
Senator Dina Titus, Clark County Senatorial District No. 7

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Michelle Van Geel, Principal Research Analyst
Patrick Guinan, Committee Policy Analyst
Terry Horgan, Committee Secretary
Trisha Moore, Committee Assistant

OTHERS PRESENT:

Alfredo Alonso, representing Southern Wine & Spirits and the Nevada Beer Wholesalers Association
Tony Sanchez, representing DeLuca Liquor & Wine, Limited
Dean Wang, Director, Taipei Economic and Cultural Office, San Francisco, California
Helen Lee, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada
David Lee, Executive Director, Las Vegas Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce; Member, Southern Nevada Workforce Investment Board
Wen-Pen Liu, M.D., Chapter President, Formosan Association for Public Affairs, Sacramento-Reno Chapter, Sacramento, California
Susan Tien, Vice President, Las Vegas Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce
Norman Chen, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada
Chiu-Hsiang Lucero, President, Taiwanese Women's Association of Southern Nevada
John Wagner, The Burke Consortium, Carson City

Chair Koivisto:

[Roll taken] Senator Schneider, would you like to come tell us about your bill, Senate Bill 430 (1st Reprint)?

Senate Bill 430 (1st Reprint): Authorizes the Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau to include the sale of souvenir wine in the Legislative Gift Shop. (BDR 17-1283)

Senator Mike Schneider, Clark County Senatorial District No. 11:

Today, I bring you a bill that will allow wine to be sold in the Legislature's gift shop. It will be ornamental wine and the bottles will have Nevada-style labels showing pictures of the Capitol, this building, the Supreme Court building, et cetera. We could sell wines with names like "Special Session Petite Sirah." The bottle I am showing you is from the legislative building in British Columbia and is the "House Red." We will try something similar and present the wine in a nice case with an attractive label. I believe it is something that will sell. I have talked to a lot of lobbyists, as well as fellow legislators, and everyone believes this would be a nice souvenir bottle. People are looking forward to buying the wine next session and taking cases of it home to give to clients or friends. That is the gist of the bill, and there is nothing underhanded about it. This bill passed out of our House unanimously.

Assemblyman Mortenson:

There is a very strong chance that we may open up a gift shop in the Grant Sawyer Building in Las Vegas, so we will sell even more wine.

Senator Schneider:

I have been to other states where this has been done. It is really a nice item, and they sell a lot of it as souvenirs.

Chair Koivisto:

Is there a Nevada winery whose wine we would be selling?

Senator Schneider:

No. The wines would be selected. We have Tahoe Ridge Winery to the south in the Genoa area, and I am sure they would be looked at to supply some of this wine. A couple from here in Carson City started a winery in Somerset, California, and commuted for years. I am sure they would be very interested since they are truly Nevadans. We are not going to have a problem finding people with Nevada connections. There are several people from northern Nevada who own wineries in California, and I know they will want to participate.

We discussed the three-tier system during the Senate hearing on this bill. The three-tier system will stay in place. There are two individuals here representing different liquor distributors who have indicated they would like to participate. They have said they will help us get the wine and will take it through their three-tiered system at no charge. Mr. Larry Ruvo of Southern Wine & Spirits indicated his support.

Alfredo Alonso, representing Southern Wine & Spirits and the Nevada Beer Wholesalers Association:

We support the bill as amended. This wine would go through the three-tier system as every other wine does; therefore, we support the Senator's attempt to bring wine to the gift shop. Kurt Brown of Capital Beverages and Larry Ruvo of Southern Wine, among others, have agreed to help find ways to facilitate this endeavor.

Tony Sanchez, representing DeLuca Liquor & Wine, Limited:

We would like to thank Senator Schneider for working with us. Early on there were some technical concerns, but those were worked out in the Senate. We look forward to this new endeavor. Maybe there should be a competition to choose which wine gets to be sold first. It is very exciting because wine is experiencing an unprecedented popularity all over the world today. This should be a very nice addition to the gift shop, and probably a best seller. We look forward to it.

Chair Koivisto:

Are there any questions from the Committee? [No response] Seeing none, I will bring the bill back to the Committee and accept a motion.

ASSEMBLYMAN SEGERBLOM MOVED TO DO PASS
SENATE BILL 430 (1st REPRINT).

ASSEMBLYMAN COBB SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION PASSED. (ASSEMBLYMEN CONKLIN AND
GANSERT WERE ABSENT FOR THE VOTE.)

Let us go to Senate Joint Resolution 15 (1st Reprint). Senator Titus is here to present this bill.

Senate Joint Resolution 15 (1st Reprint): Urges the President and Congress to continue to support the participation of the Republic of China on Taiwan in the World Health Organization. (BDR R-1358)

Senator Dina Titus, Clark County Senatorial District No. 7:

I am pleased to be here today to present two resolutions to you. I have with me as my guest Mr. Dean Wang, Director of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in San Francisco. Also here to speak on these resolutions are people in southern Nevada representing the Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce, and also some people from Reno.

As you all know, Nevada and Taiwan have had a long tradition of cooperation, recognition, and friendship. In fact, Taiwan contributed to the medallions on the north and south ends of this building. A number of legislators have been hosted on fact-finding trips to Taiwan over the years. I will leave it in their hands to address the two resolutions; but just briefly, they urge support of Taiwan's participation in the World Health Organization (WHO), and they also urge a free trade agreement be established between the United States and Taiwan. These resolutions came out of the Senate Committee on Legislative Operations. Senator Cegavske regrets that she cannot be here to personally present the resolutions, but she is in the middle of a meeting. Mr. Wang would like to make his comments now.

Dean Wang, Director, Taipei Economic and Cultural Office, San Francisco, California:

I represent the Taiwan government and the 23 million people of Taiwan. It is a great honor to be here and I am also very proud to be here on behalf of my country and my people.

"I will not permit consideration of religion, nationality, race, party, politics, or social standing to intervene between my duty and my patient." Medical students know that sentence very well. The Constitution of the World Health Organization states, in part, "The enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition." All regions, all countries, and all people are equally important. Health for all is a fundamental right. Unfortunately, the 23 million people of Taiwan do not have this health right because Taiwan is the only country excluded from the WHO.

Today, everybody knows the world is a global village, and Taiwan is connected very closely. Last year, over 7 million Taiwanese traveled all over the world, including 600,000 who visited the United States, traveling on some of the

10 daily flights from Taipei to Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle, Houston, and New York. Of course, once arriving in Los Angeles, they catch the next domestic flight to continue their journeys. All this travel shows just how close we all are, geographically speaking.

Do you remember a few years ago when SARS (sudden acute respiratory syndrome) was occurring in the WHO countries? The virus spread so quickly it caused people to panic. We do not know what will happen if avian flu breaks out in the future. Infectious disease knows no national boundaries. While it is regrettable that the 23 million people of Taiwan, plus over 400,000 foreign residents, remain left out, Taiwan's exclusion from the WHO also creates a weak spot in the global surveillance system.

Taiwan has 34 technical missions stationed in 29 partner countries. We have dispatched 16 mobile medical teams to another 12 poor, less-developed countries in Africa and Latin America. All of those countries are members of the WHO, but Taiwan is not. Is it not ironic?

Negligence of the rights of the 23 million people in Taiwan is immoral. It is a kind of "health apartheid." Ten people can be wrong; 100 people can be wrong, too; but 23 million people cannot be wrong. The absence of Taiwan in the fight against disease creates a gap in the global surveillance system that constitutes a threat to the world. Such a gap should be filled. The global surveillance system must have no gaps or weak spots.

Please, voice your support for Taiwan's WHO resolution. We need your support, not only because of the long-time friendship between Nevada and Taiwan, but also for the safety of the world. We need your voice and the support from your country and your State because your voice and your support represent fairness, humanity, and justice.

Chair Koivisto:

Are there any questions from the Committee? [No response] Mr. Christensen and I were lucky enough to visit Taiwan a couple of years ago.

Assemblyman Christensen:

Both the Chair and I have a tremendous amount of respect for Taiwan. Much of the world is aware of many of the conditions and situations that you are in. You are great people, very industrious, and I absolutely love your food. I have a question for the Chair. In the 2003 Session, did we not work on a resolution with David Chin?

Chair Koivisto:

We passed a resolution very similar to this one, urging support for Taiwan's membership in the World Health Organization. Last session we were not able to pass it.

Helen Lee, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada:

I am a Taiwanese-American. I teach music at the University. Today I come here to voice my support for Taiwan's application for membership in the WHO. I am so grateful that these two resolutions passed out of the Senate. I hope we can have the same kind of support from each one of you.

Our American society is a very kind and compassionate society. Recently, as you know, there was the scare of people's beloved pets dying from ingestion of contaminated pet foods. Many cans of pet food have been removed from shelves of stores to protect our animal friends.

In 2003 when the horrible epidemic of SARS broke out in China, it quickly spread to neighboring countries, including Taiwan. The World Health Organization's medical teams were banned from entering Taiwan because of sabotage by China. Because Taiwan received no assistance from WHO, some young, newly-graduated Taiwanese medical doctors perished with their patients. If "WHO" stands for "World Health Organization," why is Taiwan not allowed to be a member? Is Taiwan not located on this Earth? Is Taiwan located in outer space? If any place on this Earth is not being protected by WHO, then this health organization is a void. If we leave a space unprotected, that means any contagious disease can germinate and spread to the rest of the world.

As for the deceitful claims from China that Taiwan is a part of their territory and that they are taking care of the Taiwanese people, then why, when Taiwanese people want to go to China, are they required to have passports, and vice versa? Do Californians need passports to go to New York? Of course not, because they are in the same country. There is also the claim by China that they govern Taiwan. In the past century, we have never seen any officials from the Peoples Republic of China stepping on the soil of Taiwan. They should not say that they govern this island because Taiwan is already being governed by a Taiwanese president elected by the Taiwanese people themselves.

Why do we allow WHO to be controlled by China, a country that is authoritarian, a Communist country that is at the bottom of the list when speaking about human rights? Please, do not let innocent people die. Do not let their blood be on your hands.

Chair Koivisto:

Thank you for sharing your strong feelings on this subject with us. Are there any questions from the Committee? [No response] Are there other people who want to testify on S.J.R. 15 (R1)?

**David Lee, Executive Director, Las Vegas Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce;
Member, Southern Nevada Workforce Investment Board:**

I am a voter, a constituent, a Taiwanese-Nevadan. [Mr. Lee read his prepared text in support of this resolution ([Exhibit C](#)).

**Wen-Pen Liu, M.D., Chapter President, Formosan Association for Public Affairs,
Sacramento-Reno Chapter, Sacramento, California:**

I am a medical doctor and am speaking in support of S.J.R. 15 (R1). [Dr. Liu read his testimony from prepared text ([Exhibit D](#)).]

Susan Tien, Vice President, Las Vegas Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce:

[Susan Tien read her statement in support of S.J.R. 15 (R1) from prepared text ([Exhibit E](#)).]

Norman Chen, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada:

[Norman Chen read his statement in support of S.J.R. 15 (R1) from prepared text ([Exhibit F](#)) and distributed a letter from his son, a practicing physician in Carson City, also in support of S.J.R. 15 (R1) ([Exhibit G](#)).]

Chiu-Hsiang Lucero, President, Taiwanese Women's Association of Southern Nevada:

[Chiu-Hsiang Lucero read her testimony in support of S.J.R. 15 (R1) from prepared text ([Exhibit H](#)).]

John Wagner, The Burke Consortium, Carson City:

The health of people should not be politicized just because there is a border between two countries, and one country does not wish to recognize the other country. Borders between countries should be international when it comes to the World Health Organization.

Chair Koivisto:

I see that Janine Hansen [President, Nevada Eagle Forum] and David Schumann [Vice Chairman, Nevada Committee for Full Statehood] have both signed up in support.

John Wagner:

They are in other committee hearings but they both expressed a desire to be on record as being in support of S.J.R. 15 (R1).

Chair Koivisto:

I see Michael Hackett of the Nevada State Medical Association has signed up in support, too. Is there anyone else who wants to testify for S.J.R. 15 (R1)? Is there anyone who wants to testify against S.J.R. 15 (R1)? [There was no response to either request.] I will bring S.J.R. 15 (R1) back to the Committee and take a motion.

ASSEMBLYMAN OHRENSCHALL MOVED TO DO PASS SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 15 (1st REPRINT).

ASSEMBLYMAN CHRISTENSEN SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION PASSED. (ASSEMBLYMEN CONKLIN, GANSERT, GOEDHART, AND KIRKPATRICK WERE ABSENT FOR THE VOTE.)

We will now hear Senate Joint Resolution 16 (1st Reprint).

Senate Joint Resolution 16 (1st Reprint): Urges the President and Congress to support a free trade agreement between the Republic of China on Taiwan and the United States. (BDR R-1340)

Dean Wang, Director, Taipei Economic and Cultural Office, San Francisco, California:

In 1985, Nevada and Taiwan signed a sister-state agreement, so for the last 23 years we have had a long-lasting friendship. Senate Joint Resolution 16 (1st Reprint) pertains to a free trade agreement. We have a long-standing partnership with the United States that has lasted 50 years. We do \$60 billion in trade annually. Taiwan is the United States' second-largest export market and Taiwan ranks as the eighth largest exporting market to the United States. Taiwan is the fifth largest market for agricultural products from the United States, but in terms of per capita consumption, Taiwan is the world's largest consumer of United States' agricultural products. Today, Taiwan is the largest producer of information technology.

Taiwan is widely recognized as a leader in promotion of labor rights and environmental protection. We are a member of the WTO (World Trade Organization), just as the United States is. We are entitled to the same rights as any other members entered into a free trade agreement. The United States

International Trade Commission's 2002 report found that exports by some sectors of the United States economy such as motor vehicles, rice, fish, and some other foods could increase by more than 100 percent if the United States entered into a free trade agreement with Taiwan. To maintain and strengthen trade relations with Taiwan is of economic significance to the United States.

David Lee, Executive Director, Las Vegas Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce:

[Mr. Lee read a statement in support of S.J.R. 16 (R1) from prepared text ([Exhibit C](#)).]

Chiu-Hsian Lucero, President, Taiwanese Women's Association of Southern Nevada:

[Chiu-Hsian Lucero read her statement in support of S.J.R. 16 (R1) from prepared text ([Exhibit H](#)).]

Assemblyman Munford:

How does free trade benefit the United States and Taiwan?

David Lee:

There are a couple of ways the benefit would come about. When two sides enter into an agreement, both have to agree that they will remove all the tariffs, barriers, or restrictions before that agreement can be signed.

Additionally, when you open a market, when all the trade parameters are known under an agreement, suddenly you know how to proceed with additional trade. An open market enhances our living standard.

Assemblyman Munford:

What about tariffs and things of that sort. Would they be eliminated?

David Lee:

That is part of the trade agreement that must be negotiated and ironed out before that agreement can be signed.

Assemblyman Munford:

Since I was a little kid, we have always had products made in Taiwan. There has never been a problem with the trade arrangement between Taiwan and the United States. Is there a problem importing United States products into your country? Is a trade deficit developing? Are we getting more of your products and are you getting fewer of ours?

David Lee:

I do not think the trade deficit is significant in comparison to the trade deficit with China. To the best of my knowledge, Taiwan imports a tremendous amount of agricultural products and exports electronics products. You may see a number of products being sold at Wal-Mart, Kmart, or Target that have come from Taiwan. At the same time, I do not see a bushel of wheat or corn that you can put a label on saying "Made in USA." I do not think a trade deficit is an issue for this agreement.

Susan Tien, Vice President, Las Vegas Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce:

[Susan Tien read a statement in support of S.J.R. 16 (R1) from prepared text ([Exhibit E](#)).]

Helen Lee, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada:

I am in the profession of making harmony in communication between human beings in spite of nationality or racial differences. I can speak only as a private citizen because business is not really my "cup of tea." Taiwan has been the United States' strongest ally for a long time. If the United States is willing to have trade with any other country, why is free trade with Taiwan a problem?

When I was growing up in Taiwan, people admired the products from the United States. It is still the same way. Because China has the biggest population in the world, one might believe that it would be very beneficial to us to have trade with China. However besides Shanghai and Beijing, the rest of China is a struggling third world. Even if they wanted to, the majority of the population in China could not afford to purchase products from America. That is why the greatest trade deficit is between the United States and China. Personal income per capita for Taiwanese is much higher than that in China or any other Asian country. Speaking as an American citizen, I believe it is very beneficial for us to have free trade with Taiwan.

Assemblyman Munford:

Does Taiwan have any trade relationship with mainland China?

Helen Lee:

No.

Assemblyman Munford:

Do Taiwan and mainland China have any trade agreements?

Chair Koivisto:

I am seeing a lot of heads shaking "No."

Assemblyman Munford:

Do you think mainland China is the largest barrier blocking Taiwan from achieving some of the things you want to achieve?

Helen Lee:

Yes, China is attempting to suffocate Taiwan and distance it from the international community.

Wen-Pin Liu, M.D., Chapter President, Formosan Association for Public Affairs, Sacramento-Reno Chapter:

There is no trade agreement between Taiwan and mainland China although there is trade between the two countries through third countries. There is no direct trade, but there is black market trading between the two countries. Taiwan businessmen want to invest in mainland China and Taiwan has supplied lots of capital for development in China.

We calculate that trading between the United States and Taiwan could increase by 10 or 20 percent if a free trade agreement is signed because there still are some restrictions on trading between the two countries. Right now, Taiwan ranks behind South Korea, a trade competitor of ours, in trade with the United States.

John Wagner, The Burke Consortium:

I would like to answer Mr. Munford's question concerning tariffs. Tariffs, to a large degree, are punitive. Reducing tariffs through a free trade agreement lowers the cost of the product coming into the United States and it also lowers the cost of the product going over to Taiwan. It is a win-win situation and gives more employment to both sides as the companies are producing more goods. I support this. I also support S.J.R. 16 (R1) because the Republic of China [Taiwan] has always been a good friend of the United States.

Chair Koivisto:

Are there any questions or comments from the Committee? [No response]
Does someone want to make a motion?

ASSEMBLYMAN GOEDHART MOVED TO DO PASS SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 16 (1st REPRINT).

ASSEMBLYMAN SETTELMAYER SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION PASSED. (ASSEMBLYMEN KIHUEN AND OHRENSCHALL VOTED NO. ASSEMBLYMEN CHRISTENSEN, GANSERT, AND SEGERBLOM WERE ABSENT FOR THE VOTE.)

With nothing else to come before the Committee, we are adjourned [at 5:10 p.m.].

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Terry Horgan
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Assemblywoman Ellen Koivisto, Chair

DATE: _____

EXHIBITS

Committee Name: Committee on Elections, Procedures, Ethics, and Constitutional Amendments

Date: May 10, 2007

Time of Meeting: 3:45 p.m.

Bill	Exhibit	Witness / Agency	Description
	A		Agenda
	B		Attendance roster
SJR 15 (R1) & SJR 16 (R1)	C	David Lee, Exec. Dir., Las Vegas Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce	Prepared text in support
SJR 15 (R1)	D	Wen-Pen Liu, M.D., Chap. Pres., Formosan Assoc. for Public Affairs, Sacramento-Reno Chapter	Prepared text in support
SJR 15 (R1) & SJR 16 (R1)	E	Susan Tien, V.P., Las Vegas Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce	Prepared text in support
SJR 15 (R1)	F	Norman Chen, Private Citizen, Reno	Prepared text in support
SJR 15 (R1)	G	Norman Chen	Letter from his son, a physician practicing in Carson City
SJR 15 (R1) & SJR 16 (R1)	H	Chiu-Hsiang Lucero, President, Taiwanese Women's Association of Southern Nevada	Prepared text in support