

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS**

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

The Committee on Government Affairs was called to order by Chair Marilyn K. Kirkpatrick at 8:08 a.m., on Thursday, May 10, 2007, in Room 3143 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 Marilyn K. Kirkpatrick, Chair
Assemblywoman Peggy Pierce, Vice Chair
Assemblyman Kelvin Atkinson
Assemblyman Bob Beers
Assemblyman David Bobzien
Assemblyman Chad Christensen
Assemblyman Jerry D. Claborn
Assemblyman Pete Goicoechea
Assemblyman Ruben Kihuen
Assemblyman Harvey J. Munford
Assemblywoman Bonnie Parnell
Assemblyman James Settelmeyer
Assemblyman Lynn D. Stewart
Assemblywoman RoseMary Womack

GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:

Senator John Lee, Clark County Senatorial District No. 1

Minutes ID: 1252



STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Amber Joiner, Committee Policy Analyst
Scott McKenna, Committee Counsel
Rachelle Myrick, Committee Secretary
Olivia Lloyd, Committee Assistant

OTHERS PRESENT:

Keith Lee, representing the National Shooting Sports Foundation
Ray Flynn, Assistant Sheriff, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police
Department
Charles Musser, Private Citizen, Boulder City, Nevada
John Wagner, the Burke Consortium
Janine Hansen, Nevada Eagle Forum
David Schumann, Vice Chairman, Nevada Committee for Full
Statehood
J. L. Rhodes, Stillwater Firearms Association
Lynn Chapman, Nevada Eagle Forum
Glen Parshall, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
R. J. Stepan, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
Arthur Dixon, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
Brett Scolari, representing Reno-Sparks Convention and Visitors
Authority
John Sherman, Finance Director, Washoe County
Daryl Capurro, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada
Mike Alonso, representing Reno Sparks Convention and Visitors
Authority
Ben Graham, representing Nevada District Attorney's Association
Frank Adams, Executive Director, Nevada Sheriffs' and Chiefs'
Association
Alan Glover, representing the County Fiscal Officers Association
Richard Gammick, Washoe County District Attorney
Jeff Fontaine, Executive Director, Nevada Association of Counties
Pat Whitten, Storey County Manager

[Meeting called to order at 8:08 a.m.]

Chair Kirkpatrick:

We will open the hearing on Senate Bill 92 (1st Reprint).

Senate Bill 92 (1st Reprint): Revises certain provisions pertaining to the regulation of firearms by local governments. (BDR 20-45)

Senator John Lee, Clark County Senatorial District No. 1:

Assembly Bill No. 147 of the 65th Session brought the licensing of firearms into one uniform law. Previously, every county had different ordinances on its municipal books. Assembly Bill No. 147 of the 65th Session made that disappear with one law which each person in Nevada would know and understand.

To pass this law, Clark County negotiated a carve-out which said they would be treated differently than the other 16 counties. They were able to keep their ordinances or regulations previously accepted by local government before June 13, 1989.

Things have changed in Clark County. We have conventions that come to Las Vegas that are entirely about guns and shooting. A shooting park is presently being built. I have handed out a map that will show what the park will look like ([Exhibit C](#)).

This park will be a destination point for many of our nation's firearms enthusiasts and competitors. Because of these amenities we find we are in conflict with the current laws.

A group of constituents interested in this bill feel this carve-out is unconstitutional.

The crux of the bill is Section 1, line 16. Previously to this if you were a resident or a tourist visiting Clark County and were carrying a gun you had to immediately go to the Sheriff and let him know you had the gun. We have huge shows coming in, so there is no way the Sheriff could register all of the guns.

What the police department and I put together states that you can come to Clark County for 60 days. After 60 days you are a resident in the eyes of the police, and you will have to register any firearm.

On line 18, if I, as an individual, sold a gun to someone, I will have 72 hours to report the transfer to the Sheriff's Office. Previously, the limit was 24 hours.

Keith Lee, representing the National Shooting Sports Foundation:

I have submitted the written testimony of Larry Keane who is the Senior Vice President and General Counsel to the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) ([Exhibit D](#)).

The Shooting, Hunting, Outdoor Trade Show (SHOT Show) is the largest trade show in the world for the firearm, ammunition, recreational shooting sports, and

hunting industry. It is the 27th largest trade show in North America, yet amazingly it remains one of 50 fastest growing trade shows in the United States. In 2006, the SHOT Show drew over 41,000 people to Las Vegas who spent more than \$50 million on lodging and meals during the four days of the show. This year, the SHOT Show was held at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Florida, which continues to actively court the show. The 2007 SHOT Show in Orlando shattered all records for attendance and exhibit space. It was our most successful SHOT Show ever.

The SHOT Show is scheduled to return to the Las Vegas Convention Center in 2008. In 2010, NSSF plans to bring the SHOT Show to the Sands Hotel and Convention Facility, which is currently being expanded, for an extended run. The 2008 SHOT Show will draw more than 43,000 attendees and well over 2,000 exhibiting companies as the show grows to approximately 675,000 net square feet of exhibit space. The SHOT Show has a tremendous economic impact on the host city. We estimate that the 2008 SHOT Show will generate about \$70 million in tourism dollars to the economy of the State of Nevada, particularly in Las Vegas and Clark County.

There is, however, a "sword of Damocles" hanging over the SHOT Show that threatens and imperils NSSF's ability to continue to bring the SHOT Show to Las Vegas. The "sword" is Clark County Code Section 12.04.200 that requires the pre-registration with law enforcement of any "gun, pistol, revolver, or other firearm capable of being concealed," as that phrase is defined, before the firearm can be lawfully brought into and possessed within Clark County.

Both the Las Vegas Convention Center and the Sands are within the unincorporated area of Clark County. SHOT Show exhibitors must comply with this code section or face arrest and criminal prosecution. The code section is so broad in scope that it applies to every one of the tens of thousands of firearms on display at the SHOT Show. We are extremely concerned that when the SHOT Show is held at the Las Vegas Convention Center in 2008, and presumably thereafter at the Sands for many years to come, virtually all of the 25,000 exhibitors representing 1,900 companies that come to the show will be committing a crime and be subject to immediate arrest for displaying or possessing guns that have not been pre-registered with the Sheriff's office prior to transporting those firearms to the show. Nevada Shooting Sports Foundation is also concerned that by producing the SHOT Show it has potential criminal liability exposure under some theory of aiding and abetting.

The issue is the equal enforcement of the laws throughout the county. Amendments to S.B. 92 (R1) from the Senate side satisfy our concerns.

It gives us the assurance we can continue with the SHOT Show as we have scheduled over the next number of years, bringing a large financial impact to the Las Vegas area.

Ray Flynn, Assistant Sheriff, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department:

We are in support of S.B. 92 (R1) as it is written. North Las Vegas and Henderson police departments are in agreement as well.

The way the *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS) is written, if the county were to change any of the gun registration laws on its own, it would automatically void them. This is why it needs legislative intervention.

The way S.B. 92 (R1) is written, it meets the needs of Clark County, but also recognizes that times have changed.

Assemblyman Stewart:

On Section 1, subsection 3, who determines if a person is still here after 60 days? Are we going to have a log in system?

Senator Lee:

The police have an issue keeping this bill on the books, and their discretion is going to have to be used because I do not know.

Ray Flynn:

We would use things based on probable cause such as is the person employed. How long has he been employed? Is he maintaining a residence and for how long?

Chair Kirkpatrick:

Is there anyone who would like to speak in favor of S.B. 92 (R1)?

Charles Musser, Private Citizen, Boulder City, Nevada:

I favor S.B. 92 (R1) in its original form. However, there are some problems with the definition of handguns. The way the law is currently written, it includes BB guns, paintball guns, et cetera. I encourage you to look at the definition of what these weapons are.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

Is there anyone else who would like to speak in favor of this bill?

John Wagner, the Burke Consortium:

We are in favor of this bill.

My Concealed Carry Weapons (CCW) card says "State of Nevada" so I assumed it was uniform law to carry a gun as long as you have a permit.

Janine Hansen, Nevada Eagle Forum:

We support this bill but are disappointed with the amendments made in the Senate. We have considerable concern about continued gun registration in Clark County.

David Schumann, Vice Chairman, Nevada Committee for Full Statehood:

I support this bill.

J. L. Rhodes, Stillwater Firearms Association:

I support this bill and agree with previous testimony.

Lynn Chapman, Nevada Eagle Forum:

This law would apply to Washoe County as well because we are growing.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

Would anyone else like to speak in support of S.B. 92 (R1)? [There were none.]

Is there anyone who is neutral on this bill?

Glen Parshall, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I had long thought that state law over local law was an important protection for my fellow Nevadans. I am concerned that certain portions of local laws were allowed to stand after the original bill was passed. This includes the North Las Vegas and Boulder City ordinances concerning carrying of firearms.

Gun registration has been shown to be a danger to free arms people. This goes against our western and American spirit. Some may feel that gun registration is a tool for fighting crime, but what has not been addressed is the use of gun registration to harass and punish law abiding citizens.

The Clark County gun registration system is flawed. For example, many owner registrations are not in the computer system. This has led to the arrest of law-abiding gun owners who thought they were in compliance with the law.

This bill has been altered from its intended form and rewritten to leave intact the registration, but only for Clark County residents. Gone are the requirements for visitors to register their guns. Gone are the requirements for Nevadans in other parts of the State to register their guns when in Clark County. Gone are any restrictions on gun sellers from other areas from possessing guns while conducting business here.

This bill creates a second class of citizen for those of us living and working in Clark County, and in its present form I am opposed to it.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

Is there anyone who would like to speak in opposition to this bill?

R. J. Stepan, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I am in support of the bill with the exception of the definition of firearms. As the bill is currently written, any handheld firearm, be it a toy or weapon designed to discharge a metallic projectile, has to be registered.

Arthur Dixon, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I have a problem with the definition of firearms. I also have a problem with still registering guns within Clark County itself. The whole bill was created initially to do away with registration, so it would be a contiguous law throughout the State.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

There are a couple of questions we need to address.

Senator Lee:

These issues did not come up until now. Maybe we should take a step back and see what firearm really means. I could bring you an amendment for that. I will take counsel from you and the public to create a definition of firearm.

Assemblyman Goicoechea:

I am concerned with the definition of "concealed" and the barrel length of 12 inches. Is that federal law?

Ray Flynn:

Under current county ordinance under Chapter 12.04 what we require to be registered as firearms means any weapon with a caliber of .177 inches or greater from which a projectile may be propelled by means of gunpowder.

Assemblyman Goicoechea:

I was more concerned about the barrel length. It does not seem like that is a standard for a concealed weapon.

Keith Lee:

Chapter 12.04.200, which is the Clark County ordinance that presently requires immediate registration of a firearm capable of being concealed in the unincorporated areas of Clark County, is the way the ordinance reads. We are taking "capable of being concealed," as defined in the Clark County ordinance,

as a firearm having a barrel length of 12 inches or less. What we are trying to do is pare that.

Assemblyman Goicoechea:

What is a concealed weapon in Douglas County?

Keith Lee:

I do not know, but for the purposes of this legislation I do not think it matters because we are dealing with the Clark County ordinance.

Assemblyman Goicoechea:

I understand that, but I struggle with trying to get something across the State of Nevada that is equal.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

We could contact the Clark County Commissioners and ask them to address this issue. Is that true?

Senator Lee:

It is a local ordinance, and if it is tested there and there were any changes made, under the preemption law the laws would go away that are on the books right now.

Assemblyman Claborn:

I support this bill because it is a baby step toward what we are really looking for.

Assemblyman Beers:

I support this bill. I would like to see the definition Mr. Flynn spoke about replacing the definition that is in the bill.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

Are there any other questions? [There were none.]

We will close the hearing on S.B. 92 (R1).

We will open the hearing on Senate Bill 162.

Senate Bill 162: Revises the authority of certain county fair and recreation boards to enter into certain real estate transactions. (BDR 20-834)

Brett Scolari, representing Reno-Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority:

The Reno Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority (RSCVA) has requested this legislation as it is the only Fair and Recreation Board currently on the books that is prohibited by statute from entering into certain real estate transactions without the prior approval of the Washoe County Commission.

The bill removes that requirement except for its two golf course assets. It removes the requirement for real estate transactions that it enters into. This requirement came about as an extra safeguard for the county. In the younger years of the RSCVA there were some financial issues and instability within the organization, and the county felt this requirement was necessary.

The RSCVA just entered into a transaction with the Atlantis Hotel and Casino to build a sky bridge at the expense of the Atlantis Casino. The sky bridge will be from the Atlantis to the Convention Center. Because the City of Reno was granting easements to the Atlantis, the transaction had to be on hold until they could get the County Commission's approval.

This is just a request for a change of something that has become antiquated.

John Sherman, Finance Director, Washoe County:

The county is neutral on this bill, but we want to let the Committee know the county has continued interest in the financial stability of the RSCVA as the county has pledged its full faith and credit to approximately \$138 million worth of RSCVA bonds.

Assemblywoman Pierce:

You are talking about this being antiquated. It seems to me that Senate Bill No. 302 of the 73rd Legislative Session was when we last worked on this. That was not long ago.

Brett Scolari:

This bill did not make it through the 73rd Legislative Session. These requirements have been on the books since the 1970s or early 1980s.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

This was first put into statute in 1963. It has been revised five times since then, and now you just want the golf courses taken out? Right now the RSCVA can transfer any land except for golf courses?

Brett Scolari:

The statute contemplates any real property transactions, so if we entered into an agreement to purchase a restaurant with RSCVA funds, because of the

statute, we had to get it approved by Washoe County. This bill eliminates the requirement for prior approval by Washoe County for those types of transactions except golf courses.

Reno, Washoe County, and the RSCVA just voted to take a look at all public golf courses and consider different options such as a consolidation or a different type of operator.

The consensus is we are going to treat the golf courses with special care because it is a hot button in Washoe County at the moment.

Assemblyman Claborn:

Are your intentions to take the property away from the golf courses and build homes on it?

Brett Scolari:

There is no intention to get rid of any golf courses right now.

The RSCVA recently adopted a strategic plan where the goal and policy adopted was to take a look at Wild Creek and North Gate golf courses, and to eliminate the operating deficits at those golf courses within a certain time frame.

Assemblyman Claborn:

So incumbents are taking that property and selling it for a profit? What you are trying to say is if you own the property then sold it to someone, he could do whatever he wanted to do with it without going to the County Commissioners?

Brett Scolari:

I am not sure what the zoning is on Wildcreek Golf Course. Northgate is zoned open space, so that would be a decision of the Reno City Council. If that golf course is in the hands of someone private, whether or not the city would grant a zoning change for that property. . .

Assemblyman Claborn:

It would be a simple solution to rezone it and build houses on it. Is that correct?

Brett Scolari:

That would be a decision for the Reno City Council.

Regarding Northgate Golf Course, if the RSCVA tried to sell Northgate now, it would revert to the original developer that gift-deeded that property to the RSCVA.

Assemblyman Claborn:

So the developer would be able to do whatever he wanted with it because it reverted back to him? I have seen this scenario in Clark County where people bought homes on an expensive golf course and later had to cut a deal to give up their homes. Then smaller homes were built on the golf course. The residents are now stuck with the view from door to door so that they cannot see the golf course anymore, and they did not have a say in it.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

Throughout, the statute talks about having to go before the County Commissioners. I do not see where they would do the maintenance or any of that with this language. Did you not say they wanted to be able to fix things up?

Brett Scolari:

This is from the perspective of real property transactions. This statute does not affect those types of day-to-day operations.

John Sherman:

The reason the county took a neutral position is the bill excludes the sale of golf properties. If the bill is approved, the County Commission will have to approve any sale of golf properties.

Assemblyman Claborn:

My understanding is that when these golf courses start, they have a contract for 20 years, 30 years, or 40 years. How do you break that contract?

John Sherman:

I do not believe there is a contract for the existence of these golf courses in terms of duration.

Assemblyman Claborn:

Are these county or city run?

John Sherman:

The county owns two golf courses. The City of Reno also operates some golf courses. The three jurisdictions run municipal golf courses and were trying to work together to come up with a plan to make them more financially viable. The position of the County Commission is they do not want to see any of our golf courses go away.

Assemblyman Claborn:

I know of a municipal golf course in Las Vegas that is bid out for a period of years to people who manage and run it. The county does not run it at all. It is run by an individual.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

What are the checks and balances for the ability to acquire those properties?

Brett Scolari:

We have a 13 member board made up of elected and appointed members. Any type of transaction like that would go to our board. There are two members of our board who are representatives of the Washoe County Commission.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

Is there anyone who would like to speak in support of S.B. 162? [There were none.]

Is there anyone who is neutral on S.B. 162? [There were none.]

Is there anyone opposed to S.B. 162?

Daryl Capurro, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada:

I live on the edge of Wildcreek Golf Course which is one of the golf courses you heard about in the previous testimony.

I view this bill as a camel's nose under the tent situation. The RSCVA attempted to pass a bill last session to eliminate the county's ability to watch over their activities.

This time they have come with a bill that excludes golf courses; I can assure you that in future times they would come in to ask for that to be eliminated, too.

This convention authority is the only one in the State made up of a majority of non-elected officials. Of the 13 members, there are only five that are elected officials who are answerable to the people. That leads me to a concern that the RSCVA has had financial situations in the past and continues to have them because it has had to refinance its debt.

Anytime you have a board in which eight of the members are not answerable to the people, you have a problem with legislation such as this.

I would assure Assemblyman Claborn this is exactly the situation you have described. At one time there was a master plan for the development. No one has admitted to requesting it, whether it was RSCVA or the county. This master plan showed a very dense development of Wildcreek Golf Course. It seems to me that this development is eventually going to happen. Theoretically, the RSCVA could propose selling the property. They would have to have the county's blessing to do so because the county owns the title to the two golf courses.

I am opposed to this bill because they have tried to eliminate oversight before. I do not like the imbalance in the make-up of the board, and there is intent on someone's part to change those golf courses into heavier development.

Assemblyman Claborn:

A developer buys the property, puts a golf course in, and then builds expensive houses around it. These people have invested hundreds of thousands and maybe millions of dollars in their homes and property, but when smaller, less expensive homes are built on the golf course, the property value goes down to nothing.

Daryl Capurro:

This is exactly the situation you have with the homes surrounding Northgate and Wildcreek Golf Courses in Washoe County. Those people bought their homes on a golf course and paid premium prices on the property to build there. What you are telling them is they have no right to think it would continue to be a golf course.

Assemblyman Goicoechea:

The legislation being proposed says the Convention Authority can dispose of any property but golf courses with this legislation. Is that the way you interpret it?

Daryl Capurro:

Yes, that is correct.

The intent in the past has always been for them to sell assets that do not contribute to the economy that is gaming related.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

Is there anyone else who would like to speak in opposition to S.B. 162?
[There were none.]

Mike Alonso, representing Reno Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority:

I am not quite sure where Mr. Capurro is coming from. I understand the issue and was here with the last bill. That bill excluded Sparks because the issue was about Wildcreek Golf Course. That bill made it through both houses but was killed in a Conference Committee.

Wildcreek is owned by the county. Northgate has a reverter clause. If it is not used as a golf course, it automatically reverts to the developer. That is the way the deal was done when it was first given to the county for use as a golf course. We do not have any control over that.

Under current law, if we wanted to do something with the golf courses, we would have to go to the County Commission to get its consent. If this bill passes, that is exactly what we would still have to do. With respect to the golf courses nothing changes.

We have not heard any opposition to other things the RSCVA wants to do with its property.

Assemblyman Claborn:

That is not what the bill says. The bill says "purchasing, leasing, selling, or disposing of golf courses without first approval from the Board of County Commissioners." This is what the bill says. You are asking for us to give you the permission to let your board do it and then get permission from the County Commissioners.

Mike Alonso:

Current law is we have to get permission from the County Commission. That is the way the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB) drafted it. We are not changing that with respect to the golf courses.

Assemblyman Claborn:

What is the reason for the bill then?

Mike Alonso:

The reason for the bill is to allow us to do those other things without having to go back to the County Commission on other properties.

Assemblyman Claborn:

What other things?

Mike Alonso:

For example, provide an easement. We had to go to the County Commission to be able to grant the Atlantis Casino an easement for their sky bridge.

Assemblyman Claborn:

You could do that anyway without going to the County Commissioners.

Mike Alonso:

No we cannot.

Assemblyman Claborn:

So you would have to acquire the property before you did that? Is that what you are saying?

Mike Alonso:

If we wanted to acquire a piece of property we would have to get County Commission approval under current law. This bill would change that with the exception of the golf courses.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

We will close the public hearing on S.B. 162.

We will open the public hearing on Senate Bill 516 (1st Reprint).

Senate Bill 516 (1st Reprint): Revises provisions governing the compensation of certain elected county officers. (BDR 20-225)

Ben Graham, representing Nevada District Attorney's Association:

Our statutes and *Constitution* require the Legislature to set salaries of certain elected officials. These are county officials ranging from the Public Administrator, District Attorney, Sheriff, and the County Commissioners.

I have submitted a handout ([Exhibit E](#)).

Since 2003, every county has given various pay raises to its support staff. In nearly every instance there are a number of their deputies that make more than the elected official.

The most significant financial outlay, if this bill passes, is approximately \$126,000 in Clark County and \$42,000 in Esmeralda County. We are not asking for equity or parity.

We have a county where one of the directors of a county agency, who has 51 employees, is making approximately \$20,000 more than the Sheriff, who has 145 employees. We are asking this Committee to catch us up.

Classification of counties starts at the high end with Clark County as a Class 1 down to Esmeralda County as a Class 6. Esmeralda County is the only county where the District Attorney may still have a private practice.

Storey County has asked to be moved up to a Class 4 county. We have seen that Storey County is being thrust into more urban development and more urban challenges which justifies its request.

Rather than set a dollar amount in past legislative sessions for the County Commissioners the Legislature said the commissioners could raise their own pay but only up to the amount we authorize to raise for other officials.

There has been some concern that was not fair; however, the County Commissioners are in a unique position where they can raise their own pay.

Towards the end of the handout it illustrates a dollar amount situation where we have City Attorneys, City Police Chiefs, and Public Defenders who have significantly less responsibility and duties than Sheriffs and Chiefs, making quite a bit more than county elected officials. Even with this increase, they will still be below many of the Public Defenders and City Attorneys in various counties.

Frank Adams, Executive Director, Nevada Sheriffs' and Chiefs' Association:

We are here representing our 17 elected sheriffs. The majority of them make less than their undersheriffs and chief deputies because of the way pay raises are set up.

We support this bill.

Alan Glover, representing the County Fiscal Officers Association:

We would like to ask you for your support.

Assemblyman Goicoechea:

I was in local government for a long time, and we do not like setting elected official's salaries.

Pertaining to the County Commissioners salary, you have to consider the fact these elected officials also get longevity. We are talking from 2003 to 2011. That is an eight-year timeframe. That is over a 5 percent per year increase for the County Commissioners plus longevity.

I am nervous about the 143 percent. That seems to be up there. County Commissioners do a tremendous amount of work, but it is not like being a sheriff or district attorney.

Ben Graham:

When legislation authorized Commissioners to raise their pay in 2003, it reached back to 1997. Some of the counties raised their pay. Some raised it a little, and some did not raise it at all. It was hard to figure out what each of the 17 counties had done.

We looked at one county that did not take advantage of what the Legislature had authorized them to do. That is where the big number comes in. It reaches back but does not authorize the counties to do any more than what was authorized in 2003.

There is the option in this bill for a county that is in financial stress to opt out. We are not forcing a county to do this.

Assemblyman Goicoechea:

I do not think Mineral or Lincoln Counties gave raises.

That capability has been there since 2003, and technically we are talking about 143 percent of the salary that was in place in 2003. When you add longevity, that is what we are talking about.

Assemblyman Settlemeyer:

I am in favor of the bill because I understand the problem created when supervisors make less than their employees. It creates problems within the internal ranks.

The elected officials I have spoken with elaborated that it creates a situation. When an individual leaves, he has to find a successor. He has to find someone who is either totally committed to the job to take a \$20,000 pay cut, or someone who needs to be committed, period.

I was told that a law used to be in place stating the salary of a subordinate could be only 95 percent of the supervisor's salary. Can you explain to me why it was taken off?

Alan Glover:

It was a labor issue, trying to employ and maintain employees.

Assemblyman Beers:

I would also like to know the reason that law was taken off the books.

I get nervous when I see the 143.504 percent. Some County Commissioners in the State obviously deserve an increase for what they are being asked to do. There are others that may be more worthy of a pay cut. I would like to see some variableness in this.

Broad spectrum raises bother me as there is no merit involved in the system. I would like to see a change in the *Constitution* so that the localities are on the hook for doing this job.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

Are there any more questions? [There were none.]

Is there anyone in support of S.B. 516 (R1)?

Richard Gammick, Washoe County District Attorney:

I support this bill.

Jeff Fontaine, Executive Director, Nevada Association of Counties:

We support this bill.

Our members believe the compensation for all elected officials, including County Commissioners, should be established in the same manner. Either establish them at the legislative level for all elected officials, or if the *Constitution* could be changed, the County Commissioners could establish those levels of compensation.

I would like to go back to what appears to be a significant increase for the County Commissioners at 143.5 percent. That 143.5 percent is really 143.5 percent over 13 years because it would be applicable only to the County Commissioners who did not increase their salaries prior to the last time this legislative body authorized the increases. If they did increase their salaries then, the increase in this bill would amount to 17 percent. The way this bill is written, it is up to the County Commissioners to make that decision for themselves.

Pat Whitten, Storey County Manager:

Storey County fully supports S.B. 516 (R1).

We would like to be moved from a Class 5 county to a Class 4 county. That is due to our geographical proximity to Reno, Sparks, Washoe County, Carson City, and Douglas County.

Assemblyman Goicoechea:

Technically, what we are talking about is the ability for 143.5 percent raises from 2003 to 2011. That is 5 percent per year plus longevity.

Jeff Fontaine:

That is correct. In the period from 2002 till now, it would be 143 percent, but as you know there was no pay increase for the previous nine years.

Assemblyman Goicoechea:

Most of the Commissioners serving now were not serving when the commissioners did not get the increase.

Assemblywoman Parnell:

These are elected officials, and if they are not performing, I would hope the public would defeat them at the polls. They are held accountable to the public.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

Is there anyone else in support of S.B. 516 (R1)? [There were none.]

Is there anyone who is neutral on S.B.516 (R1)? [There were none.]

Is there anyone who is opposed to S.B. 516 (R1)? [There were none.]

Ben Graham:

I will sit down with the Nevada Association of Counties (NACO) and get back to you.

Assemblyman Munford:

What is the present salary for the Clark County Sheriff and the Clark County District Attorney?

Ben Graham:

The current salary for the Clark County District Attorney is \$155,745 and the Sheriff's is \$134,263.

Assemblyman Goicoechea:

What is the County Commissioners salary in Clark County?

Ben Graham:

It is around \$76,000 at this stage.

Assemblyman Goicoechea:

I thought it was higher than that.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

I will ask staff to get the exact number because I think it is based on who was in the position before.

Assemblyman Claborn:

The City Commissioners make \$54,000 to \$56,000.

Ben Graham:

If passed, this legislation would take affect in July of this year.

Chair Kirkpatrick:

We will close the public hearing on S.B. 516 (R1).

[Meeting adjourned at 9:40 a.m.]

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Rachelle Myrick
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Assemblywoman Marilyn K. Kirkpatrick, Chair

DATE: _____

EXHIBITS

Committee Name: Committee on Government Affairs

Date: May 10, 2007

Time of Meeting: 8:00 a.m.

Bill	Exhibit	Witness / Agency	Description
	A		Agenda
	B		Attendance Roster
S.B. 92	C	Senator John Lee, Clark County Senatorial District No. 1	Map
S.B. 92	D	Keith Lee, representing the National Shooting Sports Foundation	Prepared statement
S.B. 516	E	Ben Graham, Nevada District Attorney's Association	Salary amounts for county elected officials.