

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS**

**Seventy-Fourth Session
April 4, 2007**

The Committee on Ways and Means was called to order by Chair Morse Arberry Jr. at 8:05 a.m., on Wednesday, April 4, 2007, in Room 3137 of the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, 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:

Assemblyman Morse Arberry Jr., Chair
Assemblywoman Sheila Leslie, Vice Chair
Assemblywoman Barbara E. Buckley
Assemblyman Mo Denis
Assemblywoman Heidi S. Gansert
Assemblyman Tom Grady
Assemblyman Joseph P. (Joe) Hardy
Assemblyman Joseph M. Hogan
Assemblywoman Ellen Koivisto
Assemblyman John W. Marvel
Assemblywoman Kathy McClain
Assemblyman David R. Parks
Assemblywoman Debbie Smith
Assemblywoman Valerie E. Weber

GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:

Assemblyman William Horne, Clark County Assembly District No. 34

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mark W. Stevens, Assembly Fiscal Analyst
Steve Abba, Principal Deputy Fiscal Analyst
Todd Myler, Committee Secretary
Patricia Adams, Committee Assistant

Assembly Bill 251: Makes an appropriation to the Community College of Southern Nevada for the construction of and furniture, fixtures and equipment for the Southern Desert Regional Police Academy. (BDR S-748)

Chairman Morse Arberry, Jr. opened the hearing on Assembly Bill 251 and recognized Mr. Richard Perkins, the Chief of the Henderson Police Department (HPD).



Mr. Perkins said he was present to testify in favor of this bill and said that keeping the public safe was the first responsibility of government. According to Mr. Perkins, the Nevada Legislature took that responsibility seriously and for many years urged the Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST) Committee and the law enforcement agencies of Nevada to collaborate with community colleges to provide training for new and veteran police officers. He claimed that the law enforcement agencies throughout the State had done just that, and the Committee would be hearing testimony regarding this long-time partnership with the community colleges.

Mr. Perkins said there were many instances where government programs failed, but that the Southern Desert Regional Police Academy (the Academy) had not failed. The Academy was a collaborated effort between 17 different agencies and the Community College of Southern Nevada (CCSN) that had graduated hundreds of police officers and other law enforcement officials. Additionally, "non-affiliates" were included in academy classes, who were individuals not sponsored by an agency, but enrolled in the classes through CCSN.

Mr. Perkins said there were three academy sessions hosted each year at CCSN, which trained over 200 new police officers annually. All of these officers graduated with 33 college credits toward a degree. Many law enforcement agencies were making efforts to hire more educated officers such as these graduates.

According to Mr. Perkins, the Academy helped attain goals in the "Regional Policing Model," providing consistent training to each officer who participated. This academy also helped build better relationships between agencies because the participating officers were able to get to know officers from many other agencies. Additionally, the Academy better prepared southern Nevada for disasters because of the consistent training received. Mr. Perkins said that these officers all knew the same defensive tactics, radio procedures, and so forth.

Mr. Perkins said the academy was also well suited for CCSN's mission. He pointed out that Nevada had faced shortages of nurses and teachers in the past and that there was now a similar shortage of law enforcement officers. Because of efforts of the Legislature and the Clark County Commission, there was a dedicated revenue stream for the hiring of police officers in southern Nevada. As the head of HPD, Mr. Perkins asserted that it was getting increasingly difficult to find "quality employees" to train for law enforcement positions. In regard to this difficulty, CCSN had provided needed help. Mr. Perkins explained that the Academy provided "retooling" for those seeking a career change. Just like other programs at CCSN, the Academy had a vocational focus to prepare its graduates for a career in law enforcement.

Mr. Perkins said the Academy was currently held within existing facilities at CCSN's Henderson Campus, but that the Academy had outgrown those facilities. Though best efforts were made to make do with the facilities available, there were specific tasks the Academy trained, such as defensive tactics or investigation techniques, for which the CCSN classroom setting was not optimal. Another reason that the Academy did not quite fit in the existing atmosphere at CCSN was because the Academy did not run on a typical college

class schedule. The classes were held Monday through Friday for a period of twenty weeks. These classes did not allow for the intermingling of students as other college courses did.

Mr. Perkins also pointed out CCSN's successful building history. He noted the frustration surrounding many construction projects funded by the state of Nevada, but said that CCSN's construction projects had been finished on time and under budget.

According to Mr. Perkins, this particular Capital Improvement Project was presented to the Committee in a bill because it was not a priority for the Board of Regents. Mr. Perkins acknowledged that the Board of Regents was aware of the project, but that it was submitted too late for Board consideration. He accepted full responsibility for this not being placed in the Board of Regents' budget request because the proposal was assembled later than needed for inclusion. The appropriation request was for \$25 million for the construction of a building of approximately 53,000 square feet. This building was to be located on the CCSN Henderson Campus adjacent to the existing buildings. Outdoor physical fitness training facilities were also planned as part of this new structure.

Assemblyman Marvel asked how much was being contributed by other entities for this construction project.

Mr. Perkins said the amount contributed by other agencies was dependent upon the amount secured through the Legislature. He was aware that Henderson had approved, through HPD's budget, \$1.2 million that was to be used for this project and various others. Mr. Perkins reminded the Committee that, if approved, the construction of the facility would take some time to complete. He explained that he intended to petition the city of Henderson for additional funds at a later date, which he believed would be approved because this project would avoid the need for a training facility of similar cost to be built specifically for HPD.

Mr. Marvel asked whether this proposed facility would be available for law enforcement agencies throughout the State.

Mr. Perkins said there were 17 agencies that participated in the Academy, such as the Gaming Control Board, Division of Wildlife, Nye County Sheriff's Department, and Lincoln County Sheriff's Department. He also mentioned that the Academy accepted individuals from anywhere in Nevada that wished to participate.

Mr. Marvel asked whether Mr. Perkins could project how many officers were needed.

Mr. Perkins stated that personnel needs were different for each agency. The only agency in southern Nevada that did not participate in the Academy was the Metropolitan Police Department in Las Vegas because it had its own facility. Mr. Perkins said that HPD sent 75 officers per year to the Academy and believed that the North Las Vegas Police Department (NLVPD) sent a similar number. Other agencies hired less, but he estimated that 300 to 400 officers per year would be trained should a new facility be constructed.

Mr. Marvel asked whether the training received at the Academy would reduce the liability of local and state government.

Mr. Perkins explained that liability stemmed from quality of training. With this project, he contended that the quality of training for new officers would improve because more time would be spent teaching recruits "the details" of law enforcement, resulting in a decrease in liability for the participating agencies.

Assemblyman Grady asked whether the Academy worked together with the POST School and, if so, how the two worked together. He pointed out that the POST School was also a state-funded program.

Mr. Perkins said the Academy was POST accredited and worked "hand-in-glove" with POST. He believed that discussions with POST regarding the Academy's operation had taken place because POST approved the Academy's curriculum and the graduates' certificates.

Vice Chairwoman Leslie recognized Ms. Patricia Charlton Dayar, CCSN Vice President of Finance & Budget.

Ms. Dayar said that CCSN appreciated the efforts of Mr. Perkins. CCSN had a good relationship with the law enforcement agencies involved with the Academy. She said the training received at the Academy was critical, and the program had experienced significant growth because of the increased demand from law enforcement agencies. Initially, two academy sessions were held each year, but the space available was insufficient for the number of prospective trainees. Ms. Dayar said this was intense training, and the dedicated space in the proposed new facility was important to the program.

Vice Chairwoman Leslie recognized Mr. Sandy Seda, CCSN Police Department Chief and Executive Director of the Southern Desert Regional Police Academy.

Mr. Seda said that what had been accomplished through the partnership with CCSN was "nothing short of amazing." Even with limited space at CCSN, the Academy had an opportunity to positively impact Nevada's public safety through improved training. He then asked that the Committee to favorably consider this bill.

Vice Chairwoman Leslie recognized Ms. Karen Coyne.

Ms. Coyne, Chief of the City of Las Vegas Department of Detention and Enforcement, supported this bill. She explained that the population of the United States had swelled significantly and that the inmate population had increased from less than 200,000 to over 2.5 million inmates over the last 35 years. With this growth, which Nevada had not escaped, there was an increase in the complexity of issues faced by officers in the line of duty. Ms. Coyne asserted that the Academy equipped law enforcement officers with the necessary skills and knowledge to work in a safe manner and also effectively protect the public. She then asked the Committee to support this bill.

Vice Chairwoman Leslie recognized Mr. Alfonso Noyola, Assistant Director of Police Services, NLVPD.

Mr. Noyola asked the Committee to support this bill. He explained that the

Academy began three years ago as the need for new officers in southern Nevada became more pronounced. Individual agencies did not have the resources to have their own academies, and this partnership with CCSN provided the opportunity to provide this training. After three years, the Academy was experiencing success and had outgrown the space available. Staffing and maintenance funds were pooled to operate the Academy. Mr. Noyola then asked for the Committee's support on this bill.

Vice Chairwoman Leslie recognized Mr. William Newman, Sergeant of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas Police Department (UNLVDP).

Mr. Newman acknowledged that UNLVDP was small when compared with other police departments in the Las Vegas area, but said that UNLV was located in the center of the Las Vegas metropolitan area. All of UNLVDP's recruits were sent to the Academy for training because UNLVDP could not afford to do this type of training by itself, so UNLVDP supported this bill. Mr. Newman said that recruits from different agencies training together allowed for the learning of the same techniques. Should an event occur that required several agencies to work together, the officers would be able act properly together because of the standardized training received. He finished by asking the Committee to support this legislation.

Vice Chairwoman Leslie recognized Mr. James Ketsaa, Captain of the Clark County School District Police (CCSDP).

Mr. Ketsaa stated that CCSDP supported this bill and urged the Committee to support it as well. CCSDP was continually hiring new officers, which were all sent to the Academy. He said that CCSDP could not successfully train their new officers without the support of the Academy.

Vice Chairwoman Leslie recognized Ms. Jutta Chambers, Deputy Chief of HPD and Academy Commander of the Academy.

Ms. Chambers asked the Committee to support A.B. 251. She stated that agencies were recently turned away from sending in trainees because there were not enough seats available in the classrooms. Those agencies had to wait six months for a seat in the next academy session. This year, the Academy was attempting to hold three academy sessions because of the expanding demand from southern Nevada law enforcement agencies. Training staff was expanded to accommodate the extra session. Should this building be approved by the Legislature, the third session could be accommodated easily, but an additional academy session could be added as well. Ms. Chambers mentioned the need for continuing education for existing officers and supervisors, which was also required by POST. However, this required training was currently not provided because of the lack of space. She then urged the Committee to support this bill.

Assemblywoman Weber asked whether funds from a recent tax enacted in southern Nevada were available to partially fund the Academy.

Mr. Perkins said that funds from the tax enacted were not available to fund the Academy. He explained that the bill adopted in the 73rd Legislative Session was for the recruiting, hiring, and equipping of new officers, while facilities

were specifically ruled out. Mr. Perkins explained that more details regarding the financing of the project would be provided to Committee staff.

Vice Chairwoman Leslie said an outline of the proposed project budget had been received by staff earlier in the day. She then asked whether anyone else wished to speak for or against this bill. With no response, she closed the hearing on A.B. 251 and turned the hearing over to Chairman Arberry.

ELECTED OFFICIALS

GOVERNOR'S WASHINGTON OFFICE (101-1011)

BUDGET PAGE ELECTED-9

Chairman Arberry opened the hearing on Budget Account (BA) 1011, Governor's Washington Office, and recognized Mr. Ryan McGinness, Director of the Governor's Washington, D.C. Office (the Office).

Mr. McGinness stated that the Office was located in the Hall of the States in Washington, D.C., along with offices from many other states. The Office opened in 1986 and acted as the primary lobbying entity for the State of Nevada to Congress, the White House, and all federal agencies. The Office also represented the Governor to the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Western Governors' Association.

Mr. McGinness explained that the Office operated through a contract with Nevada Washington Office, LLC. This company assumed the contract duties on April 1, 2006, from the previous contractor. The Office had two full-time employees, Mr. McGinness and one policy advisor, who were employed by the contractor. While the budget only showed a single line-item for the amount of expenses incurred by the Office, Mr. McGinness provided the Committee with details ([Exhibit C](#)) on how those funds were planned to be spent during the next biennium and also with a more detailed narrative on the background, structure, and operation of the Office.

Mr. McGinness said the Office was funded through three state agencies: Department of Transportation, Commission on Tourism, and the Commission on Economic Development. With that in mind, significant amounts of Office resources were dedicated to providing federal relations assistance to those three agencies; however, the Office represented Nevada on a variety of issues, including health care, education, housing, natural resources, and Yucca Mountain.

Mr. McGinness said the top priority of the Office was to bring more federal funding to Nevada. The Office worked through a variety of channels to achieve this purpose. First, the Office maintained contact with Congressional staff to review new formulas, policies, and proposals, informing them of possible effects on existing and new state funding streams. Mr. McGinness believed that providing details rapidly to Congressional staff resulted in a well-informed Congressional Delegation, allowing the delegates to make appropriate decisions and suggest changes that helped Nevada maximize its federal funding.

Second, Mr. McGinness mentioned the Office's grant work to inform state agencies of federal grants available through the issuance of a daily email report. This report catalogued new federal grants and other funding opportunities as announced in the Federal Register. This daily alert allowed state agencies to

immediately begin researching applicability of new grant offerings and begin the application process. He referred to a listing ([Exhibit D](#)) of the weekly summary of this activity that showed the number of grants Nevada agencies were alerted to weekly.

Third, Mr. McGinness said the Office served as a resource for legislators and agency staff who visited Washington for various meetings and conferences, who needed scheduling assistance with Capitol Hill meetings, and who sought additional meetings with appropriate Cabinet officials, advocacy groups, or other organizations.

Mr. McGinness explained that he had also provided in the previous handout supplemental information that expanded on the ongoing issues the Office addressed. He also mentioned that he had provided the Committee a copy of a letter of support from the Nevada Congressional Delegation. Mr. McGinness said he was proud to have the opportunity to represent Nevada in his current capacity and appreciated the opportunity to continue doing so.

Chairman Arberry asked what the Office was doing with regard to the issues of Yucca Mountain, gaming, transportation, and economic development.

Mr. McGinness explained that the Office served as a coordinating force and convened an annual meeting of the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) and also Nevada's four metropolitan planning organizations from Reno, Las Vegas, Carson City, and Lake Tahoe. Through this meeting, a list of statewide transportation priorities was developed to provide to the Congressional Delegation. This process allowed the Delegation to focus their efforts on projects which were deemed priorities by representatives from the entire State.

Mr. McGinness explained that the Office provided appropriations support for the Delegation through the process. He acknowledged that in the last year there were no appropriations bills with earmarked transportation funds, but stated that the Office was working with the Federal Highway Administration, which would be administering the transportation funds for the next fiscal year. The Office was also assisting NDOT with assembling the necessary applications to facilitate the funding of needed projects.

With regard to Yucca Mountain, Mr. McGinness explained that the most recent issue the Office had addressed was an interim radioactive waste storage proposal that was introduced to Congress by U.S. Senators Harry Reid and Pete Domenici. The Office met with both senators' staffs to discuss the possible impact of the proposal on Nevada. Mr. McGinness said that Senator Reid and the Office felt this was a good step toward terminating the federal effort to place a nuclear waste dump at Yucca Mountain. According to Mr. McGinness, this proposal created 30 interim storage facilities throughout the United States, which was not a popular alternative for the 30 affected areas. The Office approached the NGA to ensure that the organization did not oppose the bill.

In response to the Chairman's question regarding the Office's efforts surrounding gaming issues, Mr. McGinness said the Office generally avoided gaming issues because federal attention in the gaming arena was unwanted. He said that Indian gaming expansion issues were monitored as they arose.

Mr. Marvel asked what other states were doing regarding the Real ID requirements of the federal government.

Mr. McGinness stated that states were taking various approaches to this issue. Some states had resolved to not participate in the program, which presented future problems for citizens who needed to board an airplane or enter a federal building. The Office was working through NGA on this issue, and NGA had named Governor Gibbons as a co-lead governor on Homeland Security. According to Mr. McGinness, NGA was one of the few state organizations that was not in favor of complete repeal of the Real ID Act, but instead favored adding flexibility, funding, and more time for implementation.

Mr. Marvel asked about the possibility of federal funding for Real ID.

Mr. McGinness said the Office was working toward obtaining funding for the states and had submitted letters to the money committees in Washington. He believed that members of Congress were beginning to recognize this was a growing concern for the states.

Mr. Marvel asked whether Mr. McGinness thought the act might be repealed.

Mr. McGinness did not believe it would be repealed, which was why the Office was working toward obtaining federal funding, more time, and more flexibility for the program. He stated that the longer the implementation process, the less expensive the program would be.

Assemblywoman Weber asked what the return in federal dollars to Nevada was for every dollar invested in the Office.

Mr. McGinness said the number of federal dollars received could not be quantified, but explained that the Office supported Nevada agencies in their respective grant requests. The Office attempted to "create a linkage between each agency and [the] Office on grant work" to assist in the grant application process. The Office also contacted the granting federal agency to obtain the grant qualifications and find out what information had been included on past successful grant applications to ensure Nevada agencies were doing what had already proven successful. According to Mr. McGinness, the Office had also worked toward obtaining federal earmarked funds for Nevada agencies, including the Department of Transportation. Though the Office worked hard toward the obtaining of these funds, the credit was given to the members of Nevada's Congressional Delegation.

Assemblyman Hogan asked whether the Office ever made Nevada agencies aware of federal grant programs before the agencies discovered those programs on their own.

Mr. McGinness said that a daily email was sent from the Office to Nevada agencies that listed newly available federal grants, usually within 24 hours of the grants' announcements. This immediate notification allowed the agencies to begin the qualification process much faster, avoiding unnecessary rushing to meet application deadlines.

Assemblywoman Buckley asked whether the Office worked with any nonprofit organizations in Nevada by letting those entities know about available federal grants.

Mr. McGinness said the grant alerts the Office sent out were focused toward state agencies, but said that working with nonprofit organizations was something that the Office could begin at some future point.

Ms. Buckley noted that it made sense to look into working with nonprofit organizations because of the varied nature of federal grant programs. She stated that many grant programs were "shrinking because there is no federal money, because all of our money is going to Iraq." Because of this problem, she believed that some grants were not worth applying for because very few entities throughout the United States would receive them, and the grant would only last a short time. Nonetheless, Ms. Buckley suggested that the Office explore the possibility of notifying nonprofit organizations of potential grant opportunities because there were some legislators who were not convinced the Office was worth the cost involved because all of the Congressional Delegates had their own staffs. She acknowledged that it was probably not possible to completely understand what the Office was accomplishing in Washington without witnessing it personally; however, anything the Office could do to reach out to Nevada nonprofit organizations would enhance the Office's importance.

Mr. McGinness said the Office would explore this further.

Mr. Marvel commented that the Office had helped "those of us [who] are on the Public Lands Committee," keeping them informed on what was happening in Washington with respect to federal lands. The Office had done good work in setting up agendas for the Public Lands Committee, and Mr. Marvel appreciated the Office's hard work.

Chairman Arberry closed the hearing on BA 1011.

Assembly Bill 308: Makes an appropriation to the Department of Health and Human Services to extend "Nevada 2-1-1" service to 7 days per week. (BDR S-159)

Assembly Bill 327: Makes an appropriation to the Department of Health and Human Services to extend "Nevada 2-1-1" service to 7 days per week. (BDR S-412)

Chairman Arberry opened the hearing on Assembly Bill 308 and Assembly Bill 327, combined the hearing at the request of the sponsors, and recognized Assemblywoman Kathy McClain and Assemblywoman Debbie Smith.

Ms. McClain explained that A.B. 308 was to provide Nevada 2-1-1 (211) with sufficient funding for 24-hour a day, 7-day a week (24/7) operations. She thanked Mrs. Smith for bringing forward legislation in the 73rd Legislative Session to provide seed money for this service in Nevada. Ms. McClain became aware of this program's launch because HELP with Southern Nevada (HELP), a nonprofit organization for which Ms. McClain acted as a trustee, received funding to start 211 in February 2006 in conjunction with the United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierra. Ms. McClain also mentioned that she worked with senior citizens and that 211 was a good way for seniors to find the services they needed. One of the top ten recommendations made at the Senior Solutions Summit held in June 2006 was that permanent funding be secured for the 211 service.

Ms. McClain said that 211 started in February 2006 with 16-hour a day, 5-day a week coverage. In the interim, other grant funding was obtained to expand the service to 7-days a week, but still only 16-hours a day.

Mrs. Smith explained that the start-up of 211 exceeded all expectations she had because of the public and private partnerships that were created and the businesses that came forward to assist, including telecommunications companies, a state agency, the Crisis Call Center (CCC), and HELP. She found the effort made to pool resources and funding together was amazing. Volunteers were used to answer 211 phone calls, and the number of calls received was high. Mrs. Smith thanked those who came forward to help 211 begin its service.

Mrs. Smith said that various legislative subcommittees had heard 211 mentioned many times in budget hearings. Constituents were connected to state agencies through the 211 service.

Mrs. Smith believed that there would be some benefits to the State from 211. She thought that needs of constituents could be tracked, including the types of grants needed. Mrs. Smith also mentioned that the service had been operating without advertising. She pointed out that the minimal resources available when 211 began did not allow for a marketing campaign beyond the press generated from 211's launch in February 2006. Mrs. Smith reminded the Committee that all of the statistics to be reported in the hearing were achieved without marketing, thus demonstrating the need for 211.

Mrs. Smith submitted A.B. 327 to obtain one-shot funding to provide database resources. She said that the information 211 used had to be constantly updated to ensure that accurate information was passed on to callers. The bill was also to fund training for volunteers. She then urged the Committee to continue to support this successful program.

Chairman Arberry recognized Ms. Julianna Ormsby, representing HELP.

Ms. Ormsby testified in favor of these bills and provided a handout that contained information regarding 211 to the Committee ([Exhibit E](#)), the highlights of which she pointed out for the Committee in written testimony ([Exhibit F](#)).

Assemblywoman Leslie asked whether an analysis of the types of calls that 211 received had been performed.

Ms. Ormsby said that information regarding the demographics of callers would be discussed later, including why calls were placed.

Ms. Leslie asked whether analysis was done on the types of services which were not available, but that callers needed.

Ms. Ormsby said that Mrs. Smith had alluded to a needs assessment that 211 was going to perform to evaluate what callers' needs were.

Ms. Weber asked how other states using the 211 service were funding it. She also asked whether 211 was listed in phone books.

Ms. McClain said that 211 was not listed in phone books, but that she intended to contact the phone companies about listing it in the future.

Regarding Ms. Weber's question about funding in other states, Ms. McClain said that she was not familiar with how all of the states funded this program, but that there were many public/private partnerships, and she believed that some of the states were using state funds in a matching funds situation.

Ms. Ormsby said that United Way of both southern and northern Nevada were actively participating in Nevada and that United Way was participating in many other states as well.

Ms. Buckley asked how 211's operators maintained current information.

Mrs. Smith said this would be addressed by Kathy Jacobs from CCC and that the training of operators and database upgrade requests in the bills was important.

Ms. McClain said two symposiums for the local service providers were held to discuss the level of technology needed to maintain a sufficient level of service. She pointed out that the Nevada Division of Aging Services, using their website, nevadacareconnection.org, and two new aging and disability resource centers all worked together to keep their information current.

Chairman Arberry recognized Ms. Kathy Jacobs, Executive Director of CCC.

Ms. Jacobs read testimony ([Exhibit G](#)) in favor of A.B. 308 and A.B. 327.

Ms. Jacobs explained that the program used to collect data for the operators to disseminate was also connected to the program used to maintain agency resources. This allowed for the collection of information that showed what service and agency to which a caller was referred.

In response to Ms. Buckley's question regarding how operators maintained current information, Ms. Jacobs said there was dedicated staff that worked on updating the resource database. As significant updates were made, notification emails were sent to operators. The computer system had forms that allowed the operators to communicate with each other. Should an entity discontinue a particular service, the operators recorded that information and relayed it to the data resource staff.

Vice Chairwoman Leslie asked whether the numbers at the bottom, left-hand side of ([Exhibit H](#)) reflected the number of referrals made or whether it just reflected the type of information for which callers were searching.

Ms. Jacobs said the figures reflected the number of referrals made through January 2007.

Vice Chairwoman Leslie noted that the referrals made were significantly less than the number of calls received.

Ms. Jacobs commented that some callers refused to answer questions regarding demographics.

Vice Chairwoman Leslie asked which categories in the table contained the referrals for mental health care or substance abuse treatment.

Ms. Jacobs said mental health referrals were included in the medical/dental figures.

Vice Chairwoman Leslie asked whether substance abuse referrals were contained in the medical/dental category.

Ms. Jacobs explained that those types of referrals were not reflected in the exhibit because CCC handled the substance abuse help line. She further explained that the figures shown represented the highest numbers of referrals for specific categories, but that there were voluminous types of referrals made, substance abuse being one.

Vice Chairwoman Leslie was interested in seeing better data collection on what services callers were calling for, but more particularly on what services were needed but not available. For example, she wanted to know how many referrals were made for substance abuse and also how many referrals were made that were "useless" because of long waiting lists. She suggested that in the next two years 211 work toward tracking this type of information.

Ms. Jacobs agreed and was confident that the information Ms. Leslie wanted would be available in the future because of the new computer systems in place.

Vice Chairwoman Leslie recognized Ms. Mary Liveratti, Deputy Director of the Department of Health and Human Services.

Ms. Liveratti stated that three major funding sources for 211 for FY 2008 existed: monies from a tobacco settlement which went into the Healthy Nevada Fund, the United Way of both northern and southern Nevada, and General Funds in Budget Account 3150. These funds totaled approximately \$554,000. Projected expenditures for FY 2008 were \$824,000 just to maintain the current system and level of service. Currently, because of scarce resources, each agency involved worked toward continuing the progress of 211; however, a statewide coordinator was needed. According to Ms. Liveratti, a statewide coordinator would be beneficial in obtaining ongoing funding sources and overseeing the system. Additionally, a data coordinator was needed to oversee the collection of data, the training of operators, and the refining of the data system. Costs for those coordinators were included in the \$824,000 estimate. Ms. Liveratti explained that if 211 was allowed to begin 24/7 service as proposed, it would cost approximately \$1.1 million for FY 2008. She stated that efforts were made to obtain grant funding; however, without a full-time person dedicated to that purpose, it was difficult to maximize grant revenue.

Vice Chairwoman Leslie asked whether 211 had examined when calls were coming in to verify whether 24/7 service was necessary.

Ms. Liveratti said the number of calls dropped in the evening and the service was only available on Saturdays and Sundays from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM. During the week, the southern call center handled all calls from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM, while the northern call center handled the calls from 4:00 PM to midnight.

Vice Chairwoman Leslie noted that CCC took calls 24 hours per day.

Ms. Buckley noted the number of referrals for legal services and mentioned that during the interim she worked with Clark County Legal Services, a nonprofit organization that provided free legal services. She requested a meeting with 211 after the legislative session to coordinate her activities with 211. Ms. Buckley was surprised that the number of legal referrals was so high.

Assemblywoman Gansert asked whether the estimate of \$824,000 included the cost for the statewide coordinator and the data coordinator. She also asked whether the \$1.1 million estimate was the total for the biennium or whether this was an annual cost.

Ms. Liveratti said the \$824,000 estimate included the two coordinator positions. The \$1.1 million estimate represented the estimated annual cost to operate 211, 24/7.

Vice Chairwoman Leslie asked whether the \$1.1 million cost was in addition to the costs already requested in the Department's budget.

Ms. Liveratti said that the \$1.1 million dollar cost estimate represented the total budget for the program.

Mrs. Gansert asked for clarification.

Ms. Liveratti responded that the total budget to offer 24/7 service was \$1.1 million. Currently, there was funding of \$554,000, so the program needed approximately \$0.5 million more.

Vice Chairwoman Leslie asked Ms. Liveratti to provide detailed cost estimates to the Committee.

Ms. Liveratti said she would provide the requested information.

Vice Chairwoman Leslie recognized Ms. Karen Barsell, CEO and President of United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierra.

Ms. Barsell thanked Ms. McClain and Mrs. Smith for their support on these bills. She then began outlining the importance of 211 in times of emergency and disaster by reading the following testimony:

Communities that have responded most quickly during emergencies and disasters have used 211 systems to provide access to information and specially trained referral specialists that help citizens analyze what services they need and provide appropriate resource and related information. When a 211 system is not available—we have learned that in many cases, people end up going without necessary and readily available services because most people do not know where to begin.

[For example, during] the 2005 hurricane season, particularly [with] Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, statewide 211 systems were tested in ways that they had not been tested before. All around the country, 211 call centers and resource centers responded professionally; coordinating services and help for those who had

been displaced by the storms [throughout the country], ensuring that information was accurate and up-to-the-minute.

Ms. Barsell explained that the value of 211 in an emergency or disaster included the following points from her prepared statement:

- 211 call centers infrastructure is already in place so we can begin to accept calls immediately and professionally. The public will look to the call centers for information on shelter, clothing, food, rumor control, and eventually rebuilding and recovery information.
- 211 is uniquely poised to expand the [existing] Emergency Operations Center call center capability. This coordinated dissemination of information promotes accuracy, improves service accessibility, and increases the impact of shared resources [in the state of Nevada].
- Resource database sharing is critical in times of disaster. There may be times when the only information available to staff and the public is through the website.
- 211 can receive calls offering assistance and donations.
- The recovery of a large-scale disaster can last from a few months to several years. 211 systems knowledgeable about existing resources and linkages to these services will be important in rebuilding [our] community.
- The 211 system data on needs, unmet needs and geographical information are useful tools for city, county, state and federal planning, especially in times of rebuilding.
- 211 systems become logical sources of information in disaster response and preparedness. All populations are served, including persons with disabilities.

Ms. Barsell continued with her prepared statement outlining the planning efforts currently underway:

- Nevada 211 staff is on the Washoe County Emergency Operations Management notification list for emergencies.
- The northern call center is prepared to use CERT (Citizen Emergency Response Team) volunteers to take calls.
- Crisis Call Center (the northern call center) and United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierra (runs the 211 online system) are working together to train as many volunteers as possible in anticipation of our next emergency/disaster.

Ms. Barsell added "We don't know when [the disaster will] be. We just know [the disaster] will be." She then continued outlining current efforts underway:

- The Nevada 211 online system is ready for immediate deployment as a public site for northern emergency/disaster info as well as health and human services needs.
- It is anticipated that regional successes using the Nevada 211 system for emergencies and disasters can be replicated in other areas of the State.

In conclusion, Ms. Barsell thanked the Committee for their support in 211's first year with seed money and then read the following:

Additional funding will enable the statewide 211 system to be fully integrated with other significant emergency/disaster efforts throughout Nevada. As a result, in a disaster Nevadans will have access to a website that [has up-to-date], up-to-the-minute [information] and an easy to remember 3-digit call number for critical information and service access.

Finally, Ms. Barsell explained that United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierra intended to compare the data collected with United Ways' community assessments so that shortfalls in funding and assets available within the State could be identified.

Vice Chairwoman Leslie said she was interested to see any information available on unmet needs. She then recognized Jack Mayes, Executive Director of the Nevada Disability Advocacy & Law Center.

Mr. Mayes said that these bills and 211 were supported by the Disability Strategic Plan Accountability Committee as well as the Developmental Disabilities Council by formal vote. On a personal note, Mr. Mayes mentioned that he had also visited a relative in North Carolina in 2002. He noted while there that the local newspaper carried regular ads promoting 211. This prompted him to get involved with CCC and United Way. His biggest concern was providing individuals having a mental health crisis access to professional help. He said 211 was an easy number to understand and, in his opinion, easier to use in a crisis situation. Mr. Mayes thanked the Committee for their support of the 211 service.

Vice Chairwoman Leslie recognized Ms. Jan Gilbert, Northern Nevada Coordinator from the Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada and member of the Grants Management Advisory Committee.

Ms. Gilbert stated that the Grants Management Advisory Committee voted in all four of its subcommittees to fund 211 as much as possible. She stated, however, that most states who participated in the national 211 program used their own respective General Fund dollars for at least some portion of the total funding needed. Ms. Gilbert then urged the Committee to support 211.

Vice Chairwoman Leslie again recognized Ms. Kathy Jacobs.

Ms. Jacobs explained that Nevada 211 had to provide 24/7 service to become an accredited agency through the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems and also to be eligible for federal funds should the Calling for 211 Act be adopted.

Vice Chairwoman Leslie recognized Ms. Marietta Bobba, Director of Washoe County Senior Services (WCSS), who also partners with the Division of Aging Services.

Ms. Bobba said that the aging population in Nevada was growing. Persons 65 and older represented 10.6 percent of Nevada's population in 1990. According to Ms. Bobba, in 2004 that percentage rose to 11.1 and by 2022

that percentage would be 15.3. Nearly 15 percent of Washoe County's population in 2003 was over the age of 60. Ms. Bobba said the senior population was going to continue to seek services that 211 had information about and needed an easy telephone number to facilitate access.

Ms. Bobba stated that Nevada had a large veteran population that exceeded the nationwide average percentage. In 2000, Washoe County's veteran population was 15.8 percent, compared with the nationwide average of 12.7 percent. Ms. Bobba said that the Veterans Administration believed that some services were underused by veterans because veterans did not know how to access the services. She said that 211 could be used to assist in this manner.

Ms. Bobba stated that 211 could also support caregivers who were seeking services to help people remain in their own homes, rather than moving individuals into nursing homes. Ms. Bobba explained that the Medicaid average cost for nursing home care was approximately \$60,000 per year.

Ms. Bobba reminded the Committee of a severe snow storm that hit northern Nevada several years ago. The WCSS was involved in providing services, food, and other necessities to the senior population. Through this experience, WCSS learned that seniors who needed higher levels of care, and were usually unable to leave the house on their own, already had contact with WCSS and were able to be reached and provided for. Unfortunately, the seniors who were usually more independent and typically able to leave the house on their own were unable to have their needs met because they became shut-in from the storm. Many of these seniors who became temporarily shut-in called 911 and CCC for relief. Ms. Bobba claimed that the 211 service could help meet needs faster in situations such as these. Though everyone's needs were eventually met, she stated that 211 could have improved response times.

Vice Chairwoman Leslie recognized Ms. Marcia O'Malley, Executive Director of Family TIES of Nevada, a nonprofit organization that serves people with disabilities.

Ms. O'Malley read testimony ([Exhibit I](#)) in favor of these bills.

Vice Chairwoman Leslie recognized Mr. Bob Bass, Director of External Affairs for AT&T in Nevada, a telecommunications company.

Mr. Bass stated that AT&T supported the 211 service. He said the decision of the Legislature to begin this service had yielded "wonderful results" for Nevada.

Vice Chairwoman Leslie noted that the Legislature appreciated the support AT&T had given 211 to get the service up and running. She then recognized Ms. Margaret McMillan, Director of Governmental Affairs for Embarq, another telecommunications company.

Ms. McMillan said that Embarq supported these bills and commented that Embarq no longer owned the phone book, but that the company had input on what went into it. She noted that the upcoming phone book to be released in July had already been closed to new additions or changes, but said that she believed that 211 would be placed in the next edition.

Vice Chairwoman Leslie thanked Ms. McMillan for her testimony and noted that Mr. Bass had another comment.

Mr. Bass explained that he had just sent an email a few minutes ago to the party in charge of the AT&T Yellow Pages and that 211 would be listed in the next directory published.

Vice Chairwoman Leslie thanked Mr. Bass for the prompt response to the Committee's concern that 211 was not listed in the phone books. She then asked whether there was anyone else who wished to speak for or against these bills. Vice Chairwoman Leslie recognized Mr. Bob Johnson, a citizen from rural Nevada.

Mr. Johnson gave testimony in favor of the bills.

Vice Chairwoman Leslie suggested to Ms. McClain and Mrs. Smith that they provide more details to the Committee on needed funding based on the testimony given, noting the disparity in the amounts requested in the two bills.

Ms. McClain said the information would be provided.

Vice Chairwoman Leslie closed the hearing on A.B. 308 and A.B. 327 and turned the meeting over to Chairman Arberry.

Assembly Bill 346: Makes an appropriation to the Division of Emergency Management of the Department of Public Safety for the operation of a Terrorism Early Warning Fusion Center in Clark County. (BDR S-751)

Chairman Arberry opened the hearing on Assembly Bill 346 and recognized Assemblyman William Horne from Clark County District 34.

Mr. Horne explained that A.B. 346 requested an appropriation for the operation of a terrorist early warning fusion center in Clark County. After writing Homeland Security legislation in 2003 and briefly serving on the Homeland Security Commission, Mr. Horne gained an appreciation for the need to remain diligent and proactive in this arena. He said the need to gather intelligence and act upon it had grown. Mr. Horne concluded by explaining that \$2.6 million was a small amount for Nevada to pay for a tool that would allow Nevada to remain vigilant in preventing threats.

Chairman Arberry recognized Mr. Csaba Maczala, Captain of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (Metro).

Mr. Maczala thanked Mr. Horne for his support and sponsorship of this bill. He then read the following testimony, explaining what a fusion center was:

A Fusion Center is designed to support collaboration and communication among all first responders, supporting an integrated information sharing network for increased security, documented threat assessments, improved response protocols, and for strengthening interagency partnerships. Federal, state, local, tribal, and private entity partners will work [collaboratively] to strengthen our critical infrastructure, reducing the threat of terrorism faced by our community.

A Fusion Center functions as a central repository for both domestic and international terrorist-oriented intelligence and crime data. That data is then prioritized, catalogued, analyzed, and disseminated to all of our first responder partners, making southern Nevada better prepared to mitigate potential threats to our communities.

Sharing information and intelligence-led policing is the cornerstone of the Fusion process. The Southern Nevada Counter Terrorism Center (SNCTC) will take an "All Hazard-All Crimes" approach in gathering, prioritizing, analyzing, and disseminating information. These processes will be done in accordance with all applicable state, federal, and local statutes, as well as Fusion Center best practices, to ensure the rights of the citizens and visitors to our community are protected. Regional intelligence databases and sharing initiatives promote communication and collaboration by providing access to other agencies' and organizations' investigative and intelligence data.

The Department of Justice has developed guidelines for information sharing . . . To maximize intelligence sharing, all federal, state, local, and tribal authorities, along with our private sector partners, must communicate and collaborate. The objective is to leverage resources and expertise while improving the ability to detect, prevent, and apprehend terrorists and other criminals. Fostering a collaborative environment builds trust among participating entities, strengthens partnerships, and provides individual as well as collective ownership in the mission of the center.

Successful collaboration is contingent on a trusting environment. Fusion centers should seek to establish an information sharing system that aids in collaboration, while ensuring the security of the information within the system and the system itself [is safe]. This environment should also be equipped to handle various types of information that public safety submits, including public, sensitive, proprietary, and secret information. This environment may include email, a virtual private network, a secured Internet site, or face-to-face meetings. Collaboration begins with interpersonal relationships, and fusion centers should institutionalize these relationships through ongoing dialogue and information sharing. Each jurisdiction has different needs, and collaboration will be based on these needs. Fusion centers should seek to network with various public safety agencies and private sector partners.

The National Criminal Intelligence Sharing Plan speaks to this as well:

Sharing is founded upon trust between the information provider and the intelligence consumer. Such trust is most often fostered on an interpersonal basis; therefore, law enforcement task forces and other joint work endeavors

succeed where colocated, and where personnel from different agencies and job types convene for a common purpose.

Fostering a collaborative environment is not only important to sharing, collecting, developing and disseminating [information], but also to sharing decisions and ownership. [This is truly a statewide initiative] that supports collaboration and communication. [Making us discover] solutions and expand capacity [to better serve Nevada].

Mr. Maczala said the proposed center was located in southern Nevada, but that it would be in continuous collaboration with northern Nevada agencies.

He then read the following points to illustrate for the Committee the current status of SNCTC and also the conclusion of his prepared statement:

- Project Charter has been developed
- Site location identified
- Approval of site location, with lease agreement signed in February 2007
- Tenant improvements currently underway
- Space layout and design of modular workstations underway
- Identification of FBI secured work area identified
- Construction/security/fortification measures underway
- Governance Board meeting established [scheduled for April 25, 2007]
- Continued collaboration/communication with partners

[In conclusion, the] appropriation of funds is needed to ensure the intelligence-sharing tools. The cornerstone of all Fusion Centers is the ability to immediately and seamlessly share intelligence information. The requested sum . . . will be used to identify, develop, and implement information sharing tools. The requested funds will allow Nevada to remain in the national forefront for awareness, preparedness, and community safety. I urge all of you to support A.B. 346.

Chairman Arberry asked for details on how the requested funds were to be spent, noting that the Committee needed to know how the figure was derived. He also asked whether there were federal funds available should this project not be funded by the Legislature and also what the ramifications would be if the project did not receive the requested funds.

Mr. Maczala stated that due diligence and research had been performed to determine the types of information-sharing tools needed. He noted there were approximately 18 different vendors that supplied this type of software, but none of which met all of SNCTC's needs.

Chairman Arberry restated his request for the cost details and recognized Mr. Phil Roland, Director of Information Technology, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department.

Mr. Roland explained that the entire \$2.6 million requested was for information sharing software. Over the last year, different software products and vendors, such as IBM, Oracle, and SAP, were examined and the total cost of the project was between \$4 million to \$6 million; however, those estimated funds would not be spent all at once because the project was planned in phases. The requested funds in this appropriation were specifically for software that

would consolidate 8 to 10 of the 18 different data sources that were critical to this data sharing process.

Mr. Maczala answered the Chairman's question about what would happen should this appropriation not be approved by explaining that the Board of Governors was going to meet to address the sustainability of SNCTC, especially since federal funding was not always going to be available. Mr. Maczala acknowledged that the individual stakeholders on the Board would have to be willing to partially fund this project.

Chairman Arberry asked how long it would take for SNCTC to begin operations after an appropriation was made.

Mr. Maczala said SNCTC was hoping to occupy the selected building and work toward beginning center operations on July 1, 2007.

Mr. Roland stated that SNCTC was ready to begin the procurement process to select a vendor to provide the software mentioned earlier. He expected implementation of the software to occur within approximately the next six months.

Chairman Arberry asked whether anyone else wished to speak for or against this bill. With no response, he closed the hearing on A.B. 346.

Assembly Bill 395: Makes an appropriation to the Department of Education for a pilot program for teaching children with limited proficiency in English. (BDR S-1028)

After a brief recess, Chairman Arberry opened the hearing on Assembly Bill 395 and recognized Assemblyman Moises Denis from Clark County District 28.

Mr. Denis explained that he had personal experience as a child entering a classroom without being able to speak English. This was a frustrating experience for him. He believed that students deserved the opportunity to learn regardless of their native language.

Mr. Denis said that A.B. 395 addressed needs of pre-kindergarten students with limited English proficiency, provided funds to school districts to begin pilot programs, authorized the Department of Education to create an application and evaluation for the program, required the school districts that wished to participate to present a plan, provided for one teacher and a paraprofessional in the classroom, required the school districts to provide matching funds, and provided money for parent involvement in the program.

Chairman Arberry recognized Ms. Gloria Dopf, Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction from the Department of Education (DOE).

Ms. Dopf said that a pilot similar to the one proposed in A.B. 395 was operational in the last school year because of legislation passed in the 73rd Legislative Session. Through the pilot, DOE learned that this was a good way to expose the prospective students to not only the language, but also the school building before official kindergarten classes started.

Ms. Dopf explained that the parameters required in A.B. 395 were similar to what had been done in the last pilot. She said DOE had distributed to the Legislature in January 2007 an evaluation of the pilot. The evaluation revealed that four school districts had participated in the pilot program, allowing the

instruction of 123 students at 13 different sites. Successes included improved language development and school readiness skills. According to Ms. Dopf, all of the families queried regarding the project believed that their children would not have had any other type of school readiness instruction. This pilot dealt with mostly non-English speaking Hispanic students. She then said that DOE supported any programs that aided limited English proficient students because this group of students had an achievement gap because of the language barrier.

Ms. Buckley asked what the current method was to educate children who did not speak English.

Ms. Dopf said the current program was a "sheltered immersion" program called Structured Immersion Observation Protocol (SIOP). This was a program that trained general educators and the children in the general classroom to provide support in language development. Service providers and specialists, such as Teachers of English as a Second Language (TESL), worked in conjunction with the classroom teacher. The Clark County School District used a slightly different program than the rest of the State, but SIOP served as its foundation. This program was not mandated in every school. For example, there were a few schools in Clark County that had a bilingual program. Oftentimes, especially in the larger school districts, new students who did not speak English worked in a center to build up basic foundational skills in conjunction with the instruction in the classroom. Ms. Dopf believed that both the Washoe County and Clark County school districts used this new student approach. However, the general program throughout Nevada was the SIOP program, which provided the students with language and curriculum instruction through the service providers and TESL.

Ms. Buckley noted that she had heard many suggestions about the need for immersion in the classrooms for students who did not speak English. To Ms. Buckley, it seemed that immersion was being practiced. For example, she noted that in visits to her son's classroom there were two students who did not speak English. One spoke Chinese, and one spoke Spanish. She observed that the teacher did "a phenomenal job" teaching these two children English while still teaching the entire class the content of the curriculum. Ms. Buckley said there were computers in the class that helped and that the other children in the class also helped teach the two students English. She further mentioned being confused by all the comments she had heard about the need to stop teaching classes in other languages and that immersion needed to be practiced, because immersion is what she had witnessed personally. Ms. Buckley supported this type of program because she believed non-English speaking children learned English rapidly, and it did not require slowing down the instruction for the entire class, which would cause the rest of the children to fall behind in their learning.

Ms. Dopf said there were two types of immersion programs. The first is an immersion without any support for the student. The SIOP program was immersion that provided for support through the training the classroom teachers received and also through language training.

Mr. Denis said he agreed with Ms. Buckley in that SIOP did not require wasted classroom time teaching basic English skills to the few in the class that needed it.

Assemblyman Hogan noted the successful pilot program that had taken place in the past year and asked whether another pilot was needed or whether the program should just be implemented statewide.

Mr. Denis said he believed there were still some issues that needed to be addressed, which is why he supported this continued pilot.

Assemblywoman Gansert asked how the program for the 123 students mentioned was funded in this last school year.

Ms. Dopf said the last pilot was funded through an appropriations bill in Assembly Bill No. 580 of the 73rd Legislative Session that structured the project to be available to school districts that applied for funds. The bill outlined specific requirements for certain school districts.

Mrs. Gansert asked whether the current pilot program was for children of varied ages or for just kindergarten-aged children.

Ms. Dopf said the program was exclusively for children to participate in the summer before they entered kindergarten.

Mrs. Gansert asked whether the proposed program was for the same group or whether it would include children of higher ages as well.

Ms. Dopf said the pilot was still going to be geared toward the pre-kindergarten children.

Mrs. Gansert asked whether the practices of other states had been considered or whether DOE was "reinventing" this type of program.

Ms. Dopf said the basic foundations of SIOP were similar to what was being done in other states. The SIOP concept was introduced in Washoe County because there was an interest from the business community to set up a program for kindergarten-aged children.

Mrs. Gansert asked whether a study had been performed to compare the progress of those who had participated in the program against the progress of those who did not participate.

Ms. Dopf said the evaluation previously mentioned addressed this and indicated that the participants had "additional language gain and readiness gain" based on surveys completed by the teachers and some evaluation of the students during the school year. It was intended that the new program would have a more "longitudinal component" should the program become permanently funded.

Mrs. Gansert said she was in favor of pilot programs because they were able to target particular issues that might arise.

Chairman Arberry recognized Ms. Mary Ann Robinson, Coordinator I, ESL/Foreign Language, Washoe County School District.

Ms. Robinson stated that Washoe County School District supported A.B. 395. She explained that the program used in Washoe County last school year included a teacher and an assistant in each classroom, one of whom was

bilingual, in ten classrooms at five different sites. The children beginning the program oftentimes were nervous and scared, having been the first time they had left their guardians' care. This program allowed the students time to make the transition into the classroom more easily. Additionally, there were weekly meetings and classes for the parents of the students.

Chairman Arberry recognized Ms. Joyce Haldeman, Director of Community and Government Relations, Clark County School District (CCSD).

Ms. Haldeman explained that funds from Assembly Bill No. 580 of the 73rd Legislative Session were used for a pre-kindergarten pilot program, similar to the one proposed, which received \$10,000 in matching grant funds. The CCSD began the program at three locations for a total of 28 students, all of which were Hispanic. About one-third of the students came from families with incomes of \$20,000 or less. Ms. Haldeman believed it was important to note that many of these students came from impoverished families where the parents had to engage in extra employment activities to support their families and lacked the skills or resources to assist their children with education. She reminded the Committee that the fastest growing population segment in Clark County was Hispanic.

Ms. Haldeman said the classroom instruction time in the pilot program averaged 74.5 hours before regular kindergarten classes began. The evaluators of the program felt that the parental involvement was valuable as well. The program included four days out of the week for the children to be in the classroom, while the fifth day was for the parents. Each family received literacy kits and participated in family literacy workshops. These kits included 20 books that were written in both English and Spanish to help the parents help the children begin to read. According to Ms. Haldeman, the evaluators believed this was one of the most important elements of the program. She then said that CCSD supported the bill.

Chairman Arberry recognized Mr. Lonnie Shields, representing the National Association of School Administrators (NASA) and the Nevada Chapter of the Teachers of Students of other Languages.

Mr. Shields said that the organizations he represented supported A.B. 395.

Chairman Arberry recognized Mr. Terry Hickman, Executive Director of the Nevada State Education Association (NSEA).

Mr. Hickman said that NSEA believed this was an important bill and addressed one of the greatest education needs in Nevada in closing the achievement gap. The NSEA supported A.B. 395.

Assemblywoman Smith thanked Mr. Denis for bringing forward this legislation. She noted for the Committee that parent involvement was important to her because this particular group of parents needed to get involved early in their children's education. She then commented about immersion saying that the State did virtually nothing from a funding standpoint. Mrs. Smith explained that immersion was a must because funds for other programs were not provided by the State. According to Mrs. Smith, from a budgetary standpoint, non-English

speaking students were highly neglected, and yet if some attention was paid to this issue, it would make a difference for not only the students learning English, but also for the other students who had to cope with or sacrifice valuable learning time because of lost instruction.

Chairman Arberry asked whether anyone else wished to speak for or against A.B. 395. With no response, he closed the hearing.

Assembly Bill 400: Makes an appropriation to the City of Las Vegas for allocation to the New Ventures Capital Development Company to encourage the creation of small businesses in the minority community. (BDR S-1167)

Chairman Arberry opened the hearing on Assembly Bill 400 and recognized Mr. Ernest Fountain, President of New Ventures Capital Development Company (NVCDC).

Mr. Fountain explained that NVCDC was certified by the Small Business Administration (SBA) to make loans to small businesses in Nevada since 1984. The NVCDC had arranged over \$350 million in loans through an SBA program that was set up to primarily assist small businesses purchase capital assets such as buildings or land. The purchases were financed 50 percent through the funding bank, 40 percent through NVCDC, and 10 percent through the small businesses that benefit from each loan.

As of January 2007, Mr. Fountain explained that NVCDC became the Nevada Minority Business Enterprise Center, funded by the U.S. Department of Commerce, now officially representing the Minority Business Development Agency for Nevada. Through this bill, NVCDC was trying to obtain funding to provide loans to small businesses that did not meet bank or SBA criteria. According to Mr. Fountain, there were a large percentage of minority businesses that qualified for loans, but were unable to obtain loans. One of the intentions was to provide financing for contractors seeking contracts with government entities.

Chairman Arberry asked how long it would take to assist small businesses once the funding was approved.

Mr. Fountain said that because NVCDC was already open and operating for the last 23 years, assistance would be available immediately.

Chairman Arberry asked whether anyone else wished to speak for or against A.B. 400. With no response, he closed this hearing.

Assembly Bill 541: Makes a supplemental appropriation to the State Distributive School Account for unanticipated expenses for Fiscal Year 2006-2007 for providing health care subsidies to retired school district employees. (BDR S-1249)

Chairman Arberry opened the hearing on Assembly Bill 541 and recognized Mr. Jim Wells, Deputy Superintendent for Fiscal and Administrative Services, Department of Education.

Mr. Wells explained that A.B. 541 provided a supplemental appropriation to the distributive school account to assist school districts in making payments to the State's Public Employees Benefits Program (PEBP) for school district retirees who had joined that plan. According to Mr. Wells, because of an increase in the number of retirees joining PEBP, there continued to be a shortfall in the amounts provided for this purpose. In FY 2006, the total amount of the subsidy payments to PEBP was \$10.6 million, which was \$2.2 million more than was budgeted. For FY 2007, using the billing amounts through January, the estimated payments would total \$15.2 million, or approximately \$6 million more than the budgeted amount. These two shortfall amounts made up the amount requested in A.B. 541.

Chairman Arberry asked whether this amount was already in the Department of Education's budget request.

Mr. Wells stated that when the budget was built, the \$2.2 million was included, but the \$6 million figure was not yet known.

Chairman Arberry recognized Ms. Anne Loring, representing the Washoe County School District (WCSD).

Ms. Loring stated that WCSD appreciated the subsidies that were enacted in 2003, which represented a significant expenditure for the school districts around the State. She stated that WCSD supported this bill and urged the Committee to support it as well.

Chairman Arberry asked whether there was anyone else present who wished to speak for or against A.B. 541. With no response, he closed the hearing.

Assembly Bill 607: Revises the provisions governing the design and construction of a previously approved capital improvement project at the Veterans' Nursing Home. (BDR S-1460)

Chairman Arberry opened the hearing on Assembly Bill 607 and recognized Mr. Evan Dale, Deputy Manager for the Public Works Board.

Mr. Dale explained that A.B. 607 consisted of three main parts. First, the bill would change the scope of Project 05-C17. Second, the legislation would change Senate Bill No. 524 of the 73rd Legislative Session which approved Project 05-C17, amending certain federal funding stipulations. Finally, this bill was a request to use the Construction Manager at Risk (CMR) delivery method [non traditional construction contract which involves selecting the contractor during the design phase, rather than designing the project and then sending the project out to bid] for Project 05-C17.

Mr. Dale explained that the change in scope was because the initial project included design and construction of an addition to the dining room at the Southern Nevada Veterans' Home. A portion of the funding for this project included a federal grant; however, the grant funds were delayed, though the Veterans Affairs (VA) office acknowledged that the funds were still available. Because of the delay, inflation had "rendered the funding for this project insufficient to do the design and construction," according to Mr. Dale. He said that A.B. 607 was a request to fund the design of the project while the construction funds were still pending.

Mr. Dale further explained that the second portion of A.B. 607 was a request to amend Senate Bill No. 524 of the 73rd Legislative Session, which was the initial Capital Improvement Project approval for this project. In that bill, there was a condition that required the entire project, including planning and construction, not to proceed until federal grant funds were available and that the approved funds could not be obligated for any other purpose. Mr. Dale said that A.B. 607 requested that only the construction not begin until the federal grant money was available. The reason for this amendment request was that to get the federal grant, some design work needed to be completed. With the current language contained in Senate Bill No. 524 of the 73rd Legislative Session, the design portion of the project could not begin; however, the Veterans Affairs office was requiring design documents before the grant would be approved.

Finally, Mr. Dale said that A.B. 607 was a request to use the CMR delivery method for this construction project.

Mr. Mark Stevens, Assembly Fiscal Analyst asked Mr. Dale to explain to the Committee the time constraints associated with this request.

Mr. Dale explained that design documents needed to be submitted to the VA by September 15, 2007. The architect needed to have approval to begin the design phase as soon as possible so that the VA would have design documents in time. He then said that bids for the project needed to be submitted to the VA by March 15, 2008.

Mr. Stevens asked when this bill needed to be passed for the project to have the necessary time available to meet those deadlines and ensure that the grant funds were available for construction.

Mr. Dale said that the Public Works Board had a target date to sign an architectural agreement by the end of the week. He acknowledged there was some flexibility, but that this was needed within a matter of days. If passage of this legislation took as long as two weeks, Mr. Dale believed that problems could arise in meeting the necessary deadlines.

Mr. Stevens stated that having the legislation passed by the beginning of the next week was not realistic, but said that he wanted Mr. Dale to outline the time constraints of the project and the needed expediency of bill passage so that the Committee could consider voting on the bill immediately. Mr. Stevens explained that Legislative Counsel Bureau staff would be requesting that this bill be declared an emergency measure by Speaker Barbara Buckley at the following day's floor session so that it could be passed to the Senate for their consideration.

Chairman Arberry asked whether there was anyone else present that wished to speak for or against A.B. 607. With no response, he closed the hearing and asked the Committee to consider the bill.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARVEL MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 607.

ASSEMBLYMAN PARKS SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (Assemblywoman Buckley was not present for the vote.)

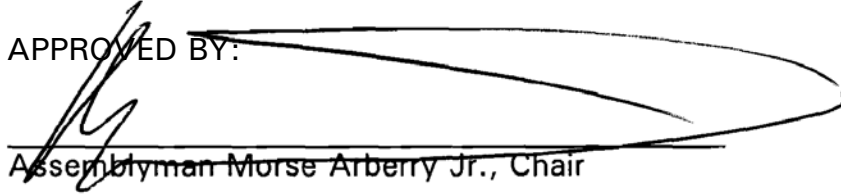
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Chairman Arberry adjourned the meeting at 10:29 AM.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Todd Myler
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be 'Morse', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is elongated and loops back to the left.

Assemblyman Morse Arberry Jr., Chair

DATE: _____

<u>EXHIBITS</u>			
Committee Name: <u>Committee on Ways and Means</u>			
Date: <u>April 4, 2007</u>		Time of Meeting: <u>8:05 a.m.</u>	
Bill	Exhibit	Witness / Agency	Description
	A		Agenda
	B		Attendance Roster
	C	Ryan McGinness / Governor's Washington Office	Annual budget worksheet
	D	Ryan McGinness / Governor's Washington Office	Federal grants listing
A.B. 327	E	Julianna Ormsby / HELP of Southern Nevada	Nevada 2-1-1 presentation
A.B. 327	F	Julianna Ormsby / HELP of Southern Nevada	Testimony
A.B. 327	G	Kathy Jacobs / Crisis Call Center	Testimony
A.B. 327	H	Kathy Jacobs / Crisis Call Center	Call center report
A.B. 327	I	Marcia O'Malley / Family Ties of Nevada	Testimony