

**MINUTES OF THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE OPERATIONS AND ELECTIONS**

**Seventy-fourth Session
May 24, 2007**

The Senate Committee on Legislative Operations and Elections was called to order by Chair Barbara K. Cegavske at 4:50 p.m. on Thursday, May 24, 2007, in Room 2144 of the Legislative Building, Carson City, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, Room 4412, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada. [Exhibit A](#) is the Agenda. [Exhibit B](#) is the Attendance Roster. All exhibits are available and on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Barbara K. Cegavske, Chair
Senator Warren B. Hardy II
Senator Bernice Mathews
Senator Valerie Wiener
Senator Steven A. Horsford

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Senator William J. Raggio, Vice Chair (Excused)
Senator Bob Beers (Excused)

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Brenda J. Erdoes, Legislative Counsel
Michelle L. Van Geel, Committee Policy Analyst
Josh Martinmaas, Committee Secretary

OTHERS PRESENT:

Tony F. Sanchez, Nevada State Democratic Party
Barbara J. Griffin, Clerk/Treasurer, Douglas County
Alan Glover, Clerk/Recorder, Carson City
Chris McGill, Nevada Republican Party

CHAIR CEGAVSKE:

We will open the hearing on Senate Bill (S.B.) 573.

SENATE BILL 573: Makes various changes concerning precinct meetings of major political parties. (BDR 24-1515)

TONY F. SANCHEZ (Nevada State Democratic Party):

I am chairing the 2008 Democratic Delegate Selection Committee which is tasked with determining the rules and process by which the Democratic Party will hold the January 19, 2008, caucus and physically putting on the event. While going through this process and formulating our plan, there have been some technical cleanup issues reflected specifically under section 2 of S.B. 573 with respect to when county clerks would be required to provide precinct and demographic data for use by both parties. Both parties will have their caucus on the same day so we are in total agreement. The section 1 provision also allows, to the extent possible, the precinct—the actual caucus—to use a governmental building for the purpose of having these caucus events in a presidential year. In the 2004 presidential cycle, the Democratic Party had one caucus location per county. We anticipate having substantially more participation considering the attention Nevada is getting from both parties. This is a win-win for Nevada being moved up so far to help select the nominees for the general election.

CHAIR CEGAVSKE:

This is a straight-up bill.

BARBARA J. GRIFFIN (Clerk/Treasurer, Douglas County):

Our question is in section 2 of S.B. 573. We have some concern where it says "state or county central committee." We do not have any problem with providing the information; our concern is the state may ask for these numbers on one particular day, then a few weeks later, the counties may ask for the numbers and they could be different numbers. Another concern is we will track this in separate folders in case there is a challenge when it comes to the state convention. If the state is certifying the numbers they received and the counties come in with different delegates because they got different numbers from us, we are going to have confusion. Personally, I would prefer we pick a date. I do not care how close that date is or that one or the other obtains the numbers. But when both are able to obtain numbers from the counties, this opens it up for confusion because you will probably have different numbers.

CHAIR CEGAVSKE:

You would prefer on page 3, line 9 to have a specific date instead of "the date of the request"?

MS. GRIFFIN:

It would make it clearer for the parties, both at the county and state level.

MR. SANCHEZ:

What got us into this predicament was not knowing Nevada's caucus would move up to January 19 this last time. The law indicates the counties do not have to give us the demographic information until January 1 of a presidential election year. If we had to abide by the law as currently written, we would only get that information 18 days before we host the caucus. With the fact that California, Florida and many states around the country are in the process of continually changing and moving up, there has been flexibility in terms of when these caucuses or elections are held. If we tie ourselves to a specific date, we could be back before you if it changes next cycle. We do understand the concern.

CHAIR CEGAVSKE:

Is it a bad thing to change the date again in two years?

MR. SANCHEZ:

To my understanding, Florida and California are looking at moving up their dates. They are talking about these supernational primaries. We are looking for flexibility to deal with something if that occurs and the Legislature is not in session.

CHAIR CEGAVSKE:

What if you amended it to specify a certain number of days before the caucus? Would that help?

MR. SANCHEZ:

I do not know why it would not.

ALAN GLOVER (Clerk/Recorder, Carson City):

That would probably work. They can pick whatever they want; it makes no difference to us. We can do 30 or 60 days. When it was January 1, we produced that report and gave it to the county central committee. Then they took it and did their thing. We knew we only produced one report. My experience with the central committees of the county and state is one asks on one day and one asks on another. Then it becomes, "But I asked first." We will make it work no matter what.

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CHAIR CEGAUSKE:
What number would work?

MR. GLOVER:
It does not matter to us because we can do it in a few minutes. I just need to know in advance.

MR. SANCHEZ:
This is new for us as we develop this process. Once we get initial numbers—the various presidential candidates ask for routine updates, we need something in the approximation of November 1 of the preceding presidential year. It would be a little less than three months out to start providing this information to the presidential candidates that is updated weekly. They make those requests of us as they are trying to determine where they are focusing in the state. The state party would provide that information to the candidates.

CHAIR CEGAUSKE:
So, 90 days?

MR. SANCHEZ:
Ninety days gives us adequate time to put that together for the parties and candidates.

MS. GRIFFIN:
That works for us. We do not care what day they use. We want to prevent confusion and challenges down the road—the county using one set of numbers and the state certifying another set. We do not care if we provide them with a specific date and they request updates 30 days later. Our issue is not providing them with the numbers; we just want it to be consistent.

MR. GLOVER:
So we do not have any confusion, the January date was the official number you used. If we give you the 90-day number, will that be the official one even though you will ask for the updates? Registration could grow tremendously in a three-month period.

MR. SANCHEZ:

We anticipated that, and both parties would advise the candidates, "Here is your baseline set of numbers we received three months out. We will be able to provide you with updates as it goes into the final 90 days."

SENATOR HORSFORD:

I would ask the additional language Mr. Glover is clarifying—it is 90 days for the initial number and then periodic reports as requested—be in the bill.

MR. GLOVER:

As I understand it, we always gave you one delegate per precinct, depending on the size and so forth. The number we used to give the central committee was the fixed number that told you how many delegates that precinct got. Is this the frozen number for determination or by party rule, could we give you an updated number at the last minute? You say, "Oh well, because of this many registered voters, we get two delegates per precinct."

SENATOR HORSFORD:

It sounds like it is the first. Can you explain that option again and make sure we are all in agreement?

MR. GLOVER:

The number we provide to the county or state party 90 days before the election is the official number upon which the party determines the number of delegates per precinct.

MR. SANCHEZ:

We agree with that.

CHRIS MCGILL (Nevada Republican Party):

We also agree.

SENATOR WIENER MOVED TO AMEND AND DO PASS AS AMENDED
S.B. 573.

SENATOR HARDY SECONDED THE MOTION.

SENATOR HORSFORD:

It is incredibly encouraging to see the bipartisanship regardless of people's political affiliation. This opportunity to showcase Nevada to presidential candidates of both parties is incredible. I am glad to see we are working together to make sure our state shines and we have a role in selecting the nominees for the President of the United States. I want to commend everyone for their hard work.

CHAIR CEGAVSKE:

Well said. You have spoken on behalf of all of us.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS BEERS AND RAGGIO WERE
ABSENT FOR THE VOTE.)

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In the next meeting, we will look at the studies. I explained to Senator Horsford it seems we have put quite a few study committees out of their regular committees. Staff will do a preliminary presentation for us because we are over our limit for studies based on what our colleagues in the other committees have done and what we have passed out of each House. We have to look at that, find out what we can do and how much staff we have.

SENATOR WIENER:

Based on the list we had of designated interim study bills and those converted because of fiscal notes, will we have the opportunity to see everything and then turn in our priorities as before?

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CHAIR CEGAVSKE:

I just had a presentation from staff and we really need to look at the lists and what both Houses have passed out and the Governor signed because we already have some studies. We need to look at what we have and then rethink what we are going to do in both Houses.

This meeting is adjourned at 5:07 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Josh Martinmaas,
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Senator Barbara K. Cegavske, Chair

DATE: _____