SENATE BILL NO. 369—COMMITTEE ON TAXATION

MARCH 23, 2009

Referred to Committee on Taxation

SUMMARY—Imposes a tax on the use of prostitution services and establishes the Office of Ombudsman for Sex Workers. (BDR 32-1228)

FISCAL NOTE: Effect on Local Government: Increases or Newly Provides for Term of Imprisonment in County or City Jail or Detention Facility. Effect on the State: Yes.

EXPLANATION - Matter in bolded italics is new; matter between brackets [omitted material] is material to be omitted.

AN ACT relating to prostitution; providing for the imposition and administration of a tax on the use of prostitution services; establishing the Office of Ombudsman for Sex Workers and creating the Account for Programs Related to Sex Workers; providing penalties; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

Legislative Counsel's Digest:

Section 10 of this bill imposes an excise tax on each patron who uses the prostitution services of a prostitute. The amount of the tax, which must be collected from the patron or paid on behalf of the patron by the person who collects the fee for such services, is \$5 per day. **Sections 1-29** of this bill provide for the administration, collection and enforcement of the tax in a manner similar to other state taxes.

Sections 30-32 of this bill establish the Office of Ombudsman for Sex Workers within the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation, specify the duties of the Ombudsman and create an account in the State General Fund for expenditure to carry out the duties of the Ombudsman.





THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

- Section 1. Title 32 of NRS is hereby amended by adding thereto a new chapter to consist of the provisions set forth as sections 2 to 23, inclusive, of this act.
 - Sec. 2. As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires, the words and terms defined in sections 3 and 4 of this act have the meanings ascribed to them in those sections.
 - Sec. 3. "Commission" means the Nevada Tax Commission.
 - Sec. 4. "Taxpayer" means any person liable for the tax imposed by this chapter.

Sec. 5. The Department shall:

- 1. Administer and enforce the provisions of this chapter, and may adopt such regulations as it deems appropriate for those purposes.
- 2. Deposit all taxes, interest and penalties it receives pursuant to this chapter in the State Treasury for credit to the State General Fund.
- Sec. 6. 1. Each person responsible for maintaining the records of a taxpayer shall:
- (a) Keep such records as may be necessary to determine the amount of the liability of the taxpayer pursuant to the provisions of this chapter;
- (b) Preserve those records for 4 years or until any litigation or prosecution pursuant to this chapter is finally determined, whichever is longer; and
- (c) Make the records available for inspection by the Department upon demand at reasonable times during regular business hours.
- 2. The Department may by regulation specify the types of records which must be kept to determine the amount of the liability of a taxpayer pursuant to the provisions of this chapter.
- 3. Any person who violates the provisions of subsection 1 is guilty of a misdemeanor.
- Sec. 7. 1. To verify the accuracy of any return filed or, if no return is filed by a taxpayer, to determine the amount required to be paid, the Department, or any person authorized in writing by the Department, may examine the books, papers and records of any person who may be liable for the tax imposed by this chapter.
- 2. Any person who may be liable for the tax imposed by this chapter and who keeps outside of this State any books, papers and records relating thereto shall pay to the Department an amount equal to the allowance provided for state officers and employees generally while traveling outside of the State for each day or





fraction thereof during which an employee of the Department is engaged in examining those documents, plus any other actual expenses incurred by the employee while he is absent from his regular place of employment to examine those documents.

Sec. 8. The Executive Director may request from any other governmental agency or officer such information as he deems necessary to carry out the provisions of this chapter. If the Executive Director obtains any confidential information pursuant to such a request, he shall maintain the confidentiality of that information in the same manner and to the same extent as provided by law for the agency or officer from whom the information was obtained.

Sec. 9. 1. Except as otherwise provided in this section and NRS 239.0115 and 360.250, the records and files of the Department concerning the administration of this chapter are confidential and privileged. The Department, and any employee engaged in the administration of this chapter or charged with the custody of any such records or files, shall not disclose any information obtained from the Department's records or files or from any examination, investigation or hearing authorized by the provisions of this chapter. Neither the Department nor any employee of the Department may be required to produce any of the records, files and information for the inspection of any person or for use in any action or proceeding.

The records and files of the Department concerning the administration of this chapter are not confidential and privileged 26 in the following cases:

- (a) Testimony by a member or employee of the Department and production of records, files and information on behalf of the Department or a taxpayer in any action or proceeding pursuant to the provisions of this chapter if that testimony or the records, files or information, or the facts shown thereby, are directly involved in the action or proceeding.
- (b) Delivery to a taxpayer or his authorized representative of a copy of any return or other document filed by the taxpayer pursuant to this chapter.
 - (c) Publication of statistics so classified as to prevent the identification of a particular person or document.
 - (d) Exchanges of information with the Internal Revenue Service in accordance with compacts made and provided for in such cases.
 - (e) Disclosure in confidence to the Governor or his agent in the exercise of the Governor's general supervisory powers, or to any person authorized to audit the accounts of the Department in pursuance of an audit, or to the Attorney General or other legal



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representative of the State in connection with an action or proceeding pursuant to this chapter, or to any agency of this or any other state charged with the administration or enforcement of laws relating to taxation.

(f) Exchanges of information pursuant to subsection 3.

3. The Commission may agree with any county fair and recreation board or the governing body of any county, city or town for the continuing exchange of information concerning taxpayers.

Sec. 10. 1. An excise tax is hereby imposed on each patron who uses the prostitution services of a prostitute, in the amount of \$5 for each calendar day or portion thereof that the patron uses the prostitution services of that prostitute.

2. Each person who collects a fee for prostitution services

shall:

 (a) Collect the tax from each patron to whom the tax applies or pay the tax on behalf of the patron; and

(b) On or before the last day of the month immediately

following each calendar quarter:

(1) File with the Department a return on a form prescribed by the Department; and

(2) Remit to the Department any tax due pursuant to this

section for that calendar quarter.

- Sec. 11. Upon written application made before the date on which payment must be made, the Department may for good cause extend by 30 days the time within which a taxpayer is required to pay the tax imposed by this chapter. If the tax is paid during the period of extension, no penalty or late charge may be imposed for failure to pay at the time required, but the taxpayer shall pay interest at the rate of I percent per month from the date on which the amount would have been due without the extension until the date of payment, unless otherwise provided in NRS 360.232 or 360.320.
- Sec. 12. If the Department determines that any tax, penalty or interest has been paid more than once or has been erroneously or illegally collected or computed, the Department shall set forth that fact in the records of the Department and certify to the State Board of Examiners the amount collected in excess of the amount legally due and the person from whom it was collected or by whom it was paid. If approved by the State Board of Examiners, the excess amount collected or paid must be credited on any amounts then due from the person under this chapter, and the balance refunded to the person or his successors in interest.

Sec. 13. 1. Except as otherwise provided in NRS 360.235 and 360.395:





- (a) No refund may be allowed unless a claim for it is filed with the Department within 3 years after the last day of the month following the calendar quarter for which the overpayment was made.
- (b) No credit may be allowed after the expiration of the period specified for filing claims for refund unless a claim for credit is filed with the Department within that period.
- 2. Each claim must be in writing and must state the specific grounds upon which the claim is founded.
- 3. Failure to file a claim within the time prescribed in this chapter constitutes a waiver of any demand against the State on account of overpayment.
- 4. Within 30 days after rejecting any claim in whole or in part, the Department shall serve notice of its action on the claimant in the manner prescribed for service of notice of a deficiency determination.
- Sec. 14. 1. Except as otherwise provided in this section, NRS 360.320 or any other specific statute, interest must be paid upon any overpayment of any amount of the taxes imposed by this chapter at the rate set forth in, and in accordance with the provisions of, NRS 360.2937.
- 2. If the Department determines that any overpayment has been made intentionally or by reason of carelessness, the Department shall not allow any interest on the overpayment.
- Sec. 15. 1. No injunction, writ of mandate or other legal or equitable process may issue in any suit, action or proceeding in any court against this State or against any officer of this State to prevent or enjoin the collection under this chapter of the tax imposed by this chapter or any amount of tax, penalty or interest required to be collected.
- 2. No suit or proceeding may be maintained in any court for the recovery of any amount alleged to have been erroneously or illegally determined or collected unless a claim for refund or credit has been filed.
- Sec. 16. 1. Within 90 days after a final decision upon a claim filed pursuant to this chapter is rendered by the Commission, the claimant may bring an action against the Department on the grounds set forth in the claim in a court of competent jurisdiction in Carson City, the county of this State where the claimant resides or maintains his principal place of business or a county in which any relevant proceedings were conducted by the Department, for the recovery of the whole or any part of the amount with respect to which the claim has been disallowed.





2. Failure to bring an action within the time specified constitutes a waiver of any demand against the State on account of

alleged overpayments.

Sec. 17. 1. If the Department fails to mail notice of action on a claim within 6 months after the claim is filed, the claimant may consider the claim disallowed and file an appeal with the Commission within 30 days after the last day of the 6-month period. If the claimant is aggrieved by the decision of the Commission rendered on appeal, the claimant may, within 90 days after the decision is rendered, bring an action against the Department on the grounds set forth in the claim for the recovery of the whole or any part of the amount claimed as an overpayment.

2. If judgment is rendered for the plaintiff, the amount of the judgment must first be credited towards any tax due from the

plaintiff.

The balance of the judgment must be refunded to the *3*.

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- Sec. 18. In any judgment, interest must be allowed at the rate of 6 percent per annum upon the amount found to have been illegally collected from the date of payment of the amount to the date of allowance of credit on account of the judgment, or to a date preceding the date of the refund warrant by not more than 30 days. The date must be determined by the Department.
- Sec. 19. A judgment may not be rendered in favor of the plaintiff in any action brought against the Department to recover any amount paid when the action is brought by or in the name of an assignee of the person paying the amount or by any person other than the person who paid the amount.
- Sec. 20. 1. The Department may recover a refund or any part thereof which is erroneously made and any credit or part thereof which is erroneously allowed in an action brought in a court of competent jurisdiction in Carson City or Clark County in the name of the State of Nevada.
- The action must be tried in Carson City or Clark County unless the court, with the consent of the Attorney General, orders a change of place of trial.
- 3. The Attorney General shall prosecute the action, and the provisions of NRS, the Nevada Rules of Civil Procedure and the Nevada Rules of Appellate Procedure relating to service of summons, pleadings, proofs, trials and appeals are applicable to the proceedings.
- Sec. 21. 1. If any amount in excess of \$25 has been 44 illegally determined, either by the Department or by the person filing the return, the Department shall certify this fact to the State





Board of Examiners, and the latter shall authorize the cancellation of the amount upon the records of the Department.

- 2. If an amount not exceeding \$25 has been illegally determined, either by the Department or by the person filing the return, the Department, without certifying this fact to the State Board of Examiners, shall authorize the cancellation of the amount upon the records of the Department.
 - Sec. 22. 1. A person shall not:

- (a) Make, cause to be made or permit to be made any false or fraudulent return or declaration or false statement in any return or declaration with intent to defraud the State or to evade payment of the tax or any part of the tax imposed by this chapter.
- (b) Make, cause to be made or permit to be made any false entry in books, records or accounts with intent to defraud the State or to evade the payment of the tax or any part of the tax imposed by this chapter.
- (c) Keep, cause to be kept or permit to be kept more than one set of books, records or accounts with intent to defraud the State or to evade the payment of the tax or any part of the tax imposed by this chapter.
- 2. Any person who violates the provisions of subsection 1 is guilty of a gross misdemeanor.
- Sec. 23. The remedies of the State provided for in this chapter are cumulative, and no action taken by the Department or the Attorney General constitutes an election by the State to pursue any remedy to the exclusion of any other remedy for which provision is made in this chapter.
 - **Sec. 24.** NRS 360.2937 is hereby amended to read as follows:
- 360.2937 1. Except as otherwise provided in this section, NRS 360.320 or any other specific statute, and notwithstanding the provisions of NRS 360.2935, interest must be paid upon an overpayment of any tax provided for in chapter 362, 363A, 363B, 369, 370, 372, 374, 377 or 377A [.] of NRS or sections 2 to 23, inclusive, of this act, any fee provided for in NRS 444A.090 or 482.313, or any assessment provided for in NRS 585.497, at the rate of 0.5 percent per month from the last day of the calendar month following the period for which the overpayment was made.
- 2. No refund or credit may be made of any interest imposed on the person making the overpayment with respect to the amount being refunded or credited.
 - 3. The interest must be paid:
 - (a) In the case of a refund, to the last day of the calendar month following the date upon which the person making the overpayment, if he has not already filed a claim, is notified by the Department that





a claim may be filed or the date upon which the claim is certified to the State Board of Examiners, whichever is earlier.

- (b) In the case of a credit, to the same date as that to which interest is computed on the tax or the amount against which the credit is applied.
 - **Sec. 25.** NRS 360.297 is hereby amended to read as follows:
- 360.297 1. A responsible person who fails to collect or pay to the Department any tax or fee imposed by this chapter, chapter 363A, 363B, 368A, 369, 370, 372 or 374 of NRS, sections 2 to 23, inclusive, of this act, NRS 444A.090 or 482.313, or chapter 680B of NRS, or who attempts to evade the payment of any such tax or fee, is jointly and severally liable with any other person who is required to pay such a tax or fee for the tax or fee owed plus interest and all applicable penalties. The responsible person shall pay the tax or fee upon notice from the Department that it is due.
 - 2. As used in this section, "responsible person" includes:
 - (a) An officer or employee of a corporation; and
- (b) A member or employee of a partnership or limited-liability company,
 - → whose job or duty it is to collect, account for or pay to the Department any tax or fee imposed by this chapter, chapter 363A, 363B, 368A, 369, 370, 372 or 374 of NRS, sections 2 to 23, inclusive, of this act, NRS 444A.090 or 482.313, or chapter 680B of NRS.
 - **Sec. 26.** NRS 360.300 is hereby amended to read as follows:
 - 360.300 1. If a person fails to file a return or the Department is not satisfied with the return or returns of any tax, contribution or premium or amount of tax, contribution or premium required to be paid to the State by any person, in accordance with the applicable provisions of this chapter, chapter 360B, 362, 363A, 363B, 369, 370, 372, 372A, 374, 377, 377A or 444A of NRS, *sections 2 to 23, inclusive, of this act*, NRS 482.313, or chapter 585 or 680B of NRS as administered or audited by the Department, it may compute and determine the amount required to be paid upon the basis of:
 - (a) The facts contained in the return;
 - (b) Any information within its possession or that may come into its possession; or
 - (c) Reasonable estimates of the amount.
 - 2. One or more deficiency determinations may be made with respect to the amount due for one or for more than one period.
 - 3. In making its determination of the amount required to be paid, the Department shall impose interest on the amount of tax determined to be due, calculated at the rate and in the manner set forth in NRS 360.417, unless a different rate of interest is specifically provided by statute.





- 4. The Department shall impose a penalty of 10 percent in addition to the amount of a determination that is made in the case of the failure of a person to file a return with the Department.
- 5. When a business is discontinued, a determination may be made at any time thereafter within the time prescribed in NRS 360.355 as to liability arising out of that business, irrespective of whether the determination is issued before the due date of the liability.

Sec. 27. NRS 360.417 is hereby amended to read as follows:

360.417 Except as otherwise provided in NRS 360.232 and 360.320, and unless a different penalty or rate of interest is specifically provided by statute, any person who fails to pay any tax provided for in chapter 362, 363A, 363B, 369, 370, 372, 374, 377, 377A, 444A or 585 of NRS, or sections 2 to 23, inclusive, of this act, or any fee provided for in NRS 482.313, and any person or governmental entity that fails to pay any fee provided for in NRS 360.787, to the State or a county within the time required, shall pay a penalty of not more than 10 percent of the amount of the tax or fee which is owed, as determined by the Department, in addition to the tax or fee, plus interest at the rate of 1 percent per month, or fraction of a month, from the last day of the month following the period for which the amount or any portion of the amount should have been reported until the date of payment. The amount of any penalty imposed must be based on a graduated schedule adopted by the Nevada Tax Commission which takes into consideration the length of time the tax or fee remained unpaid.

Sec. 28. NRS 360.419 is hereby amended to read as follows:

360.419 1. If the Executive Director or a designated hearing officer finds that the failure of a person to make a timely return or payment of a tax imposed pursuant to NRS 361.320, [or] chapter 361A, 362, 363A, 363B, 369, 370, 372, 372A, 374, 375A, 375B, 376A, 377 or 377A of NRS, or sections 2 to 23, inclusive, of this act is the result of circumstances beyond his control and occurred despite the exercise of ordinary care and without intent, the Department may relieve him of all or part of any interest or penalty, or both.

- 2. A person seeking this relief must file with the Department a statement under oath setting forth the facts upon which he bases his claim.
- 40 3. The Department shall disclose, upon the request of any 41 person:
 - (a) The name of the person to whom relief was granted; and
 - (b) The amount of the relief.





- 4. The Executive Director or a designated hearing officer shall act upon the request of a taxpayer seeking relief pursuant to NRS 361.4835 which is deferred by a county treasurer or county assessor.
 - **Sec. 29.** NRS 360.510 is hereby amended to read as follows:
- 360.510 1. If any person is delinquent in the payment of any tax or fee administered by the Department or if a determination has been made against him which remains unpaid, the Department may:
- (a) Not later than 3 years after the payment became delinquent or the determination became final; or
- (b) Not later than 6 years after the last recording of an abstract of judgment or of a certificate constituting a lien for tax owed,
- including, without limitation, any officer or department of this State or any political subdivision or agency of this State, who has in his possession or under his control any credits or other personal property belonging to the delinquent, or owing any debts to the delinquent or person against whom a determination has been made which remains unpaid, or owing any debts to the delinquent or that person. In the case of any state officer, department or agency, the notice must be given to the officer, department or agency before the Department presents the claim of the delinquent taxpayer to the State Controller.
- 2. A state officer, department or agency which receives such a notice may satisfy any debt owed to it by that person before it honors the notice of the Department.
- 3. After receiving the demand to transmit, the person notified by the demand may not transfer or otherwise dispose of the credits, other personal property, or debts in his possession or under his control at the time he received the notice until the Department consents to a transfer or other disposition.
- 4. Every person notified by a demand to transmit shall, within 10 days after receipt of the demand to transmit, inform the Department of and transmit to the Department all such credits, other personal property or debts in his possession, under his control or owing by him within the time and in the manner requested by the Department. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 5, no further notice is required to be served to that person.
- 5. If the property of the delinquent taxpayer consists of a series of payments owed to him, the person who owes or controls the payments shall transmit the payments to the Department until otherwise notified by the Department. If the debt of the delinquent taxpayer is not paid within 1 year after the Department issued the original demand to transmit, the Department shall issue another demand to transmit to the person responsible for making the





payments informing him to continue to transmit payments to the Department or that his duty to transmit the payments to the Department has ceased.

- 6. If the notice of the delinquency seeks to prevent the transfer or other disposition of a deposit in a bank or credit union or other credits or personal property in the possession or under the control of a bank, credit union or other depository institution, the notice must be delivered or mailed to any branch or office of the bank, credit union or other depository institution at which the deposit is carried or at which the credits or personal property is held.
- 7. If any person notified by the notice of the delinquency makes any transfer or other disposition of the property or debts required to be withheld or transmitted, to the extent of the value of the property or the amount of the debts thus transferred or paid, he is liable to the State for any indebtedness due pursuant to this chapter, or chapter 360B, 362, 363A, 363B, 369, 370, 372, 372A, 374, 377, 377A or 444A of NRS, *sections 2 to 23, inclusive, of this act*, NRS 482.313, or chapter 585 or 680B of NRS from the person with respect to whose obligation the notice was given if solely by reason of the transfer or other disposition the State is unable to recover the indebtedness of the person with respect to whose obligation the notice was given.
- **Sec. 30.** Chapter 232 of NRS is hereby amended by adding thereto a new section to read as follows:
- 1. The Office of Ombudsman for Sex Workers is hereby created. The Director shall appoint the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman is in the unclassified service of the State.
- 2. The Ombudsman for Sex Workers shall, under the supervision of the Director and to the extent that money is available:
- (a) Provide counseling services specifically designed to assist sex workers in obtaining other types of employment, including:
 - (1) The assessment of their skills for other occupations;
- (2) The development of personal plans for alternative careers;
- (3) The provision of information regarding the availability of other types of employment; and
- (4) Referrals to appropriate public and private programs which provide career or technical education or training for, or placement in, other types of employment; and
 - (b) Perform such other tasks relating to sex workers as may be assigned by the Director.
 - 3. The Account for Programs Related to Sex Workers is hereby created in the State General Fund. The Ombudsman for Sex Workers shall administer the Account and may expend money





in the Account only to pay for the expenses of carrying out his duties and the functions of his office. All claims against the Account must be paid as other claims against the State are paid.

Sec. 31. NRS 232.900 is hereby amended to read as follows: 232.900 As used in NRS 232.900 to 232.960, inclusive, *and section 30 of this act*, unless the context otherwise requires:

- 1. "Department" means the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation.
 - 2. "Director" means the Director of the Department.

Sec. 32. NRS 232.910 is hereby amended to read as follows:

232.910 1. The Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation is hereby created. The purpose of the Department is to plan, coordinate and carry out various services and activities designed to achieve and support employment and economic independence for residents of this State who are disadvantaged, displaced or disabled.

- 2. The Department consists of a Director and the following divisions:
 - (a) Employment Security Division;
 - (b) Rehabilitation Division: and
 - (c) Such other divisions as the Director may establish.
- 3. The Nevada Equal Rights Commission, [and] the Board for the Education and Counseling of Displaced Homemakers *and the Office of Ombudsman for Sex Workers* are within the Department.
- **Sec. 33.** The State Controller shall transfer the first \$100,000 of the money deposited in the State General Fund pursuant to section 5 of this act during the fiscal year ending on June 30, 2011, into the Account for Programs Related to Sex Workers created by section 30 of this act.
- Sec. 34. 1. This section and sections 1 to 29, inclusive, and 31 33 of this act become effective on July 1, 2009.
- 2. Sections 30, 31 and 32 of this act become effective on July 1, 2010.





