

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
OF THE  
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

**Seventy-Fifth Session  
May 31, 2009**

The Committee on Health and Human Services was called to order by Chair Debbie Smith at 4:37 p.m. on Sunday, May 31, 2009, in Room 3138 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/75th2009/committees/](http://www.leg.state.nv.us/75th2009/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](mailto:publications@lcb.state.nv.us); telephone: 775-684-6835).

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Assemblywoman Debbie Smith, Chairwoman  
Assemblywoman Peggy Pierce, Vice Chair  
Assemblyman Mo Denis  
Assemblyman John Hambrick  
Assemblyman Joseph (Joe) P. Hardy  
Assemblywoman Sheila Leslie  
Assemblywoman April Mastroluca  
Assemblywoman Ellen B. Spiegel  
Assemblyman Lynn D. Stewart

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Assemblyman Ty Cobb (excused)  
Assemblywoman Bonnie Parnell (excused)

**GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:**

Senator Joyce Woodhouse, Clark County Senatorial District No. 5  
Senator Allison Copening, Clark County Senatorial District No. 6

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Amber Joiner, Committee Policy Analyst  
Chris Kanowitz, Committee Secretary  
Olivia Lloyd, Committee Assistant

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Lynn O'Mara, Program Manager, Repository for Health Care Quality,  
Sentinel Event Registry, Health Division, Department of Health and  
Human Services

**Chairwoman Smith:**

I will adjourn yesterday's meeting [at 4:37 p.m.] and open today's meeting. [Roll was called and a quorum was present.] I will open the hearing on Senate Bill 316 (1st Reprint) and invite Senators Woodhouse and Copening to the table to present the bill.

[Senate Bill 316 \(1st Reprint\)](#): Directs the Legislative Committee on Health Care to consider the establishment of a health insurance exchange in Nevada. (BDR S-1108)

**Senator Joyce Woodhouse, Clark County Senatorial District No. 5:**

We are very pleased to be here to present S.B. 316 (R1). I am here in my role as Chair of the Senate Committee on Legislative Operations and Elections. [Read prepared testimony ([Exhibit C](#)).]

I will ask Senator Copening to testify to the specifics of the bill and its intent.

**Senator Allison Copening, Clark County Senatorial District No. 6:**

I am pleased to be here to briefly explain S.B. 316 (R1), which allows for a study for the establishment of a Health Insurance Exchange in this state. [Read prepared testimony ([Exhibit D](#)).]

These are the basic benefits, but again, what we are asking is for permission to do a study. It is not "cookie-cutter" when it comes to these health exchanges. It would be what is appropriate for Nevada. This is why we need a study; to see what our current situation is, and if an exchange like this would actually work in Nevada. I got my idea from a study that was done in Minnesota. They had a very intense study where they outlined everything that they went through. They eventually wound up doing only part of what I read to you. We are asking you to pass this bill so that we may have the interim committee take

a look at this and direct staff to research whether this would be good for Nevada.

**Chairwoman Smith:**

You are not asking for an actual study, you are asking that our interim Legislative Committee on Health Care consider this issue, correct?

**Senator Woodhouse:**

That is correct, because we knew that there would not be funds to provide the staff and resources to do a full study. What we are trying to do is get this to an interim statutory committee so that they can put it on their agenda and start beginning the process. Hopefully next session, we may find that it is big enough to become a full-blown interim study. For now, we would like to get started with researching this issue and seeing where we need to go with it in the future.

**Assemblywoman Leslie:**

I do not know if the Legislative Committee on Health Care has a budget this year. We had a budget last interim that was fairly sizeable and we ended up reverting quite a bit of it, but usually there is a fairly good budget that comes with that committee to hire consultants because it is a statutory committee. Is a consultant going to be required in order to do this, or is it something our Research staff will be able to handle? Also, do you know what else has been assigned to the Legislative Committee on Health Care?

**Senator Copening:**

I called the people in Minnesota who did this study because they did retain consultants. I explained our situation and said that this is something we want to have our staff do because we have no budget. I asked if they believed staff could do this and they said they believed that staff could. The work they had their consultant do was quite extensive, but I was told it was not necessary. The aspects that they did would not be necessary for Nevada to do, and that staff could handle it.

**Chairwoman Smith:**

It sounds like what you are talking about is having it on a meeting agenda, going through the process and figuring out the specifics for a future study, more than actually taking it to the next level of bringing in a consultant, et cetera.

**Senator Woodhouse:**

That is my belief at this point in time based on what our resources are. All we are trying to do is get a good look at this topic. It might be that this is too large a project for us to get involved in, so we need to look at it first and see how far

we want to go; is this something that we want to pursue any further? I would not want us to jump into it without the proper preliminary work, and I think we can do the preliminary work this interim with the Legislative Committee on Health Care, to determine how much further we may want to go when the Legislature convenes in 2011.

**Chairwoman Smith:**

In response to Assemblywoman Leslie's comments, I was waiting to see what ended up passing, and how it all came together as far as our assignments. We have heard quite a few places where we have been asked to study certain issues during the interim. I would ask our Policy Analyst if she has any other information.

**Amber Joiner, Committee Policy Analyst:**

We do have a list of the items that have been assigned to the Legislative Committee on Health Care so far. Three have been approved by the Governor. The first will be Senate Bill 278 which requires the committee to study certain issues concerning the provision of public health.

There is also Assembly Bill 191 which requires an interim study relating to examinations of the height and weight of pupils.

Assembly Bill 326 would create a study of abuse of prescription narcotic drugs. Those are the three that have been approved and will be assigned to the committee.

Then there is one that is headed for conference committee, Senate Bill 293, which requires the study of medication for children. Senate Bill 316 (R1) would be number five.

**Chairwoman Smith:**

I do believe that all of the budgets have been cut back for the committees, and of course our staff has been cut back, so the staff that is available for all the committees has been reduced by 20 percent.

**Assemblyman Stewart:**

I am not sure how everything gets on the agenda, but in the interest of time, and with no time left, can the committee just agree to put it on at some time?

**Chairwoman Smith:**

I do think the chair, along with the co-chair, could probably do that. The chairs will decide the overall agenda anyway.

**Assemblyman Stewart:**

I am just thinking that if we pass this, and then the Governor has the prerogative to just kill it, we do not have any say.

**Assemblywoman Leslie:**

I think it is an interesting idea. I do not know anything about this. Just from reading your testimony, it certainly sounds like something that we should explore. I think we can pass the bill and be done with it. I would be in favor of going ahead and passing it because then it would be assigned to the interim committee. When Ms. Joiner was reading the list of things assigned to the interim committee, many of them seemed important, but minor. I like the idea of passing the bill and formally asking for the interim committee to do it. If the Governor vetoes it, the chairs can still decide to hear it.

**Assemblyman Denis:**

I just wanted to mention that I feel greedy. Out of the three that were approved, two were mine. I just wanted to say that the prescription of narcotic medications bill was in conjunction with the Pharmacy Board Task Force, and they said there was some funding available there. I was concerned about the staff and what they do, but at least for the narcotics one, there will be some help. Perhaps other organizations can help with the other interim committee work.

**Chairwoman Smith:**

Is there anyone here who would like to testify in support or opposition to the bill? [There was no response.] Is there anyone who would like to give neutral testimony?

**Lynn O'Mara, Program Manager, Repository for Health Care Quality, Sentinel Event Registry, Health Division, Department of Health and Human Services:**

We just have some additional information to share with the Committee that has come about since the bill was first introduced back in March. There are already elements of what would be required for this Health Insurance Exchange emerging in the private sector; however, there is no coordinated effort. We found them because we were doing research for a grant that could be the starting point of a study or even a pilot project. Of course we have not submitted it yet, and we do not know if we will get the grant, however the information we do get, we would gladly be able to share to assist the interim committee with what they would do.

**Chairwoman Smith:**

Is there anyone else who would like to testify on S.B. 316 (R1)? Then I will take a motion.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MASTROLUCA MOVED TO DO PASS  
SENATE BILL 316 (1st REPRINT).

ASSEMBLYWOMAN LESLIE SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION PASSED. (ASSEMBLYMEN COBB AND PARNELL  
WERE ABSENT FOR THE VOTE.)

Is there anyone else who would like to come before the Committee for public comment? I do not see anyone. I believe that we will stand in recess, just to be safe. The Committee is in recess subject to the call of the Chair [at 4:52 p.m.].

[This meeting was adjourned at 4:08 p.m. on June 1, 2009.]

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

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Chris Kanowitz  
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

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Assemblywoman Debbie Smith, Chair

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**EXHIBITS**

**Committee Name:** Committee on Health and Human Services

**Date:** May 31, 2009

**Time of Meeting:** 4:37 p.m.

<b>Bill</b>	<b>Exhibit</b>	<b>Witness / Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>
	<b>A</b>		Agenda
	<b>B</b>		Attendance Roster
S.B. 316	<b>C</b>	Senator Joyce Woodhouse	Testimony
S.B. 316	<b>D</b>	Senator Allison Copening	Testimony