

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

**Seventy-Sixth Session
February 23, 2011**

The Committee on Health and Human Services was called to order by Chair April Mastroluca at 1:32 p.m. on Wednesday, February 23, 2011, in Room 3138 of the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 4401 of the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada. Copies of the minutes, including the Agenda ([Exhibit A](#)), the Attendance Roster ([Exhibit B](#)), and other substantive exhibits, are available and on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau and on the Nevada Legislature's website at www.leg.state.nv.us/76th2011/committees/. In addition, copies of the audio record may be purchased through the Legislative Counsel Bureau's Publications Office (email: publications@lcb.state.nv.us; telephone: 775-684-6835).

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Assemblywoman April Mastroluca, Chair
Assemblywoman Peggy Pierce, Vice Chair
Assemblyman Elliot T. Anderson
Assemblywoman Teresa Benitez-Thompson
Assemblyman Steven Brooks
Assemblyman Richard Carrillo
Assemblyman Jason Frierson
Assemblyman Pete Goicoechea
Assemblyman John Hambrick
Assemblyman Scott Hammond
Assemblyman Pete Livermore
Assemblyman Mark Sherwood
Assemblywoman Debbie Smith

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Assemblywoman Lucy Flores (excused)

GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:

None

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Allison Combs, Committee Policy Analyst
Kirsten Coulombe, Committee Policy Analyst
Risa Lang, Committee Counsel
Linda Whimple, Committee Secretary
Olivia Lloyd, Committee Assistant

OTHERS PRESENT:

Jennifer L. Silverman, Attorney, Children's Attorney Project, Legal Aid
Center of Southern Nevada
JoAnne Witter, Family Services Supervisor, Department of Family
Services, Clark County
Madison Sandoval-Lunn, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
Dashun Jackson, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
Victoria Fulmer, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada
Jan Gilbert, Northern Nevada Coordinator, Progressive Leadership Alliance
of Nevada
Amber Howell, Deputy Administrator, Bureau of Services for Child Care,
Division of Child and Family Services, Department of Health and
Human Services
Andrew M. Eisen, M.D., F.A.A.P., Associate Dean for Clinical Education,
College of Osteopathic Medicine, Touro University Nevada
Frank P. Sullivan, Judge, Eighth Judicial District, Family Division
Gard Jameson, Chair, Children's Advocacy Alliance
Kevin Schiller, Director, Department of Social Services, Washoe County
Luann Grey, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada
Alex Ortiz, representing Clark County
Larry Struve, Advocate, Religious Alliance In Nevada
Rebecca Gasca, Legislative and Policy Director, American Civil Liberties
Union of Nevada
Tomika Martin, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada
Joseph Galata, Executive Director, Sierra Association of Foster Families

Chair Mastroluca:

[Roll was called.] Good afternoon. It is nice to see such a full house. We appreciate you being here. We are going to do one piece of Committee business, and then we are going to move on to the hearing. Committee members, you should have at your desk a copy of a Committee bill that is up for introduction. I would like to pass this out of Committee or go to the floor to be assigned. It basically has to do with the issue that we have been talking about regarding the Fund for Hospital Care for Indigent Persons, or the

Indigent Accident Fund and the Nevada Association of Counties, so it is something that will hopefully help them.

BDR 31-756—Revises provisions governing the use by a local government of the money in certain funds that are designated for capital projects. (Later introduced as [Assembly Bill 209](#).)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN SMITH MOVED FOR COMMITTEE
INTRODUCTION OF BDR 31-756.

ASSEMBLYMAN FRIERSON SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION PASSED. (ASSEMBLYWOMAN FLORES WAS
ABSENT.)

We are going to move into the hearing on [Assembly Bill 154](#).

[Assembly Bill 154](#): Enacts provisions which guarantee certain rights to children placed in foster homes in this State. (BDR 38-802)

Assemblyman Jason Frierson, Clark County Assembly District No. 8:

I come before you today with [Assembly Bill 154](#). This bill was originally a recommendation of the Legislative Committee on Children, Youth, and Families of the 2003-2004 Interim and was originally introduced as [Assembly Bill No. 43 of the 73rd Session](#) (2005). The goal of the bill is to create a foster child bill of rights in Nevada and in doing so to codify existing practices which serve to ensure foster children are treated with dignity and respect just as any other child would be entitled to. It does not create additional rights for foster children other than those that already exist, and it does not create any additional obligations on the part of foster parents other than those that already exist.

In 1973, the National Foster Parent Association adopted a bill of rights for foster children. Since then, several states have also adopted versions of that measure. When this measure was originally presented, there were concerns voiced by various entities involved in the foster care system, and the measure ultimately failed when those various entities could not agree on how to proceed. Since then, those entities have come together, and [A.B. 154](#) reflects language that was drafted with the involvement and agreement of district attorneys, the Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada, Children's Attorney Project, attorneys, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), foster parents, community organizations such as Boys Town and St. Jude's, and most importantly, it was primarily drafted by foster children and former foster children.

The intent of A.B. 154 is not to create additional obligations or duties, and the provisions in the draft before you include additional language from years of work on this issue. Since those groups have come together and contributed to the development of this measure, there are some provisions in A.B. 154 that we are going to propose to remove. This will allow the foster care system to treat the protection of these rights on a case-by-case basis, but also provide flexibility to the foster parents and the foster care system.

I would like to go through the bill now and answer any questions about the intent before inviting some individuals who have some very compelling stories to come and tell you why they support this measure. I also want to point your attention to an exhibit, just for your review at some point, a publication by the Child Welfare Network. It is a 2011 Legislative Policy Agenda ([Exhibit C](#)) and on the third page of that agenda is a recommendation to adopt a foster child bill of rights.

Section 2 of A.B. 154 indicates that it is simply a policy of the state that the children in our foster care system have the rights that are set forth in this bill. Section 3 deals with the rights of foster children at home. They have a right to receive this information. They have a right to be treated with respect. They have a right to fair and equal access to services, placement, care, treatment, and benefits. These are rights that already exist. As with the rest of the bill, these rights exist throughout either the *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS) or the *Nevada Administrative Code* (NAC), and the purpose of bringing these together is not to be redundant, but to consolidate in one place so when foster children are apprised of their rights, everyone involved knows where to find the list of rights that they are entitled to.

Sections 1 through 5 are the sections of this bill that reflect the rights that the foster children have about various aspects of their lives with respect to school, religion, extracurricular activities, and health care services. Sections 6 through 9 are actually the sections that I referred to earlier that are provisions that were added over the years because of various concerns about enforcement and how these measures would be put into place. The reason that we are proposing to remove those sections now is because the various parties have been brought together and concluded that the best way to proceed with the enforcement of these rights is to allow the foster care system to address them on a case-by-case basis. This is a very fact-specific area and sometimes it requires very fact-specific resolutions. We are proposing to remove sections 6 through 9. I have been in contact with the parties that have been involved with the drafting of this measure; in particular, the Clark County District Attorney's Office was extremely helpful in filtering through the redraft. While I am discussing the redraft, I would like to compliment our drafters. Oftentimes we

submit bills to drafters and they come out different than the way we submitted them and almost always they have come out a hundred times better and much more appropriate for the NRS and that is the case in this measure. So the language is actually in a different order than it was originally submitted by the folks who drafted it, but sections 1 through 5 completely encompass the language that was intended to be included.

The only other thing I would like to add at this point is that we are not going to proceed with this as an enforcement measure, but rather as a codification of existing civil rights. So this is something that the foster care system, foster parents, foster children, professionals, and community agencies that work with these individuals can use to dictate how they proceed with each individual child in the foster care system. That is my initial presentation. I am more than happy to answer any questions. At the direction of the Chair, I have Jennifer Silverman from the Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada, Children's Attorney Project, and she is here to answer some practical questions if there are any about how these measures would actually be put into place.

Assemblywoman Smith:

Thank you for bringing this bill forward. I was looking at section 5, and you might remember in the hearing the other day I was talking about the education system and making sure that we have systems that are identifying kids as they move from school to school. I was wondering in this case where it refers to the child having the right to stay in the original school that is in the child's best interest, who decides that? Is it the foster care agency or the advocate? Who makes that decision?

Assemblyman Frierson:

I would like to have Ms. Silverman come up and answer some questions about the application of the measure.

Jennifer L. Silverman, Attorney, Children's Attorney Project, Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada:

Education is governed by federal law and also when a parent still retains parental rights, the parent will actually have involvement in deciding what is in the best interest of their child in terms of education. When a child is in the foster care system and the parent is not available, then the foster parent may act as a surrogate. If the foster parent cannot, then an educational surrogate can also take the place of the parent as well. That usually applies when the child is in a group home or a home without one individual foster parent on a one-on-one basis. Children in the foster care system have a legal guardian, who is their caseworker in the Department of Family Services, and oftentimes educational issues are discussed on a team basis with the caseworker, the

parent, and/or the educational surrogate meeting with the schools. In terms of the best interest, it would go first to the parent, then the educational surrogate, and to the team. In terms of whether or not the child can stay in the school, consideration will also be made in terms of distance, and it will be what is practicable and that is what is in this statute.

Assemblywoman Smith:

That is what is in the federal statute?

Jennifer Silverman:

That is what is proposed in A.B. 154, and that is if it is practicable to get the foster child from their new home to their old school.

Assemblywoman Smith:

If the foster parent becomes the decision maker and it is more convenient for the foster parent to have the child moved, which I completely understand, but it may be more beneficial for the child to stay in the old school, how is that conflict resolved?

Jennifer Silverman:

The foster parent would only take the place of the parent if the parent was unavailable or unwilling to make that decision. If it is impractical for the foster parent to transport, then the child would not go to the old school. This happens quite frequently when a child is placed in a group home and the group home only has a certain bus that takes all the children to the school in which they are zoned. Oftentimes, due to practicality, they will go to that zoned school. If there is no parent available, then the foster parent can make those decisions unless the foster parent does not want to make them, and then an educational surrogate can be appointed. In southern Nevada we have educational surrogates run by a program in our own office that we help match up the children who need those decisions made for and with them.

Assemblywoman Smith:

Does this mirror the federal law that is in this bill of rights?

Jennifer Silverman:

Yes. Right now in Nevada we have aspirations to allow the children to stay in the school that they are entitled to stay in if they can. We are also looking at the practicality of the matter, and if they cannot be transported and it is too much of a burden on the foster parents to transport them to their old school, then they will find a school in their zone which will be adequate and will meet their needs. Oftentimes if a child has special needs, then individual educational programs will be designed for them at the school in which they are zoned.

Assemblywoman Smith:

I am not sure that completely answered my question. Does this mirror the federal language?

Jennifer Silverman:

Yes, to my understanding, it does.

Assemblyman Frierson:

Madam Chair, if I may follow up briefly on something I think may be helpful for other questions as well as that one. Although I indicated we were proposing to remove sections 6 through 9, section 7, subsection 2 reflects that "A licensee of a foster home may impose reasonable restrictions . . . ," and I believe that that measure is current practice and that was the intent of the bill. The folks that brought this together intended to include that aspect of the bill so that the foster parents had control over the way that this is enforced and that they could do what was appropriate depending on the circumstances.

Assemblyman Hambrick:

I am going to try to define my use of the term "system." The Law Center would be part of the system, the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) is going to be part of the system, the foster parents, the real parents, and anyone else connected to this child could be the system. Try to explain to me in very general terms how—and I am going to be in support of this bill because I like it—but explain how you assist a child under the age of ten to understand what is happening. You seem to articulate 12 and above, 18 and below, and these youngsters are fairly smart at this point. If they are in foster care, they are street-smart. But how do we make sure that their rights are granted or that they understand it at that age bracket? I had a conversation prior to the beginning of the Committee meeting with some people with DCFS and the public defenders, so it is an educational question more than anything else. How do we get these youngsters to fully comprehend what is happening to them and that they do not have to be afraid, that they can stand up and say, "Wait a minute. I have a question. Who do I go to?"

Jennifer Silverman:

At the Children's Attorney Project, we represent children ranging from babies to, at the most, the age of 20 to 21. As attorneys, we do have to tailor our counsel and advice to the children depending upon their age. If I am meeting with a very young child, I will break it down in the most simple terms that I can. I will oftentimes draw and diagram things for them because I am very visual and a lot of children are very visual. We just have to make that judgment call as counselors and attorneys to tailor what we are saying to the children, how we are describing what is happening to them in terms that they will understand.

With practice, we all get better at being able to identify the age that is appropriate for certain descriptive terms or even descriptions of the law itself.

Assemblyman Goicoechea:

I am going to follow up with Assemblywoman Smith's comments. The language in section 5, subsection 1, paragraph (c), ". . . to the extent practicable . . ." as far as transportation, but then continues with, ". . . and if in the best interests of the child." I think that is pretty broad-based. At that point maybe a change in the schools would to some people seem to be the best option, where maybe the foster child really does not want to be displaced. Does that become a violation of their rights?

Jennifer Silverman:

Some accommodations can be made. I have had personal clients who have taken the bus from their home to their school, maybe a city bus. They have possibly had transportation arranged in some other manner, so there are ways to go around the transportation issue; however, ultimately if the foster parent cannot transport the child from Las Vegas to Boulder City, it would be more practical for that child to go to Boulder City High School and then have the educational program tailored to them. Then their best interests would still be met.

Assemblyman Goicoechea:

I am looking more at "best interests." Who makes that determination? Clearly the foster child would probably prefer to stay in his own element, but maybe that is a problem because of the crowd he is running with or the environment that surrounds him in that particular school. So it seems pretty broad-based to me. Then the foster parent or maybe the parent says, "Hey, it would probably be better if this foster child went to school in Boulder City because it would be a completely different environment." But then would the foster child have the ability to say, "That is a violation of my rights?"

Jennifer Silverman:

I believe that the way you characterized it would actually be consistent with the bill. If the child still wanted to go back to his school in Boulder City and he is living in Las Vegas, then his parent, the foster parent, or the educational surrogate can make the decision in conjunction with the legal guardian that in fact the child will have his interest served at the new school with extra supports put in place and that would actually be in the best interest of that child and accommodations would be made.

Assemblyman Anderson:

I really like this bill. I wanted to clarify one thing. We had corresponded a bit off the record about section 3, subsection 7, line 29 regarding unreasonable searches and seizures. My thoughts are because of section 7, subsection 2 regarding reasonable restrictions to preserve good order and discipline in the light, maybe that would be a good subsection to leave in as well. That was my thought.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson:

I was wondering if I could get clarification about how the determination is made of how a child goes to a particular school. Could I get a little bit of clarification about who is involved in that process? I do not know if there is someone here to speak about what the first step is, whether they try to find a foster home within the school zoning area to try and maintain that child in the school they are zoned for, or what happens if there is not a foster home available.

Assemblyman Frierson:

Madam Chair, I believe we have someone who may be able to answer some of those questions.

JoAnne Witter, Family Services Supervisor, Department of Family Services, Clark County:

I think that when a youth or child is placed out of the home, we would like to find a foster home in the region of their originating school. It is not always possible, so as Jennifer was saying, we certainly look at all of the options that we have available. If the foster parent is able to assist with transportation, or if there are no safety concerns, then an older youth could potentially take the city bus. I think we absolutely look at all of the options available, but typically our first line would be that we hope to be able to find a home in their original zone. Because we have so many different foster homes and kind of in-cluster areas it is not always possible, but a lot of times in our child and family meetings we bring a whole team together and try to get everyone's thoughts and opinions and look at different ways that we can make it happen so that the youth can attend their home school.

Assemblyman Hammond:

I have talked at length with my colleague, Mr. Frierson, and I like the bill. I wanted to put sort of a human touch on this. I am a school teacher, and I have had a few siblings attend my school that entered this program. One of them I had for one year. She played basketball for me, and she really loved it. She felt like she wanted to go to a different school where they had opportunities for her as an Advanced Placement student. She had informed me that she had gotten together with her foster parents and a few others and had

decided that they were going to go to a different school. To me, that is the way the system is supposed to work. They got together and looked at the best interests of the child. In exchange for losing her, though, she sent her two sisters to the basketball team, so that was a good exchange. I just thought I should mention that. To the Committee, I think that is what we are looking at—if I am not mistaken—where the best interests of the child are brought forward. And they know it. They know that they have those rights, and they felt pretty good about it.

Chair Mastroluca:

Mr. Frierson, I recognize what you explained as far as how most of this language comes from other parts of the NRS. I was looking at section 4, subsection 2, paragraphs (a) and (c). I noticed in paragraph (c) it talks about the age of the child, “If the child is 12 years of age or older” But in paragraph (a) it does not state a child’s age and I am wondering why we would not use the same age for both.

JoAnne Witter:

I think our goal for that one was the age the youth could consent to being adopted or not being adopted and having the choice of really being an active participant in where they would like to be placed at that time, whether it be a foster home, if we can find that kinship home, or ultimately if we are going to be looking at having them age out of the system. When we are looking at the case plan we want to be able to give youth of all ages an opportunity to have some say in their life. I think because placement tends to be more due to safety and security issues, we are going to look a little bit more at the youth who are older and able to make more of an educated decision and not so much of an emotional decision.

Chair Mastroluca:

I was also looking at section 5, subsection 1, paragraph (e), and I really liked the language in section 9. I was wondering that since you have eliminated that section if there was any consideration to reflect that language in paragraph (e).

Assemblyman Frierson:

I will briefly address that and they can follow up. I did raise that issue with the players, so to speak, who helped draft this, and I had received no hesitation about making sure that that was included, that the language would mirror the full number of staff that were not to identify those children.

Chair Mastroluca:

I think that is a good recommendation because I know in Clark County oftentimes there are people in the office that know and who need to know and it is just an extra layer of security that this is not for public consumption.

Assemblywoman Smith:

Is that not a Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) issue that already has that confidentiality? Is that not already covered there? Do we just need to reinforce it here?

Jennifer Silverman:

Yes, even if it is covered in the federal law or FERPA, the intent is that the children will actually receive it, read it, be educated about it, and then know that this is their right. At the ages of 5 to 20, they may not be able to access federal laws, go through the NRS and the NAC on their own, but to have it in their bill of rights, it will be there in black and white for them and they can discuss it with their case worker, their CASA, and their attorney and have it right there for them to see.

Chair Mastroluca:

Do you know of other states that have enacted a similar bill of rights for children?

Assemblyman Frierson:

I believe at least three states have adopted it as statute: New Jersey, Florida, and California. Other states that have adopted a policy but not necessarily a statute include Maine, New York, South Carolina, and Vermont. I believe that there may be some more, and I can certainly provide that information. I know that several states have actually continued to look at it, and I have spoken with someone today, Andrew Eisen, who is planning to testify, about a national effort and some other states that would like to not only get involved but model their policy after our effort.

Assemblyman Livermore:

I would like to echo the sentiments of my colleagues about this bill and the importance of this bill, especially to the foster care community. I looked through the whole bill and I could not find anything close to this, but basically what it comes down to is section 5, subsection 1, paragraph (i), "Attend a class or program concerning independent living" And then to subsection 2, "To participate in extracurricular, cultural and personal enrichment activities" It is not in here, but would you support or not support the participation in high school Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps?

JoAnne Witter:

We absolutely support it. We have several youth who are actively involved. One of my current staff, who was a former foster youth, was actively involved in it as well. I think that with the funds that are available for our youth, we really promote any activities that they are interested in and want to participate in, whether it is sports, musical activities, art, drawing, drama, or anything. Any kind of activities that they are interested in, we are absolutely going to support. It may not be what they ultimately end up really liking, but we have given them that chance and then they can try, and say, "You know, I did or did not like it." So absolutely, any activities that they provide to us we will do everything we can to get them involved in it.

Assemblyman Livermore:

Thank you very much. I appreciate that.

Chair Mastroluca:

Mr. Frierson, I know that you have brought some folks with you, and I was going to ask if you wanted to have the former foster youth that you specifically brought to go first and then we can have some other folks in support from the agencies testify.

Assemblyman Frierson:

Thank you. I do not know if Ms. Silverman has any closing information. She was originally going to testify, and I believe I covered much of what she intended on presenting. If she has any closing remarks I would like her to do that, and she can introduce Madison and Dashun, who are the youth that I have arranged to be here and who were heavily involved in the drafting of the bill of rights.

Jennifer Silverman:

I will speak briefly about the meaning of this bill for my clients and for the children in foster care. I have been representing abused and neglected children at the Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada for two years. My clients are often physically abused, sexually abused, neglected, exposed to drugs and alcohol, and in some cases, utterly abandoned by their parents. They are moved from their homes and placed into shelters. They are split up from their parents and siblings. They are confused, young, and they do not know who to turn to, and they do not know who to trust. They do not know when they enter the system that they are entitled to dignity and respect and all of the rights outlined in the bill before you today. Imagine a child who, at the age of 12, is taken away from his sister who he has grown up with his whole life. He does not know if he will ever see her again, if he is allowed to be placed with his family again, and when he will get his next meal. If this 12-year-old child that is placed in a

shelter home is provided with this bill of rights, he will be able to see that if it is possible, the law says that he should be placed with his siblings again, that he will have visitation with them, that he is entitled to shelter, food, dignity, and respect. This will provide these children with a sense of hope that they did not have before when they did not see what their rights were in black and white.

This bill was drafted by the youth, and six of those youth are here with us today. It was drafted by the youth and for the youth with the help of an immense number of community partners including the Department of Family Services, CASA, the Office of the District Attorney of Clark County, the National Foster Parent Association, and numerous foster care agencies across Nevada. It was drafted by children in both the north and the south in Foster and Adoptive Youth Together (FAAYT) chapters. It was overseen by the Youth Advisory Board, and it was done by children in all counties including rural counties. It is just an amazing effort, and they are looking forward to hopefully making an imprint on Nevada law so that future foster children will not feel as helpless, hopeless, and uncertain about their futures as they may have felt.

I will now introduce two of the former foster youth that came with us from southern Nevada. One is Madison Sandoval-Lunn, and the other is Dashun Jackson. Madison was in foster care for seven years. Dashun Jackson was in foster care for four years, and he aged out of the system just last month in January 2011. I welcome them here with us today.

Madison Sandoval-Lunn, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

Good afternoon, Committee members. I would like to take this time to thank you all for the opportunity to speak on behalf of Assembly Bill 154. I am a junior at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. I am also a member of the local Youth Advisory Council and statewide Youth Advisory Board. Both of these organizations are aimed at creating a network of current and former foster youth and building the leadership needed to advocate for change in the system.

I am here today in support of Assembly Bill 154, which seeks to be a comprehensive list of rights for children in foster care. I hold this bill very close to my heart for a number of reasons. First and foremost, Miriya Lawrence, who was unable to attend the hearing today, my colleague Dashun Jackson, and I were heavily involved in drafting the language necessary for the bill to reflect the needs and voices of the youth across the state of Nevada.

You see, each one of us were in the foster care system at one point in time and hear the cry for change in the system. Personally, I was in the foster care system for seven years, and I had my fair share of good and bad foster homes. This may be a little bit more information than you actually need, but there was a

point in time when I was about 14, I was in a foster home for about three years. I only stayed because I wanted to stay in the school, but we had our refrigerators and pantries locked, food was rationed out, and that is why one of the provisions here was to make sure that the children have fair, adequate, and accessible food. So it is something that holds much importance to me.

Reflecting upon those years, I recognize the areas in which the system was broken, how my unawareness of the law and my rights essentially silenced me, and how children in the system can benefit from the knowledge I had attained through my experience.

As a group of young leaders, we all share the same vision—the vision of creating a means for vulnerable children in the foster care system to advocate for themselves. Today, I present to you the Nevada foster care bill of rights, which seeks to be that exact mechanism for children to address grievances. It is the voice that I, as a foster care alumna, wished I had. It is the voice that will echo across the state of Nevada to create a more efficient and effective foster care system. It is within everyone's responsibility to make sure that these vulnerable children are given those tools necessary to advocate for themselves.

In conclusion, in support for the children of the current and future system, I strongly urge the Committee to move forward on this bill. Thank you.

Dashun Jackson, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I am a former foster youth and the president of the Youth Advisory Council, as well as FAAYT. As Madison stated, we came here today with a purpose, a purpose to get a bill passed and to testify and to have our voice heard on a project that means so much to many. I would like you to take a moment to imagine yourself as a young child, taken from your home and placed into a stranger's house. When you first walk in, you are greeted, but as time goes on, you notice there is a lock on the refrigerator. You look to your left and there is a lock on the pantry. Then you notice when you go to the garage there are two refrigerators, one that is the freezer and in it is nothing but frozen foods. So you cannot access anything there. On the other, there is another chained lock. For many foster youth, such as myself, that was the issue. Imagine yourself being placed among strangers and being forced to adopt rules, going to school and wondering if everyone knows your deepest secret, or knowing your deepest thoughts, that you are in foster care and you have these things going on. Foster children across the globe are looked at, examined, and diagnosed as troublemakers, problems to society, and doers of wrongful deeds. I believe that by enabling and putting forth this bill, it would ensure that it would decrease the problems that we face today—children being locked in hot cars and children

being beaten. Caseworkers are not checking up on their kids. You know the headlines. "Former Foster Child Sues Over Alleged Abuse" in the *Seattle Times*. Or "New Life for New Jersey Brothers Who Were Nearly Starved to Death by Foster Parents." Do you not remember the story of the three brothers living with the foster family? They were nearly starved to death. They were forced to eat drywall in order to fill their stomachs. They were beaten and deprived of living a normal life. With this bill, we can assure that these headlines do not make it to Nevada and to prevent as many problems as possible.

I am reminded of a story of a little boy and the starfish. There was an older man sitting on the beach and he noticed something dancing in the distance. When he got closer, he noticed a young boy throwing starfish into the ocean. The starfish had washed ashore the night before and as the older man got closer, he asked, "What are you doing?" The young boy stated that he was throwing the starfish back into the ocean. The older man had to rephrase his question and simply state, "Why are you throwing the starfish back into the ocean?" The older man made the assumption that there were miles of starfish that had washed ashore and clearly the young man could not get to them all. The young boy picked up a starfish, threw it back into the ocean, and simply said, "I made a difference to this one." And he did the same thing with another and he said, "I made a difference to this one." As we look at the foster care bill of rights, the ocean represents the bill. You represent the young boy. Those that do not know represent the older man, and we, as foster youth, represent those starfish. We need someone to pick us up and throw us back into that ocean of life.

David Felter, a renowned author and a former foster youth, once stated, "Ask yourself, was there anything I could have done to prevent this situation? If the answer is 'yes,' do something now and become that better person for it." I stand in the gap as a former foster youth, asking and urging that this measure be passed. I have three younger siblings that are in the foster care system still, and I see the things that they go through in their current foster home, and I go to these different meetings and sit in and listen to different youth talk about the many problems that they face because they do not know what their rights are. The problem with the three young men in New Jersey could have been resolved had they known what their rights were and had they known that they could have taken the next measure. Thank you.

Victoria Fulmer, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada:

I am a Youth Advisory Board member in Washoe County. I have been in foster care for the last six years and also have siblings who are still in there. One point I would like to make is the inadequate clothing that we have. There is a certain amount of money that we are supposed to get per month for

clothing or every couple of months to go shopping, whereas in the foster homes that I have been in personally, or my sisters have been in, we get to go to Savers and we have a certain amount—\$30, whereas the kids that are actually biological to the foster parents go to the mall and spend \$300 to \$400, knowing that that is the money they get for us and we get nothing basically. My little sister is going to be in the foster system until 2015, and she has no idea what it is that she has rights to. She knows the basic rights like, “I can do this. I can go to school. I can come home. I have a curfew.” She does not know that they cannot touch her and they cannot revoke her right to her mother. I was in a situation where they abused my sister and it took six months for us to be removed from the home. My sister had constant bruising and as far as I know, they still are allowed to have foster children, which is appalling to me. I come from a background of sexual abuse, neglect, and things like that, and to be put in a home where all the same things happen terrifies me. How do I know that when my foster dad goes to do crack or smoke he is not going to come and do things that have already been done to me? So for kids who are in that situation, they need to know that they have somewhere to go and that they can call people. That is all I would like to say. Thank you.

Chair Mastroluca:

I would like to thank all three of you for stepping up and making this a priority. You will definitely be making a difference in the lives of a lot of children that will come behind you. Sometimes it is easier to just walk away and try to forget what you have gone through, and to be willing to share your story with us and to put what you went through into action to help others is a sign of a true humanitarian. I want to thank each of you for doing so.

Are there any questions from the Committee?

Assemblyman Hambrick:

Dashun, I am going to aim the question at you, since you are one of the starfish that survived. I am sure that you have picked up that this Committee, by and large, is in support of this piece of legislation. Do you truly believe, right down to your toenails, that regardless of the legislation that we pass, will this make a difference to the attitudes and the behavior of the foster parents? All three of you have had some very bad experiences, but would a piece of paper make a difference?

Dashun Jackson:

I believe that though this is a piece of paper, it is what comes behind it that is important. I believe that if the paper is supported, it will be pushed, and the minds and the attitudes will change. However, we can write any type of paper, or any type of bill, but if no one is behind the bill and no one is enforcing it,

then it will not go any further. It will remain in a stagnant place. I believe that if, and only if, it gets that push that it needs, then will it be able to move forward.

Assemblyman Hambrick:

Well said. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Assemblyman Brooks:

I just have a comment. I have sat back and listened, and the Committee members know that is sometimes hard for me to do. I believe that special people are put in special places for special reasons, and today you were here for a special reason, and you are all starfish and you remember that. Thank you for your testimony today.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson:

I just wanted to say that I know that this might be a piece of paper and this just codifies a lot of what is in law, but I do not think that we could ever go really far enough in terms of empowering the youth of all ages who are in the foster care system and those who have aged out. I do not think that we can actually add language strong enough to support you in all that you do. I wish you a fabulous successful future. Thank you so much.

Assemblyman Hammond:

I do not have very many questions for you, and it is not that I want to hear myself speak, but I think it would be rude if I did not say this. I have gone through similar experiences as you have. I think there was a point in my life—there were some things that happened—where I looked at my parents and thought that I did not want to repeat what had happened to me. I knew I had to make changes, and I think those changes have impacted the future of my children. I think I am a better father because of what I wanted to do. What I want to say here is that there may have been someone that picked you up and threw you back into the ocean, but you had to have done some of that on your own. Just by you being here, that piece of paper that you want to see get passed, while it might be out there, it is going to be the three of you and many others like you that will go out there and change the world because you want to see a change.

As a teacher, I almost have to say that to you. Some of us will put our hands on a book and say “We are going to do that one day.” I appreciate your willingness to go out there and say some things that were very difficult to say, very difficult, and I appreciate that. Thank you.

Assemblyman Anderson:

I also want to echo some of my colleagues' sentiments and in particular my colleague from District 27 about empowerment. I think a lot of people know of the *Constitution*. It is just a piece of paper, but by knowing your rights, it makes you much more able to fight for them and having them written down and easily accessible. This is a very simple thing that I think we can do to help you. Thank you for coming to give us your testimony.

Jan Gilbert, Northern Nevada Coordinator, Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada:

I do not think you need me to speak. You have all said everything that I feel about this bill, and I am thrilled that these young people have come before you to support it. Thank you.

Amber Howell, Deputy Administrator, Bureau of Services for Child Care, Division of Child and Family Services, Department of Health and Human Services:

The Division is in support of this legislation. I also wanted to follow up on some questions that the Committee had about the educational stability component. On Monday I spoke about fostering connections legislation having to do with kinship guardianship assistance. That legislation is also included in the Fostering Connections to Success Act, which also talks about the educational stability of children. Based on that legislation, what the state had to do was to revise their case planning policy to include educational components and consideration of placement of children in schools in close proximity. So what we have is a case planning policy which talks about how those decisions are made, defines what the best interests of the children are, and also has a tool that can be used for consideration on how you select which school that child goes to. If the Committee would be interested, I would be happy to submit it to you so it can further answer your questions.

Chair Mastroluca:

Thank you, Ms. Howell. Please do submit that to staff, and we will make sure that we get it to all of the Committee members.

Are there any questions? [There was no response.]

Andrew M. Eisen, M.D., F.A.A.P., Associate Dean for Clinical Education, College of Osteopathic Medicine, Touro University Nevada:

Good afternoon, Madam Chairwoman and members of the Committee. My name is Dr. Andrew Eisen. I am a board-certified pediatrician, a fellow of the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the American Academy of Pediatrics, Nevada Chapter foster care contact. I am here today to speak in support of this

foster child bill of rights. It is an impressive piece of work that was created almost entirely by some of Nevada's own children. I have had the opportunity to meet some of these young people in the past and have been duly impressed by the work they have done and that they have recognized how important this work actually is. I cannot say anything that is going to be more moving than what you heard from them a few moments ago, but there are a couple of points that I did want to share with the Committee.

To the point of this being a piece of paper and if it would change attitudes, I think that is a very important question. Whether or not this will change attitudes—and you made an important comment about the *Constitution* as a piece of paper—I think that what is important here is that this is a major step in Nevada codifying in law the state's responsibility to our own children. When we talk about our children, we say it that way because they are our responsibility. We can see the outcome; if we take care of our children, what they can do surpasses even what we have seen today.

I do want to address a couple of the questions that came up. One is with regard to the references to age 12 and what we do for children younger than that. I think the issue in the statute is that as children reach the age of 12, that it is really a deadline by which the expectations are that they are involved in the decisions that affect their long-term placement. The sections that precede that really outline that all children, regardless of age, are entitled to information about their placement and about changes in their status. But it is really putting that age in there as an absolute deadline by which those children are expected to have the opportunity to speak up about their care.

The other issue that came up as a general concern and also relates specifically to that question of educational stability is the issue of what is in the child's best interest. I think it is important to recognize that this is not a new concept. We have an expectation as to the way things currently stand, not simply foster parents but of all parents, that we will act in our child's best interest. We do offer, and rightfully so, considerable leeway to parents in determining what they feel is in their child's best interest, whether that is an actual parent or a foster parent, but nonetheless, there is ultimate responsibility on the part of the state to ensure the parents are indeed acting in what is their child's best interest. So this is not something new that is being developed for this bill. This is just an opportunity for us to clarify that children in foster care are entitled to those same rights as children who are with their natural parents, that decisions be made in their best interest.

The last point that I want to make, because I always want to finish on something positive, and Assemblyman Frierson made reference to this, as

the Chapter foster care contact for the American Academy of Pediatrics, I had the opportunity to share with my colleagues around the country what had been developed by our youth with regard to this bill of rights. Not only did I get overwhelmingly positive feedback on what had been created, but in fact the Academy of Pediatrics is hoping to be able to utilize Nevada's foster child bill of rights as a model for other states to follow. It is high time for us to be able to present Nevada as a positive model for the rest of the country in terms of how we care for children and how we take responsibility for our children. I thought that was incredibly strong support for this document, and I will be proud to be able to tell my colleagues at the Academy that not only did our children create this, but that our legislators recognized the value of this and are behind it. I have been very pleased to hear the positive comments from the members of the Committee today in support of this. I think it is an important document for us to codify in law, and I encourage the Committee's support.

Chair Mastroluca:

Are there any questions? [There was no response.]

Frank P. Sullivan, Judge, Eighth Judicial District, Family Division:

I am a Judge for the Eighth Judicial District, Family Division, and I preside over child welfare cases in the Juvenile Division. I do not want to say very much. I think I cannot say anything better than what has already been expressed by our young adults. I am simply here to show my support as a juvenile court Judge. I agree with the statements of Assemblyman Frierson and attorney Silverman that this simply provides the dignity and respect for our foster care children that all our youth and all our citizens are entitled to. I agree these rights already exist under state and federal law, and state and federal policies. It does not impose any additional obligations. I think it is recognizing just the basic fundamental rights to adequate food, clothing, housing, access to appropriate services, equal access to education, freedom of religion and communication. I think those are basic fundamental rights of all our citizens. I do want to commend our foster care youth who testified today and all that worked on this bill for a great job, and I want to commend the Legislature and our community partners for taking a lead on recognizing the bill of rights for our foster care youth. If you have any questions on this, I will be glad to answer.

Chair Mastroluca:

Are there any questions? [There was no response.]

Gard Jameson, Chair, Children's Advocacy Alliance:

I am the Chair of the Children's Advocacy Alliance and a member of the Child Welfare Network. We also support this bill. We want to commend Jennifer Silverman, Legal Aid, Madison, and Dashun for the great work that

they have done. I think the assembled group up there needs to know there is a fiscal note associated with this bill. The fiscal note is that three out of four of the girls in foster care wind up pregnant and within 18 months have another child and are in this system. Six out of ten of the boys, who are aging out of this system, wind up in jail. This is a national survey. These are the fiscal notes if we do not create safety nets underneath these children. So this bill represents an additional safety net that is absolutely mandatory, and I cannot imagine in good conscience anyone voting against this bill. As we say in child advocacy, "This is low-hanging fruit." So I encourage you to not only look at this bill, but I would ask if this group would look at our penal system and look at what that population consists of. In the state of New York, over 50 percent of the male inmates are former foster youth. I think this state needs to know that information. Once that information comes forward, I think we will make intelligent decisions based on that information. I encourage you to try to bring about a census of our penal system and to ask the appropriate questions because there is a disproportionate number of youth in our penal system who are coming from the foster care system. Thank you.

Chair Mastroluca:

Thank you for bringing up the point regarding that census. I know we had a discussion about it previously, and I did try to find that information. It is not something that I can find that we currently keep track of. I agree that it is something that will help us in the future. Thank you for bringing that up.

Are there any questions for Mr. Jameson? [There was no response.]

Kevin Schiller, Director, Department of Social Services, Washoe County:

I do not want to repeat anything that has been said. I think what the youth said has been very empowering. There is one thing I want to highlight, and this gives me the opportunity to do it. We listen to parents as we develop policy and we move forward, and we need to listen to youth even more. I want to emphasize from the perspective that you hear lots of bills and you hear lots of testimony around regulations about how we need to change our practice. The transparency in what this bill does is that it emphasizes and makes it law, and we need to make sure we are listening to those youth as we make those changes. I want to highlight something today that I never had the opportunity to do with this audience. There is a former foster care youth in the audience that we brought into a project about three years ago to develop policy and practice changes working with Casey Family Programs. She is part of a collaborative where we went across the country and met with other jurisdictions to listen to that youth voice and listen to that former foster care voice say, "How do we change what we do every day?" I will be the first to tell you that the system is not perfect and that this is a work in progress that we have to

take seriously, and youth are a key component of that. So I wanted to introduce LouAnne Gray, because she was a key component in developing policy and practice on information that I presented to you earlier this week.

Luann Grey, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada:

I am a former foster youth and former president of Wake Up Youth in Washoe County. I am in my senior year at University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) and will graduate in May with a journalism degree. I was really busy when I got this email last night. The coordinator of the Children's Cabinet had emailed me asking me to please come, if not to speak just to be here. I really thought about saying no. I am an editor for the magazine at UNR, I am in five classes, and I have been volunteering for foster youth for a really, really long time. I tried to talk myself out of coming. The reason I say this to you is because I had to come. It is so important. Regardless of whether there are really articulate and well-spoken youth here, regardless of how happy you are to pass this bill, I had to come here to make sure that I could help in any way that I could. The reason I say this is because I truly, truly believe in what this bill represents. I can say that coming from the foster care system. I have done a lot of advocacy, because I believe in it. It is nowhere in my future to be working for child protective services. Journalism is a far cry from advocacy of this sort, but I have given my time because I truly believe in it.

It was asked, "Is this going to make a difference?" This is already something that is supposed to be the right of children anyway. Children, foster children in particular, are a very, very vulnerable group. Not everyone gives rights to very vulnerable groups. Not everyone pays attention. When I came into foster care, I did not get anything like this. Most kids do not, even if it is the law. So I walk into a foster home and someone hands me this piece of paper and they say, "You know, this is already law, but here are your rights." You have not given me a piece of paper. You have given me power that I did not already have. You gave me something in writing saying that I have the right to stand up for these things. I have this. I might have had a slight inclination that maybe this is wrong, what is going on in my life, maybe this is illegal. But it is different when it is handed to you and you can say to your social worker, or to your attorney, or to your CASA, "Look. This is the law. It is not just me. Somebody else believes in this and you can get in trouble." That matters. That gives you power. That gives me power, and that gives the other hundreds of youth in Washoe County who are in foster care, the thousands, the hundreds of thousands in the country, for Nevada to be a model for the right thing for once. I stand behind that, and I am here because this matters.

I love the government. I really do. I am the only foster kid who loves the government, I swear to you. Because you have something that I do not, and

you have power. I have interned for lobbyists, I have interned in Congressman Heller's office in Washington, D.C. I love you guys. You guys are great. Because you can do something. That is your job. Your job is to protect me and hundreds of thousands of other vulnerable kids. I highly, highly urge you to do so.

Chair Mastroluca:

Are there any questions? [There was no response.]

Alex Ortiz, representing Clark County:

I am here in support of Assembly Bill 154 as well. We know that there are some amendments proposed, and we will work closely with the sponsor to work on those amendments. I would also like to state that I had an opportunity to work with Madison and Dashun in Las Vegas and would say that all children in foster care will have a brighter future ahead based on this. Thank you.

Larry Struve, Advocate, Religious Alliance In Nevada:

The Religious Alliance in Nevada (RAIN) is a coalition of five denominations: Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Methodist, and Lutheran. I am here to simply reiterate RAIN's strong support for this legislation, and we want to state on the record how pleased we are that Assemblyman Frierson was able to bring this bill forward. We were involved in the effort in 2005 to get this bill through. The testimony offered in 2005 was as compelling then as it is today. Somehow when the bill got from the Assembly to the Senate it got hung up, apparently on some issues that Assemblyman Frierson has been able to iron out, and we certainly hope that if you process the bill you will work with your colleagues in the Senate to not let it fall through the cracks as it did in 2005. The reason RAIN is interested is in section 3, subsection 8 of the bill. You will note that it specifically provides as a right to foster kids the ability "To attend religious services of his or her choice or to refuse to attend religious services." Many of the pastors and priests in the RAIN coalition work with foster families and foster children. We think that it is important that if a child is taken from a home, placed in a foster family, and there has been a relationship of that child with a pastor or priest, that they have the ability to continue to receive that support, which could be very important in keeping that child working towards a wholesome life. So we join with all the others and hope that you will follow through and process the bill. Thank you for considering it, and let us all stay with it until we get the job done this time.

Rebecca Gasca, Legislative and Policy Director, American Civil Liberties Union of Nevada:

We are here to state for the record that this bill is incredible. The American Civil Liberties Union spends time, day in and day out, to fight for the rights of the most vulnerable portion of our population. It is not always popular; it is not always easy. It is often very emotional and difficult. Speaking from a personal perspective, I can tell you that we often deal with cases with a high emotional toll. But we do it because we believe in it, and we do it because we believe in the *Bill of Rights* and the *Constitution* and the rights therein. We do it because those people who are most vulnerable are those whose rights are most often put at peril. Children in the foster society in our state are just one of many groups of people whose rights are put at risk because they do not understand these rights. Often they do not know of their existence. This bill in its entirety clearly delineates for children that they do have rights and that they can access them and they can be empowered by them. I would urge the Committee to keep us in mind as they move forward with this and the Legislature as a whole. Of course, children in foster care are not the only group in our great state whose rights are being put at peril. So as we move forward with this, please take that into consideration. I would urge the Committee members and the Legislature in the future to consider other acts such as this for those whose rights are also put at peril: immigrants, racial and ethnic minorities. These are people who do not often have the opportunity and privileges that many of us grew up with to understand our own rights.

I do want to place on the record one minor concern that I have already spoken to Assemblyman Frierson about, which is in section 3, subsection 11. It relates to the identification kit. There is an outstanding question that has not yet been able to be answered and that is regarding the record keeping of this identification kit. I note that fingerprints are taken and I want to make sure that once children are phased out of the foster care system that there is adequate record keeping and that this type of information is kept confidential if not destroyed. It is also a bit of a concern that it says "To complete an identification kit, including, without limitation" As we all know, there is a tendency of our government to use the identification of DNA collection on an increasing basis, and I want to make sure that "without limitation" never encompasses taking the DNA of any child who is in the foster care system. Thank you.

Chair Mastroluca:

Are there any questions? [There was no response.]

Tomika Martin, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada:

I am a former foster youth, and I was in foster care for about five years. I want to talk about some things that I have been through. This bill would help the foster kids. When I was younger, I was abused by my mom's boyfriend, and my mom did not do anything. She just sat there and let him do whatever. Finally my sister told her volleyball coach about the whole situation I was having at home. We got taken away, which was probably the best thing ever. Some people say that foster care was a bad thing, but I really had a great experience in foster care. My foster parents—I only had one foster family—and they are amazing and I see them all the time. One thing that really gets to me is when people label me as a foster child. I am not a foster child. I am Tomika. I am a person and not just a foster child. It is like people do not want to hire you or they do not want to be around you because you are a foster kid and they think that, "Oh well, since you are a foster kid you are going to do this and that" and I do not think that is true. Not just foster kids are getting pregnant or going to jail. It is everyone, pretty much. It is not just foster kids. Just having your own rights, having your privacy, and not having people tell you that you are a foster kid is a good thing. That is basically what I think.

Joseph Galata, Executive Director, Sierra Association of Foster Families:

I want to address a subject that I do not know if it has really been touched upon today and that is how this bill of rights can help the two most important words outside the word "safety" and the world of foster care, and that is family permanency. I think this bill helps foster parents and birth parents to work together for their reunification. I have worked with thousands of teenagers in my long career in foster care and hospice. I will briefly share an experience that my colleague, Sheryl Overstreet, and I had on December 22 and 23 at a place that we think is wonderful, and that is Washoe County Social Services. On those two days before Christmas, I counted 56 birth parents that came for visits with their kids. Anyone with some common sense knows that Christmas is family time, and here you are coming to see your kids who are in the homes of someone else and you do not have presents. We had a wonderful time with Kevin Schiller's permission to create a Santa's Workshop where the birth parents could pick some gifts and take them into visitation. But what I saw there was something that was extraordinary, and that is that everyone needed to have their needs met. The birth parents have their needs, the foster parents have their needs, the kids have their needs, social workers have their needs, and social service administrators have their needs. But sometimes in trying to meet those needs, I think the foster parents and birth parents do not realize that as much as their needs need to be met, that does not supersede the rights of the kids. I have not met anyone in the world of foster care that does not say and does not believe that the needs of the foster kids are the priority. But sometimes the rights of the kids can be ignored when there is so much

conflict or just little bits of intersections and sharing about everybody's needs. I think this bill is so important to helping foster parents and birth parents to both recognize "We have our needs, you have your needs, I have my needs," but the bottom line is, what are the priorities of these kids?

I would like to say to Assemblywoman Smith's question about education-Washoe County Social Services, Washoe County Family Courts, my organization Sierra Association of Foster Families, Washoe County School District—we all meet constantly about the education of these kids. One of the things that is in this bill that is so important is that the records of these children and teens be transferred to another school in the most appropriate time. So if a child cannot stay in the school that they were in because of whatever various reasons, that when they go to that new school those records follow. Sometimes unfortunately that does not happen, despite the fact that everybody knows how important it is, simply because of this wonderful issue we call time.

The second issue on there—I think it was Assemblyman Livermore that addressed it—is culture. Foster parents have some tremendous schedules. They have visitations with birth parents, they have court appearances, they have social worker appearances, et cetera. Sometimes they just get exhausted, and sometimes in that exhaustion what really suffers is the kids' ability to participate in cultural activities, whether it is after school or in community events. We all know that many of these kids cannot participate in Little League, soccer, or baseball because sometimes the coaches do not know where the kids will be tomorrow. By just having this in writing—Jennifer from Las Vegas kept using the word "visual" and I just love the word "visual"—is that it is just a tool. This bill is a tool to give to foster parents, biological parents, the kids, the social workers, and all of us involved that this is something that is important. Your priority is not refreshing your energy, but your priority is getting these kids into all the cultural events. So I just wanted to address that about the fact that this is a wonderful tool to help speed up, strengthen, and nurture the reunification process leading towards family permanency. All of us in this business want to see that as the primary outcome. Thank you very much, and we thank Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson for inviting us to come here.

Chair Mastroluca:

Is there anyone else, either in Las Vegas or Carson City, that would like to testify in support of A.B. 154? [There was no response.] Is there anyone that would like to testify against A.B. 154? [There was no response.] Is there anyone who would like to testify neutral on A.B. 154? [There was no response.] With that I will close the hearing on A.B. 154.

Is there any public comment? [There was no response.] Is there any public comment in Las Vegas? [There was no response.]

The meeting is adjourned [at 2:54 p.m.].

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Linda Whimple
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Assemblywoman April Mastroluca, Chair

DATE: _____

EXHIBITS

Committee Name: Committee on Health and Human Services

Date: February 23, 2011

Time of Meeting: 1:32 p.m.

Bill	Exhibit	Witness / Agency	Description
	A		Agenda
	B		Attendance Roster
A.B. 154	C	Assemblyman Jason Frierson	2011 Legislative Policy Agenda