

MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
OF THE  
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
AND THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
JOINT SUBCOMMITTEE ON K-12 EDUCATION/HIGHER EDUCATION

Seventy-Sixth Session  
March 24, 2011

The Assembly Committee on Ways and Means and the Senate Committee on Finance, Joint Subcommittee on K-12 Education/Higher Education was called to order by Chairwoman Debbie Smith at 5:41 p.m. on Thursday, March 24, 2011, in the Fallon Convention Center, 100 Campus Way, Fallon, 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/](http://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](mailto:publications@lcb.state.nv.us); telephone: 775-684-6835).

**ASSEMBLY SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Assemblywoman Debbie Smith, Chairwoman  
Assemblyman Marcus Conklin, Vice Chair  
Assemblyman Tom Grady  
Assemblyman Pat Hickey  
Assemblywoman April Mastroluca  
Assemblyman John Ocegüera

**SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Senator Steven A. Horsford, Chair  
Senator Moises (Mo) Denis  
Senator Barbara K. Cegavske  
Senator Ben Kieckhefer

**SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS EXCUSED:**

Assemblyman Paul Aizley

**GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:**

Senator Mike McGinness, Central Nevada Senatorial District  
Senator David R. Parks, Clark County Senatorial District No. 7  
Senator James A. Settelmeyer, Capital Senatorial District

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Janice Wright, Subcommittee Secretary  
Anne Bowen, Subcommittee Assistant

Chairwoman Smith explained the Subcommittee would like to hear public testimony on the budget for education. She wanted to accommodate as many public speakers as possible. The Subcommittee generally limited testimony to two minutes but because of the smaller number of speakers present, she would be flexible about the time allotted. She reviewed the procedures for the speakers.

- Speaker numbers 1 through 5 please come sit at the testifier's table. Speaker numbers 6 through 10 please sit in the front "reserved" row.
- As each group of speakers finish, the next group sitting in the front row should move up to the testifier's table. At that time, the next 10 speaker numbers should sit in the front row. This type of rotation would continue until 7 p.m.
- When a speaker finished testifying, the speaker should go to the back table and turn in the speaker's number and blue speaker information card to be placed in the official legislative record.
- Large groups should select a speaking representative. This would allow the Subcommittee to accommodate as many speakers as possible.
- If anyone did not have an opportunity to testify tonight, the person should pick up a pink contact sheet at the exit. Persons would be able to submit written testimony to the secretary and that testimony would be placed in the official legislative record.

Chairwoman Smith asked each legislator to identify themselves for the audience. She mentioned there were competing events including a meeting of the Churchill County School District Board of Trustees and a meeting of the

City of Fallon City Council meeting. She thanked everyone for coming to the Subcommittee meeting. She recognized several elected school board members who traveled from various districts to present testimony. She asked that the various speakers present their testimony in the order of their speaker numbers and asked to begin with speaker number 1.

Dennis O'Connor testified he had lived in Churchill County since 1952. He said there was insufficient funding for education and Churchill County lacked sufficient revenue for its programs. He was a medical marijuana patient and believed medical marijuana fees were the source of revenue that would solve the funding problems for the state. When the voters of Nevada approved medical marijuana, the voters authorized the Legislature to create the program. The legislators must be open-minded about the program and allow the medical marijuana users to grow more marijuana and create dispensaries. It was difficult for medical marijuana patients to obtain marijuana in Nevada unless they grew it for personal use. He recommended a medical marijuana program similar to California's program that allowed doctors to write prescriptions for marijuana. Medical marijuana patients could visit dispensaries and pay a nominal fee for their marijuana. The California program was successful and almost paid for the California school system.

Frank Stephens testified he was a wounded Vietnam veteran who smoked marijuana to relieve pain in his hip. He was proud of his military service and was drafted to serve his country. He said marijuana allowed him to be successful in life by helping him hold a job, maintain a family, support his disabled mother and disabled wife, contribute to society, and pay taxes. He grew marijuana for his personal use. Medical marijuana was a viable crop that could generate revenue for the state.

John O'Connor testified that during the last election he spoke to voters around the state about the medical marijuana program. The voters were concerned that if Nevada approved a medical marijuana program, the price should be set at a reasonable amount of \$250 per ounce. If the price was as low as \$250 per ounce, the criminal drug interests would not be attracted to the sale of marijuana because it would not generate sufficient profit.

Susan Davis, President, Lander County School District Board of Trustees; Director, Nevada Association of School Boards; and member of the Advisory Board of Great Basin College, testified in opposition to cuts to education funding. She was a teacher and an adjunct faculty member at Great Basin College. Her positions provided her a unique perspective. She

appreciated the job of the legislators and understood the difficulty of the decisions to be made.

Ms. Davis said the Lander County School District had not accepted incentives that were offered, which crippled the County's ability to provide programs for its children ranging from special education to remedial programs. Lander County was being asked to make further cuts. A battle was being fought to take away room taxes from education. The Governor proposed to use room taxes to balance the budget. The 5 percent pay cut to School District staff and the increased retirement contributions created burdens for staff.

Ms. Davis said she had been an educator for the past 40 years and it was important to educate children. Children were the future of the state. When the state cut the opportunity for children to receive a good education, the state's future was compromised. Her plea was to fund education and not cripple the opportunities for children in elementary school and institutions of higher learning. Students attempting to gain a higher education were often unable to get into required classes because the funding cuts reduced the number of classes offered. She wanted changes that allowed those students who wanted an education to be able to obtain the education they desired.

Kathy Ancho, Lander County School District, testified she had worked for the Lander County Sheriff's Office for 24 years as a child safety advocate. She testified in opposition to cuts to education funding. If the Legislature cut education, the state would pay more later for prison inmate housing. She had seen three generations in some families come through the correctional system. She predicted it would only get worse as trade programs were cut. In her years working for the Sheriff's Office, she had seen more violent crimes, more drugs, and more families destroyed.

Bob Burnham, Vice President, Nevada Association of School Boards, was a farmer in Diamond Valley. He testified in opposition to cuts to education funding. He read an article in a recent edition of *The Economist*, a respected international business magazine, which addressed the rising regional income inequality within developed nations, including the United States. The article discussed the efforts to alleviate those inequity problems including massive fund transfers, tax incentives, enterprise zones, and infrastructure spending. The article concluded all those methods were relatively ineffective in the long run. The article mentioned West Virginia received a tremendous amount of federal funding in recent years because of efforts of United States Senator Robert Byrd.

Mr. Burnham suggested that instead of obsessing about revitalizing lagging regions, politicians would do better to focus on the persons within the regions. The article stated a region's prosperity was determined by its inhabitant's productivity, and thus by persons' skills, the scale of capital investment, and the pace of innovation. The article presented two specific ways to equalize relative income between regions. The first way was to make it easier for residents to move, but that was undesirable. Given inherent gaps in regional productivity prospects, there was a case for boosting mobility from declining regions to prospering regions. Nevada was not the poorest state in the United States, but was as depressed as any state. The last thing Nevada should do was export its citizens, particularly its young people.

Mr. Burnham said the second way to equalize relative income between regions was education. The article cited an example of Sunderland, a poor area in the United Kingdom of Great Britain. The article stated that only 21 percent of the adults in Sunderland completed any form of higher education versus 39 percent of Londoners. The British government could boost productivity by strengthening infrastructure or cutting red tape, but the single biggest reward would come from improving the educational performance of Sunderland residents. It was possible that more educated persons might move away from Sunderland, but they and the country as a whole would be better off.

Mr. Burnham said he believed it would be better to educate Nevada's young than to export them. At a new board member training session, Anne Loring of the Education Alliance of Washoe County presented some data about relative educational expenditures across state lines correlated to educational achievement. Though the relationships were not linear, and some individual states deviated from the norm, the general trend was states that spent more on education achieved better results.

Mr. Burnham said the race did not necessarily go to the swift or the fight to the strong, but that was the best way to bet. Educational achievement did not specifically equate to expenditures, but that was the trend line. The old economic model based on gaming and construction that had driven Nevada's growth for the last generation was no longer performing well. He believed there would be some recovery but the glory days for the gaming and construction industries were probably gone for the foreseeable future.

Mr. Burnham said future economic growth and prosperity would be driven by knowledge-related industries. Nevada would need an educated society. He said that it was no coincidence that Silicon Valley grew up in the neighborhood of

Stanford University. There were also booming technology industries near the Raleigh/Durham area of North Carolina; Provo, Utah; and the Boston area. These were areas where education was respected and supported. If Nevada wanted to build a strong and vibrant economy for the future, he believed Nevada would have to respect and support education.

John W. Brown, President, Eureka County School District Board of School Trustees, testified he was a mechanic and fixed things. He did not envy the legislators and the job they must do. He was concerned about the proposal to sweep \$425 million from the bond reserve accounts for school operations. That would send a message to voters that approval of construction bonds did not guarantee those funds would be used for construction. Voters would not want to approve future bonds.

Mr. Brown said Senate Bill 146 would make various changes relating to biodiesel fuels. The bill would increase the cost of fuel and invalidate the warranty on some engines. At this time, biodiesel fuel was made from corn and S.B. 146 would increase the costs of food and beef. He suggested the legislators look at collective bargaining. The Governor wanted the school districts to cut salaries 5 percent, and there was no way those cuts were possible.

Debi Kissack said she was a Fallon resident and had attended school in Fallon. She had several suggestions for the legislators to improve the economy. The Yucca Mountain Nuclear Waste Repository was closed but too much had been invested in it and the state could generate revenue if the citizens would agree to promote the project. The federal government could pay for the bypass routes. The state could develop stipulations that the project must use local contractors. The project could include an upgrade to any required safety systems. The Yucca Mountain Nuclear Waste Repository project could generate significant per capita revenue to be used for education, social services, or whatever the state needed.

Ms. Kissack continued and said the state should study the mining laws and fees, which had not been updated since 1876. The foreign-owned companies should be paying royalties to the state and the counties where the mines were located. In South America and other foreign countries, United States mining companies paid a substantial amount for the rights to mine. The mining resources belonged to Nevada and compensation should be fair.

Ms. Kissack continued and said geothermal revenues were a major resource for Churchill County. Churchill County was a rural county and had cut its budget for three years. She worked for Churchill County, which received only 25 percent of the money paid by geothermal resource companies. She said that was unacceptable.

Ms. Kissack said welfare was a problem because several generations of families continued to receive welfare. She believed welfare benefits should be limited to only three years as a benefit to fill a temporary need. The time limit would eliminate the generational welfare problem.

Ms. Kissack continued and said she was concerned about education because she had three children in school and children were the future of our state. She said the state ranked 49 out of 51 in education spending in the nation. Nevada should improve for its children.

Ms. Kissack continued and said possible closure of the Western Nevada College (WNC) campus in Fallon would be devastating. The WNC served many rural communities other than Fallon and also served high school seniors.

Sharla Hales, President, Douglas County School District Board of Trustees, testified that Don Keele often recited a poem about "Priming the Pump" which told about a parched traveler at the point of death who needed water while making his way across the desert. The traveler finds a pump and a small jar of water to prime the pump. The traveler could either drink the jar of water, still be parched, and not have any more water. Or the traveler could pour the water down the pump to prime it, have the pump work, and drink as much water as he wanted. Nevada was that traveler and was traveling across really dry ground. The water that the state had was the resource to be poured into the pump of education. When Nevada primed the education pump, it would bring forth far more than was invested.

Ms. Hales said the Douglas County School District cut \$4.9 million out of a \$55 million annual budget over the past three years. The District significantly deferred maintenance, reduced 1 of 12 central office support staff, cut 2 of 26 administrators, cut \$200,000 from the custodial budget, cut 5 work days per year for classified staff, deferred all bus replacements, took a one-time health insurance premium holiday, and deferred textbook purchases. Under the Governor's proposed budget, Douglas County School District must cut \$4.1 million from its budget. The District's expenses increased for fiscal year 2012 to pay for increased unemployment premiums, increased utility

costs, and increased costs for the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS) contribution. If the District took all those cuts from certified staff salaries, the District would need to cut 20 percent of its teachers. If the District took all the cuts from the classified staff salaries, the District would need to cut 40 percent of the classified staff. If the District took all the cuts from the administrator salaries, the District would still need to cut \$900,000 in revenues. The cuts were drastic.

Ms. Hales asked the legislators to make the education funding cuts as small as possible. She knew that every cut would affect students. Everything the District did was to benefit students. She asked the legislators to temper cuts by giving the District the flexibility needed to use the money most effectively. The districts should look at education reform with a laser-like focus on student achievement. School board members would work hard with what they received and do the best for the students. She knew the legislators had the best interests of students at heart and the board members shared that also.

Becky Dodd, President, Churchill County Education Association, testified the legislators must develop a stable source of funding for schools and educators. Several years ago teachers worked hard to gain support for the room tax petition dedicated to education. Now those funds would be swept away and applied to other expenses in the budget. This was very disheartening to the Association. For years, the Association asked the Legislature for stable funding for education. The response had always been the Legislature would form a committee and see what it could do. Nothing had every changed.

Ms. Dodd said many persons believed teachers were overpaid. New teachers hired in Churchill County with a family of four would qualify for the free and reduced-price lunch program for five years. A teacher with a bachelor's degree plus 15 credits would qualify for the free and reduced-price lunch program for four years. A teacher with a master's degree or a bachelor's degree plus 45 credits would qualify for the free and reduced-price lunch program for two years. The family would also need to pay for insurance. A teacher who was the sole support of a family would pay \$700 for health insurance for his family in Churchill County. It was often said teachers had excellent benefits for health insurance. The deductible was \$3,000 in Churchill County and Ms. Dodd's co-pay last year was \$20 per visit but had increased to \$30 per visit. That was an increase of 50 percent and her wages did not increase.



Ms. Dodd continued her presentation and said the last time teachers were given a four percent raise, the District was in such serious economic difficulty that the teachers agreed not to accept the raise. The District had already given up the raise that the other districts received. Now the District was asked to take more cuts. If Governor Sandoval's plan was approved, a teacher's family of three members would qualify for the free and reduced-price lunch program. She said teachers in Nevada would like a living wage. She thought it was sad that the public believed that teachers should qualify for the free and reduced-price lunch program.

Ms. Dodd wondered how vouchers would benefit students in rural communities such as Owyhee, Gabbs, Ely, Pioche, or Panaca. She wondered if voucher money was given to private schools, would private schools be held to the same standard as public schools. She asked the legislators not to make changes to the retirement benefits from the Public Employees' Retirement System ((PERS). Nevada PERS was one of the few state retirement systems rated financially sound and she did not want any changes to PERS.

Steve Johnson, Chairman, Science Department, Churchill County High School, testified the Governor spoke about "shared sacrifice" in his "State of the State Address." He saw ample evidence of the sacrifice but had not seen any evidence of the "shared" part. He wondered whether the students and teachers were meant to share the sacrifice. Perhaps the "no new taxes" Governor considered teachers to be second-class citizens, since his budget effectively increased their taxes by 15 percent to 20 percent. Students and teachers had little to do with the economic collapse of the past several years, but political extremists determined that teachers and students should shoulder most of the resulting burden.

Mr. Johnson said research overwhelmingly suggested that the single most influential variable in the classroom was a quality teacher. To improve education, the state must strive to place a highly effective teacher in every classroom. Unfortunately Governor Sandoval's education agenda would leave no effective teachers in the classroom. The teachers would all have left Nevada for other states or other professions.

Mr. Johnson said he had been involved in the District's hiring process for all new science teachers for a decade. Even with the current pay and benefits considered generous by some, the District struggled to attract highly qualified science teachers. Governor Sandoval's proposal would decimate public education in Nevada. Carefully designed reforms could improve public schools.

An equitable pay-for-performance plan and an increased probationary period for new teachers would make Nevada schools stronger. Proposals from political extremists would crush the state's schools, the state, and our democracy.

Glenda Deputy, member, Humboldt County School District Board of School Trustees, testified the District was stable and would make any required budget cuts in the lunch program, transportation program, and extracurricular activities. Students needing lunch would be unable to concentrate. Students needing transportation would be unable to get to the school. Further cuts would require staff cuts, but at least the students would be in school. She asked the legislators to not sweep the bond reserve funds. She did not want to destroy the trust the voters placed in the District.

Carolyn S. Ross, Ed. D., Superintendent, Churchill County School District, testified the District improved its ranking from "in need of improvement" to the "high achieving exemplary" category under the *No Child Left Behind Act*. The voters placed their trust in the District by approving the largest bond issue in the state. The District was dutiful, thoughtful, and brought forth results with that money. All of the District's trend lines were improving. What many of the school districts were going through right now, the School District went through five years ago. The District streamlined its services and became more efficient. Staff was picking up extra jobs and going above and beyond to meet expectations, and federal and state requirements.

Dr. Ross acknowledged the hard work of the legislators and the support provided to the School District. She realized the legislators must focus on the current situation. Her request was that the legislators think about "paying it forward" to the future. The students needed facilities that were decent, clean, and roads that permitted access to schools. The District's facilities were falling down but student achievement was improving and the School District was streamlining its processes. She asked the legislators to pay it forward and not to sweep the bond reserves. It was the public trust that must be considered.

Gregory S. Koenig, Legislative Chairman, Nevada Association of School Boards and President, Churchill County School District Board of Trustees, testified the District experienced a leukemia scare that resulted in decreased enrollment in its schools. The School District shifted from a rural district to a centralized district, which meant the District received less funds per student at the same time the District lost enrollment. Now the State Distributive School Account (DSA) funds were decreasing. The District trimmed 11 percent from its budget over the last several years. Cuts totaling another 10 percent were proposed. The

School District trimmed the fat and there was no more fat left. The District passed the recent bond question by 257 votes. Some schools were 50 years old. The bond funds were used to replace roofs that were leaking. The District was improving its electrical system to power new computers.

Mr. Koenig said the sweep of the bond reserve funds would affect what could be accomplished today and in the future. The voters understood that the bond money would be used to improve school facilities. If the money was used for other purposes, the District would never be able to pass another bond question in the county. He asked for flexibility to complete some of the education reforms.

Don Keele, member, Churchill County School District Board of Trustees, testified he taught John Ocegüera, who was a good student. If the state robbed the bond reserves, no one in the state would ever vote in favor of a bond question again. The public trust would be destroyed. Education was an asset not a liability. Those that received a good education would make more money, pay more taxes, and would not be a drain on public assistance programs. He agreed to recite the poem for the legislators later during the hearing.

Alyce Volberding testified in opposition to cuts to education funding. She was a parent with five children. Her husband taught at Dayton High School for the past 22 years and her daughter taught at Silver Springs High School for the past 5 years. Her daughters have been well-educated and successful in their lives. Her children qualified for the free and reduced-price lunch program. Her son was diagnosed with a cancerous brain tumor. She appreciated all the services provided by the Lyon County School District and stated her son had been a difficult and expensive student. He had been successful in spite of the predictions he would be retarded and unable to learn. She appreciated the services provided and said the schools were excellent.

Lynn Broyles, Director, Business Services, Churchill County School District, testified she attended schools in Churchill County, graduated from the University of Nevada, Reno, and was the daughter of pioneers. She was concerned about the elimination of the hold-harmless provision. The District was required to prepare a tentative budget by April 15, and submit that to the Department of Taxation. The hold-harmless provision allowed districts to use the greater of the two prior years of enrollment for funding purposes. The DSA was computed on a per-pupil basis and calculated based on the Basic Support amount set by Legislature multiplied by the number of students enrolled.

Ms. Broyles said the hold-harmless provision allowed the District to prepare its budget based on the number of students enrolled as of September of last year. If the hold-harmless provision was eliminated, the District would have to guess about the amount of Basic Support and the number of students enrolled. The District already cut 11.8 percent of its budget during the last three years. She worried about staff that may lose jobs. Notification of the intent to employ must be submitted by May 1. The District may or may not have the funds to employ some staff. She cited an example of an art teacher who was laid off after 18 years in the position but later restored to her art teacher position.

Jane Wren, Teacher, Lyon County School District, testified the gifted and talented programs were not mandatory. She started teaching for an annual salary of about \$18,000 and 25 years later earned about \$54,000. She paid for classroom supplies and insurance. She purchased materials for gifted and talented students. She raised travel funds for her students that won national competitions. She contributed because she loved her students but the legislators should not expect teachers to contribute to the needs of the students. Her family heritage included many individuals who fought for the rights and benefits of workers. She recommended the legislators consider imposing a state income tax to fund the needs of the state. She suggested that the state should be proactive not reactive. She said poorly educated children today would determine the future of our state.

Cindi Kent-Dillon, School Psychologist, Churchill County School District, testified she taught part-time at the Western Nevada College (WNC). She enrolled in classes at WNC as a senior in high school, as a high school graduate, and as a college graduate. The WNC had been an invaluable resource available to rural residents. Those rural residents who attended local classes at WNC often returned to the rural communities and brought their education back as a benefit to the community. She spoke in opposition to cuts to education. Many rural WNC students did not have the ability to travel to Carson City for education. Dismantling the rural colleges would have detrimental effects on rural communities.

Alex Ashby testified in opposition to cuts to education funding. She said her family just moved to Nevada from southern Utah because her husband was a pharmacist who could only find part-time work in Utah. Her family imposed many "cut backs" to manage with less income. Closing schools was not an option. She cited an example of a pioneer family crossing the Carson River in 1849, who traveled at night to avoid the heat. The family missed the fork in the road and later realized they must turn back to get to the final destination.

She stated that Nevadans were similarly traveling at night during these uncertain times and did not want to miss the fork in the road on the journey to their final destination of a good education.

Ms. Ashby said many sacrifices had been made and nothing ever became sacred until sacrifices were made. She asked the legislators to imagine the shortsightedness and lack of vision that would have prevailed had the pioneers left behind the seeds for their next year's crops. She said planting the necessary tools inside our children to create something better than what we were living today was the goal. She suggested the state prepare its children to compete in a global economy. She suggested a four-day school week or online classes. She cited detrimental statistics resulting from overcrowded schools.

Paul Johnson, Chief Financial Officer, White Pine County School District, testified in opposition to cuts to education. Two of the board members from the White Pine County School District (WPCSD) were present. The WPCSD anticipated cuts of \$1.9 million in its \$13 million budget. Some of the cuts were state revenues, some were federal revenues, and some were Net Proceeds of Minerals Taxes. The Basic Support reductions totaled about \$274 per pupil, but the WPCSD received about a 35 percent bigger cut than the average and would receive \$381 less per pupil.

Mr. Johnson said the proposal to eliminate the Governmental Services Tax (GST) in the bond reserves would require the WPCSD to use moneys from its General Fund to secure loans presently secured with the GST. He said the District was considering 10 percent to 15 percent reductions in staff, reductions in library services, counseling, nutrition, vocational services, administration staff, athletics, and the potential combining of some elementary schools. Sweeping the bond reserve account would cripple the ability of the District to maintain the integrity of the school facilities. The District may only spend \$200,000 each year for capital improvements. The WPCSD received approval for a rollover bond to make significant improvements to its facilities, including pouring new concrete at a school that was 102 years old. Another school was 98 years old and both schools together housed over 50 percent of the District's students. The WPCSD determined it had \$7.5 million in deferred capital construction projects, not including new school construction. The state built a new school in Lund in 2001 because the District was unable to pay for the new school.

Mr. Johnson continued and said he married a first year teacher and was in the unfortunate position of telling her she may not have a job next year with the

District. He suggested that the taxes that were sunseting should be continued and gradually diminished over time perhaps decreased 10 percent one year and 20 percent the next year. If the District was required to cut 10 percent of its programs in one year, the students in those programs the next year would not be learning as much as the prior year students. The effect would be too drastic to make all the cuts in one year. The cuts should be spread over a four-year period.

In response to a question from Senator Horsford, Mr. Johnson clarified the WPCSD employed 100 teachers and 100 other staff. A cut of 10 percent would be 10 teachers, and the District would have to go through a public process to identify what areas were priorities and what subject areas and teachers should be cut. It would be difficult for the District to maintain its certification in all subject areas.

Irena Joannette Gallio testified on behalf of students who graduated from rural Nevada high schools and pursued a degree at a college or university. She spoke in opposition to cuts to education funding. She had taught at Western Nevada College (WNC) for 27 years. Statistics showed that a high school education was no longer enough to be successful in the world. Community colleges were often the only resource for rural students. Many of her students worked all day and came to classes at night because they had families to support. The WNC offered online classes but those were not as good as traditional classes. She reminded the legislators that WNC was developed for rural Nevada.

Don Keele recited a poem written by Billy Edd Wheeler entitled "Priming the Pump." It told of the wise decision to use a little water to prime the pump and then be assured of sufficient water for the future. According to the poem, one must have faith, plan for the future, and give of yourself until you were worthy to receive.

Chairwoman Smith thanked everyone for attending the hearing. She explained the cuts to the education budget totaled almost \$1.2 billion. There being no further questions or public testimony, Chairwoman Smith adjourned the meeting at 7:16 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

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Janice Wright  
Subcommittee Secretary

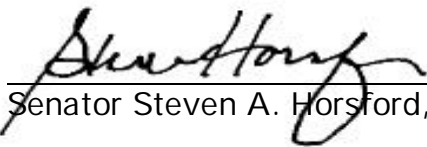
APPROVED BY:



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Assemblywoman Debbie Smith, Chairwoman

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



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Senator Steven A. Horsford, Chair

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

**EXHIBITS**

**Subcommittee Name: Assembly Committee on Ways and Means/Senate Committee on Finance Joint Subcommittee on K-12 Education/Higher Education**

**Date: March 24, 2011**

**Time of Meeting: 5:41 p.m.**

<b>Bill</b>	<b>Exhibit</b>	<b>Witness / Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>
	A		Agenda
	B		Sign-In Sheets