

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE OPERATIONS AND ELECTIONS**

**Seventy-Eighth Session
April 2, 2015**

The Committee on Legislative Operations and Elections was called to order by Chair Lynn D. Stewart at 4:02 p.m. on Thursday, April 2, 2015, in Room 3142 of the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 4404B 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/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015. In addition, copies of the audio or video of the meeting may be purchased, for personal use only, through the Legislative Counsel Bureau's Publications Office (email: publications@lcb.state.nv.us; telephone: 775-684-6835).

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Assemblyman Lynn D. Stewart, Chair
Assemblywoman Shelly M. Shelton, Vice Chair
Assemblyman Elliot T. Anderson
Assemblywoman Michele Fiore
Assemblyman John Moore
Assemblyman Harvey J. Munford
Assemblyman James Ohrenschall
Assemblywoman Victoria Seaman
Assemblyman Tyrone Thompson
Assemblyman Glenn E. Trowbridge

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:

Assemblywoman Jill Dickman, Assembly District No. 31
Assemblyman Stephen H. Silberkraus, Assembly District No. 29

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STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Brenda Erdoes, Legislative Counsel
Carol M. Stonefield, Committee Policy Analyst
Patricia Hartman, Committee Secretary
Olivia Lloyd, Committee Assistant

OTHERS PRESENT:

Janine Hansen, State President, Nevada Families for Freedom
Lynn Chapman, Washoe County Chairman, Independent American Party
Shawn Meehan, representing Nevada Republican Party, and Private
Citizen, Minden, Nevada
Bonnie McDaniel, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
Tom Jones, Clark County Chairman, Independent American Party
Jim Sallee, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
Jack Mallory, representing Nevada State AFL-CIO
Larry Jackson, Private Citizen, Fallon, Nevada
Stacey Shinn, representing Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada
Juanita Clark, representing Charleston Neighborhood Preservation
Marlene Lockard, representing Nevada Women's Lobby and Local 1107,
Service Employees International Union Nevada
Andrew Zaninovich, representing America Votes
Yvanna Cancela, Political Director, Culinary Workers Union Local 226
Greg Gardella, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada
Bruce Woodbury, Private Citizen, Boulder City, Nevada
Daniel Stewart, Policy Analyst, Assembly Leadership
Robert Frank, Private Citizen, Henderson, Nevada

Chair Stewart:

[Roll was taken.] We have three bill introductions and a work session on five bills. We will start with the work session and turn the time over to Ms. Stonefield.

Carol M. Stonefield, Committee Policy Analyst:

In your binder and on the Nevada Electronic Legislative Information System (NELIS) is the first work session document ([Exhibit C](#)). The bills are arranged in numerical order, and we will begin with Assembly Bill 384.

**Assembly Bill 384: Establishes the Nevada Legislature Oral History Program.
(BDR 17-1011)**

Assembly Bill 384 was heard in this Committee on March 26. It was brought forward by Assemblywomen Swank and Joiner. It proposes to establish the Nevada Legislature Oral History Program in the Research Division of the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB). The bill proposes that the Research Division shall prepare a plan for oral histories, procedures for conducting and preserving oral histories, and policies governing the acceptance and release of oral histories with the approval of the Legislative Commission. Materials gathered are confidential and may be released only pursuant to policies approved by the Legislative Commission. The Director of the LCB may accept gifts, grants, or donations for support of this program. The fiscal note provides information that there is no particular appropriation and the program will be implemented as funding is available. There are no amendments.

Chair Stewart:

Do I have a motion to do pass?

ASSEMBLYMAN THOMPSON MADE A MOTION TO DO PASS
ASSEMBLY BILL 384.

ASSEMBLYMAN OHRENSCHALL SECONDED THE MOTION.

Is there any discussion? [There was none.]

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Assemblywoman Swank will present the floor statement on this bill.

Carol M. Stonefield, Committee Policy Analyst:

The next bill for consideration is Assembly Bill 289 and was heard in this Committee on March 24. [Referred to work session document ([Exhibit D](#)).]

Assembly Bill 289: Directs the Legislative Commission to appoint a committee to conduct an interim study concerning issues related to the provision of mental health services. (BDR S-693)

This bill was presented by Assemblyman Araujo. The bill proposes to require the Legislative Commission to appoint a committee to conduct an interim study concerning a regionalized structure for the provision of mental and other behavioral health services. The study must include the manner in which such regions may be formed and the governance model for those regions.

The committee members shall include four legislators and representatives of various federal, state, and local entities and the committee will make its report to the next session of the Legislature.

There is one amendment behind the bill page that was proposed by the sponsor of the bill ([Exhibit E](#)). It has two parts to it. The first part is to propose three subcommittees: (1) one subcommittee would include providers of mental health services and representatives of those who pay for services including Medicaid managed care organizations and private insurance providers; (2) one subcommittee would focus on children's mental health; and (3) one subcommittee would be composed of professionals in academia. The other part of the amendment proposes to specifically delete the member who was employed by a private university specializing in educating health care professionals and to insert a member who is experienced in medical education.

Chair Stewart:

Do I have a motion to amend and do pass?

ASSEMBLYMAN OHRENSCHALL MOVED TO AMEND AND DO PASS ASSEMBLY BILL 289.

ASSEMBLYMAN ELLIOT T. ANDERSON SECONDED THE MOTION.

Is there any discussion?

Assemblywoman Shelton:

I am going to vote yes to get the bill out of Committee, but I am reserving my right to change my vote during floor session. I believe in supporting mental health. That is one area where we need to move forward. I am not on board with this 100 percent as far as the committee portion of it.

Chair Stewart:

Assemblymen Moore, Seaman, and Fiore are also reserving their right to change their vote during floor session.

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Assemblyman Araujo will present the floor statement on this bill.

Carol M. Stonefield, Committee Policy Analyst:

The next bill for consideration is Assembly Bill 273 which was heard in this Committee on March 24. It was brought forward by Assemblyman Hickey. [Referred to work session document ([Exhibit F](#)).]

Assembly Bill 273: Requires a cooling-off period before a former State Legislator may act as a paid lobbyist before the Legislature. (BDR 17-760)

This bill proposes to prohibit a former legislator from receiving compensation to serve as a lobbyist at the Legislature for a period beginning when the legislator leaves office and ending at the adjournment of the next regular session. Exemptions are provided in the proposal if lobbying is part of the duties of the former legislator's full-time employment. There are no amendments.

Chair Stewart:

Do I have a motion to do pass?

ASSEMBLYMAN ELLIOT T. ANDERSON MOVED TO DO PASS
ASSEMBLY BILL 273.

ASSEMBLYMAN OHRENSCHALL SECONDED THE MOTION.

Is there any discussion?

Assemblywoman Fiore:

I am going to vote this bill out of Committee, but I am reserving my right to vote no in floor session.

Chair Stewart:

Is there any other discussion? [There was none.]

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Assemblyman Hickey will present the floor statement on this bill.

Carol M. Stonefield, Committee Policy Analyst:

The next bill for consideration is Assembly Bill 253. It was heard in this Committee on March 17 and presented by Chair Stewart. [Referred to work session document ([Exhibit G](#)).]

Assembly Bill 253: Requires proof of identity for voting. (BDR 24-1125)

This bill requires proof of identity for voting in person. It sets forth acceptable forms of identification. The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) is required to issue a voter identification card free of charge to a person who does not have an acceptable form of photographic identification. A person who does not

present proof of identity may cast a provisional ballot under certain circumstances. The bill also provides that the provisional ballot must be counted if the voter subsequently provides proof of identity. The bill makes numerous conforming changes in state and municipal election provisions.

There is an amendment proposed by the Chair, and it is behind the bill page. Those of you who were here in the 2013 Session will recognize Senate Bill No. 63 of the 77th Session, which was proposed and heard in the Senate Committee on Legislative Operations and Elections. The cover page of the amendment states that this is a conceptual amendment and it includes the provisions that are in the bill. The amendment proposes various changes to voter identification processes. These include a process to include photos of voters in rosters for early voting and election board registers, a process to require the DMV to provide to the Secretary of State or county clerks digital colored photos of registered voters, a process for election workers to compare voters' appearances to the photo, and a means to identify a registered voter who is unable to sign his or her name. Also, the amendment proposes to change procedures permitting a voter to vote if the electronic poll book does not contain a photo of the voter, including requesting written affirmation of identification allowing the election worker to photograph the voter, or allowing the voter to produce another identification card. No person shall be challenged on the basis that the voter does not have photo identification or refuses to allow a photo to be taken. The clerks are required to provide equipment necessary to take digital photos of voters, and the amendment also prohibits the inclusion of certain information in a list of registered voters that is made available to the public.

Chair Stewart:

I will entertain a motion to amend and rerefer to the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means without recommendation.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN SEAMAN MOVED TO AMEND AND REREFER
ASSEMBLY BILL 253 WITHOUT RECOMMENDATION TO THE
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN SHELTON SECONDED THE MOTION.

Is there any discussion?

Assemblyman Elliot T. Anderson:

I am not supporting the policy. This is a procedural motion because I am not convinced the policy is needed based on the hearing. I do not believe we had

any evidence of voter fraud, but because this is a procedural motion and the bill is being sent to the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means, I am willing to support the motion.

Assemblyman Thompson:

I am voting yes to get the bill to the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means, but this is a serious issue and concern for myself and my constituents. I was not here in 2013, so I do not have any background information on the bill. I owe it to myself and my constituency to review an amendment, but for the sake of moving it forward to the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means, I vote yes.

Assemblyman Ohrenschall:

I concur with my colleagues. I am voting yes for this procedural motion to move the bill to the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means for their consideration, but I do not believe the policy espoused by the original version of the bill is a good policy for our constituents. The amendment was considered in the Senate, but we did not see it in the Assembly Committee on Legislative Operations and Elections, so we did not have the opportunity to vet it. I did not support the original policy of the bill, but I will support the procedural motion.

Assemblyman Munford:

I will go along with the procedural motion to move this bill to the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means, but I see this issue as another cost, such as a poll tax. The Twenty-Fourth Amendment to the *U.S. Constitution* prohibits any costs in order to be eligible to vote. When the bill comes to floor session, I will vote no.

Assemblyman Trowbridge:

I, too, agree that we should refer this for a financial evaluation of the proposal to the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means. On the Legislative Operations Committee communications page, there is document that refers to the photo ID card as a voter ID card. I think that is an emotionally-charged word that has caused the state to add a significant financial impact because they have to design a new system, make new photo ID cards, and provide other new information to produce a voter ID card. The state DMV currently offers ID cards that would serve the same purpose. All they would have to do is issue them for free, and we could avoid the topic of having a voter ID card and all its emotional baggage as well as the additional cost for the preparation of a special card. It would be a more palatable item for consideration.

Chair Stewart:

We will take a vote.

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Carol M. Stonefield, Committee Policy Analyst:

Assembly Bill 266 was heard on March 17 in this Committee and was presented by Assemblywoman Dickman. [Referred to work session document ([Exhibit H](#)).]

Assembly Bill 266: Requires proof of identity for voting. (BDR 24-919)

The members will recall that Assembly Bill 266 and Assembly Bill 253 were presented at the same time. They contained the same provisions so, A.B. 266 is before this Committee as it was presented. There are no amendments proposed for consideration.

Chair Stewart:

Do I hear a motion to rerefer Assembly Bill 266 to the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means without recommendation?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN SHELTON MADE A MOTION TO REREFER WITHOUT RECOMMENDATION ASSEMBLY BILL 266 TO THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN SEAMAN SECONDED THE MOTION.

Assemblyman Elliot T. Anderson:

I want to reiterate the same comments I made on passing A.B. 253 out of Committee.

Chair Stewart:

Ditto from Assemblymen Ohrenschall, Munford, and Trowbridge.

Assemblyman Thompson:

I do not ditto what I said on A.B. 253 because this is as is without an amendment. I think we are making major assumptions about people having identification and being able to get identification in order to exercise their right to vote. I am in favor of the bill going to the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means, but I have concerns because there is an assumption that the homeless or those who were incarcerated have identification or have the ability to replace their identification.

Assemblyman Ohrenschall:

I do not like the policy in this bill. At the hearing on A.B. 253, there was testimony from the Office of the Secretary of State in which they came up with only two instances of someone trying to commit in-person voter fraud and in both of those instances, the person was caught and apprehended. I believe voting is a fundamental right and placing an obstacle in front of it when we have not had enough proof that there is a problem is bad policy and questionable. I am going to vote yes for the motion to move the bill to the fiscal committee so they can review the fiscal impact, but if it comes to the floor session in this form, I will vote no.

Assemblyman Munford:

There should not be any additional costs involved for people to be eligible to vote. In 1965, the Martin Luther King era emphasized the voting rights of people, and I believe this bill takes a step backward to the old days and we need to look ahead to the future.

Chair Stewart:

We will take a vote.

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

The work session is closed on A.B. 253, and we will open the hearing on Assembly Joint Resolution 8.

Assembly Joint Resolution 8: Proposes to amend the Nevada Constitution to require approval of certain initiative measures by a two-thirds vote. (BDR C-916)

Assemblywoman Jill Dickman, Assembly District No. 31:

I am here to introduce Assembly Joint Resolution 8 for your consideration. This joint resolution relates to certain measures that are placed on the general election ballot. The joint resolution proposes to amend the *Nevada Constitution* to bring these provisions into alignment with constitutional provisions governing similar actions taken by the Legislature.

As you know, the *Nevada Constitution* reserves to the people the power to propose statutory revisions or constitutional amendments by initiative petition. It also provides that the Legislature may refer measures to the people for their action. The *Constitution* provides different ways to submit a proposal to the people on the general election ballot. If a statutory initiative petition qualifies by getting enough signatures, the *Constitution* requires that it must first be submitted to the Legislature. If the Legislature enacts the provisions and

the Governor approves them, the changes to the statutes become law. The petition is not submitted to the voters. However, if the statutory initiative petition is rejected by the Legislature or it takes no action, the *Constitution* provides that the measure must be submitted to the voters at the next general election. The *Constitution* also provides that the Legislature may refer any measure that creates, generates, or increases any public revenue to the voters at the next general election.

A two-thirds majority vote is needed in each house of the Legislature to pass a measure that generates or increases a tax, fee, assessment, rate, or any other form of public revenue. Assembly Joint Resolution 8 proposes to amend the *Constitution* to require that same two-thirds majority vote when certain questions are placed before the people on the ballot. If a statutory initiative petition proposes to raise revenues, each house of the Legislature must pass the petition by a two-thirds majority vote. If a statutory petition that raises revenues is not acted on by the Legislature and goes to the ballot, two-thirds of the voters must approve it. If the Legislature refers a legislative measure to the people that will generate or increase revenues, that question must also receive a two-thirds majority vote to pass.

Twenty years ago, Nevadans were presented with a proposal to require both houses of the Legislature to approve by a two-thirds majority vote any bills that generate or increase a tax, fee, assessment, or any other form of public revenue. It was known as the Gibbons Tax Restraint Initiative. Thanks to that initiative, we do not have a gross receipts tax that almost passed in 2003. This constitutional amendment resulted from an initiative petition. The people overwhelmingly supported the proposal. In 1994, it passed by a vote of 284,000 to 80,000, resulting in 78 percent of the voters approving this measure. In 1996, the question passed by a vote of 301,000 to 126,000, resulting in 70 percent approving the amendment in a presidential election year when voter turnout was higher. The arguments made then are still relevant today. One way to control the raising of taxes is to require a greater percentage of votes in the Legislature before a measure increasing taxes could be passed. Since a smaller number of people could prevent the raising of taxes, a broad consensus of support from the entire state would be needed to pass these tax increases. It may be more difficult for special interest groups to get increases they favor. State government will have to prioritize its spending and economize rather than turning to new sources of revenue.

Assembly Joint Resolution 8 presents a simple concept. The Legislature has to live with a requirement of a supermajority when it comes to revenue increases. Votes of the people should also be required to meet the same standard,

otherwise special interest groups can circumvent the intent of the constitutional amendment adopted 20 years ago. The effect of this proposal is to tell tax advocates to make the argument and convince the voters that more revenue is needed. If A.J.R. 8 is approved by the Legislature in 2015, it must be approved again in 2017 before it can be placed on the general election ballot in 2018. Let the people decide. If the voters do not see the wisdom in this proposal, they will defeat it at the polls. Our *Constitution* then would not be amended.

With the low voter turnout we have been experiencing, it will be a lot easier to get a ballot initiative on the ballot. It is also going to make it easier for special interest groups to take over; for example, the Bloomberg money that has been put into the background check initiative. There were people who did not understand what they were trying to get them to sign, and I experienced that myself. With the low voter turnouts, a small percentage of the electorate could impose a tax on all of us.

Here are a couple of examples, because this is not unique. There was a supermajority requirement on parcel tax elections in California where a local parcel tax ballot measure needed a two-thirds supermajority in order to pass. Also in California, local school bond ballot propositions require a 55 percent supermajority vote to pass. In Illinois, for a referred amendment to win, it must win a supermajority vote of 60 percent of those voting on the question. That is not just on initiatives that raise taxes but all initiatives. For a referred or an initiated amendment to win in Florida, it must win a supermajority vote of 60 percent of those voting on the question. In New Hampshire, a proposed amendment must be approved by two-thirds of those voting in order to become part of that state's constitution.

That concludes my remarks, and I urge this Committee's support.

Assemblyman Elliot T. Anderson:

I am trying to figure out the purpose of this because in a democracy, if you have one more vote than the other person, you win. Democracy has always been about getting 50 percent of the votes to pass a measure and now instead of 50 percent, it is becoming two-thirds of the vote. You need 60 percent of the votes to break a filibuster in Congress. When did the majority become two-thirds? I think this is a basic power of government. Spending money and raising money is a foundational power of government, and it is not about impeachment, ratifying important documents, or constitutional amendments. What this bill does is tell the people that you have less power and you will have to get more people on your side than the normal 50 percent. Can you explain why we cannot trust the people to make a decision on an initiative in front of them?

Assemblywoman Dickman:

We do not live in a democracy. Our form of government is a representative republic, but it is the same reason they used in Florida. The ballot initiative process in most cases is being taken over by special interest groups. Tons of money is being dumped into these ballot initiatives to influence people. I think these groups should have the same restrictions that we have to raise taxes. This does not apply to all ballot initiatives such as school bonds. It is only for those initiatives that would raise taxes.

Assemblyman Ohrenschall:

I think about the initiative process and about what I learned in U.S. government and political science classes about how Senator Robert M. La Follette, Sr. from Wisconsin, in the progressive movement in the late 1800s, wanted initiative referenda recalls so that people would have another avenue and not just state legislatures and the governor. That was a defining character of many of our western states having the initiative process, referenda, and recall of officials who were not serving the people. Do you know how many initiatives in Nevada passed with a two-thirds vote, if there were fiscal notes, or if they were policy-related initiatives?

Assemblywoman Dickman:

I do not. Ironically, the Florida initiative that raised the threshold to a 60 percent majority vote would not have passed that threshold. It passed by 57 percent, but the people still wanted it. I have no idea how many bills passed either way, but I think our climate has changed. Now there is so much money that gets dumped into these ballot initiatives, and with a 50 percent plus one vote when we have such a small number of people voting, 50 percent plus one of 20 percent of the voters is 10 percent plus one of the people that could impose a tax increase on all of us.

Assemblyman Ohrenschall:

I understand, but looking at the Secretary of State's website, so far I have not found a single initiative that passed with 66.67 percent of the votes. When I extrapolate and look back at Nevada's history, whether it is a funding initiative that has money tied to it or is just a policy initiative, I realize it is virtually impossible to get that kind of consensus from the electorate. I see this amendment vetoing any initiatives, which I do not believe is the intent. I think our citizens want to have an initiative process. Recalling past elections, I do not see anything, even popular initiatives, getting a two-thirds majority vote. I am afraid this will shut down most initiatives even if it is something that does not propose to raise taxes but has a fee increase associated with it.

I believe Initiative Petition 1, regarding the Assembly's determination if recreational marijuana might work, has a fee and certainly might not get the two-thirds majority vote. I see a consequence of this legislation shutting down a great portion of the initiative process.

Chair Stewart:

Assemblywoman Dickman, do you have additional comments?

Assemblywoman Dickman:

Thank you for your time and your patience, and I hope you will give serious consideration to this resolution.

Chair Stewart:

Is anyone in favor of this bill?

Janine Hansen, State President, Nevada Families for Freedom:

Presently, most Americans pay 50 to 60 percent in federal, state, and local taxes, most of which are hidden. This is more than they pay for housing, food, health care, transportation, education, or recreation. It was said by Chief Justice John Marshall the power to tax is the power to destroy. We are a republic and one of the differences between a republic and a democracy is that we protect the rights of the minority. Alexander Frazer Tytler has been attributed as saying that a democracy cannot exist as a permanent form of government. It can only exist until the voters discover that they can vote themselves largesse from the public treasury. From then on, the majority always votes for the candidates promising the most benefits from the public treasury with the result that a democracy always collapses over loose fiscal policy always followed by a dictatorship. The average age of the world's greatest civilizations is 200 years.

I think it is important in America, which was founded as a republic and to the republic for which it stands, that we defend the rights of the minority. According to Jim Clifton, Chairman and CEO of Gallup, that recently did a survey, only 44 percent of adult Americans have a job for 30 hours a week or more. He calls the 5.6 percent unemployment rate a lie. We have a depressed economy with people out of work and who cannot afford to give more opportunities for increased confiscatory taxation. We appreciate the opportunity to support this bill.

Lynn Chapman, Washoe County Chairman, Independent American Party:

Taxpayers have been saying what they believe. It is important that elected officials listen because we know how much we can afford, and I do not think they are listening. This is a good, no-nonsense bill and as taxpayers, we want it. I urge you to support this bill.

Shawn Meehan, representing Nevada Republican Party:

I was recently the Chairman of the Resolutions Committee last April at our state convention and at that convention, voices of 478,000 Republicans in Nevada were heard. In our platform, we resolved to strongly support those in public office who resist higher taxes and fees and seek to reduce the size, cost, and scope of government at all levels. Residents of the state of Nevada are not undertaxed and state government is not underfunded. I applaud Assemblywoman Dickman for this commonsense resolution that would conform to our state *Constitution* and the two-thirds majority vote that this Legislature is required to have in order to pass tax measures. It is a timely measure because even our own fellow party members are supporting tax increases under cover of the code word "fees" to try to do an end run around our state *Constitution*. We have a problem with it. In November, 78.74 percent of Nevada voters said we are not undertaxed. This resolution's commonsense approach ensures that those taxpayers have an effective input and that their consent is required along with those who do not pay and yet consume the taxes.

Assemblyman Elliot T. Anderson:

Ms. Hansen, I am interested in your thoughts because you always have supported people's rights in this Committee. Maybe government has gone too far. Why is it that we do not have a two-thirds rule to do anything? There are policies that are also important besides taxes that can cost people money. Why not require a two-thirds majority vote for every bill in the Legislature including spending money or making cuts? The point is that we have basic foundational powers of government and as long as they are not abused, they are normal for a government to have because our government is founded on we the people and letting we the people do what we want whether it is taxes or throwing the bums out.

Janine Hansen:

I am an advocate of the petition process. The Republicans made it more difficult for the people to have an initiative by placing in the law the issue of the single subject rule which is more narrow than the state Legislature. In 2000, there was an initiative which passed by 70 percent. Perhaps a two-thirds majority vote is not the right amount, maybe 60 percent, as in other states. The problem is that this is the government's power, but they are abusing it because we have become tax slaves to the government. This is a problem for

those of us trying to survive and continue to pay our taxes. Because government is out of bounds and is responding to those who would like to vote themselves largesse from the government, it has become a problem of abuse of the system. Those who are contributing to the system are financing those who are subsidized by the system. Up to 50 percent of Americans receive assistance with Social Security. I am concerned about that because of the national debt. I do not want to see this great country collapse because of fiscal irresponsibility.

Assemblyman Thompson:

Ms. Hansen, I want to hear more regarding your statement about people who rely on social services. They are still a part of our community and voting base. I work with this populace, and I want to understand your point.

Janine Hansen:

We are all concerned about the devastating consequences of the economic crisis. I blame this on the people who are in charge of our economic system. The Federal Reserve has debased our money and caused economic collapse. We are in a situation where there are needy people including those who used to be in the middle class who are barely surviving, like myself. I have compassion for those people and belong to a church that helps them. I think that without the extraction of so much of our money by the government, Americans, through their generosity and charity, would be able to better service these people in need. These people would be better serviced by the private sector rather than by the government, which filters down a small amount of money. The rest is taken up by bureaucracy.

Bonnie McDaniel, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I agree with the three previous Carson City testifiers and support A.J.R. 8. Any time a change is made to the *Nevada Constitution*, it should require a two-thirds majority vote. Just a simple majority vote should not be sufficient to change such an important document. An assemblyman wanted to know why the people of Nevada are smart enough to vote on this bill with a majority vote, yet us Nevadans are told we are not smart enough to take care of our own public lands. You cannot have it both ways; either we are smart or we are not.

Tom Jones, Clark County Chairman, Independent American Party:

I am commenting on the question for the need of the initiative to have a two-thirds majority vote. I believe the Legislature has the power to make laws and levy taxes. If they do their job, then we would not have as many initiatives. The initiatives are just another means of getting things done if the Legislature is not taking care of what the voters want. By making the requirement of a two-thirds majority vote for issues that require spending

money, it would be the same legislative restriction. If something does not pass as an initiative and the Legislature thinks it is a good idea because there was a vote of 55 percent and it passed, it could be brought up in the next session. I believe that a two-thirds majority vote is a good thing, and I urge your support of this bill.

Jim Sallee, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

As a Republican, I support Mr. Meehan's position and I support the bill.

Chair Stewart:

Is anyone else in favor of this bill? [There was no one.] Is anyone opposed to this bill?

Jack Mallory, representing Nevada State AFL-CIO:

The key point of this bill is the first line of the Legislative Counsel's Digest which states that the *Nevada Constitution* reserves to the people the power to propose statutory or constitutional amendments by initiative petition. The power lies with the people. Each and every one of you is not required to have a majority vote to be successfully elected to office. If there are three individuals who are in a race in a general election, the requirement is a plurality of votes to be elected.

The last time there was a ballot initiative on a constitutional or statutory question that received two-thirds or greater vote was in 2006, when the minimum wage petition received 68.71 percent of the votes. Since then, every ballot initiative has received less than two-thirds of the votes. The initiatives that received two-thirds of the votes have been negative as shown in the last election when the margin tax initiative was voted down by 78.74 percent. This is proof that people are smart enough to make the decision on the question of taxes. In 2006, there was a vehicle tax offset issue on the ballot and the people voted in support of it in a supermajority. When you trade in a vehicle, you get an offset of the value of that vehicle against the value of the new vehicle. We are opposed to this bill because it strips away the rights of the people.

Larry Jackson, Private Citizen, Fallon, Nevada:

I oppose this bill because initiatives are becoming a big problem in many states. Initiatives in some states are being proposed and operated by people who use out of state contractors paid on commission. People are getting signatures by convicted felons who cannot vote in the state even if they lived there. I urge you to look at the initiative process and establish rules to prevent those who are out-of-state and those who cannot vote from gathering signatures.

As previously mentioned, with the divided populace, you will seldom get a two-thirds majority vote. It would be ridiculous to receive a two-thirds majority vote. I urge you to turn this initiative down.

Stacey Shinn, representing Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada:

Ballot initiatives are a democratic tool available for the people and used infrequently. They have a place in participatory democracy and spark democratic conversation. There is no doubt that even failed initiatives change Nevada's discussion about relevant societal issues and contribute to policy changes. We are not asking for the initiative process to be made simpler or easier; in fact, the recent requirement to collect signatures by congressional districts makes the process even more difficult. Structurally the two-thirds requirement creates disadvantages for popular grassroots movements that do not have resources like the money interests to run high profile campaigns. Please preserve the people's right to take action into their own hands when necessary and oppose A.J.R. 8.

Juanita Clark, representing Charleston Neighborhood Preservation:

We listened to Governor Sandoval regarding the tax adjustment, and there was a concern that his words were not sincere. We are concerned about the power to tax. Is it to help or to destroy? Please vote no on A.J.R. 8.

Chair Stewart:

Is anyone else in opposition to this bill?

Marlene Lockard, representing Nevada Women's Lobby and Local 1107, Service Employees International Union Nevada:

We oppose A.J.R. 8. It has been difficult for the average voter to understand the concept of 60 votes for cloture, and consequently we have had our years of gridlock in Washington, D.C. that have manifested problems that could have been dealt with in a timely manner rather than a crisis proportion. In Nevada, we know where we are on the good and bad lists. The inability to adequately deal with issues and problems facing our education system and other programs has multiplied the expense of fixing those inherent problems. To further limit and tie the hands of the average citizen to speak when the legislative process is not responsive, in addition to Citizens United, diminishes our role in governmental participation.

Andrew Zaninovich, representing America Votes:

We are in opposition to A.J.R. 8. This would require a two-thirds majority vote on ballot initiatives, which would allow a tyranny of the minority to determine those initiatives. This type of change should come in the form of an initiative petition as opposed to the Legislature's approval, such as the Gibbons Initiative.

Yvanna Cancela, Political Director, Culinary Workers Union Local 226:

We are opposed to this bill. The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled twice on the idea of one person, one vote. This measure would unfairly give the supermajority the right to oversee the rule of the minority and that oversteps the idea that one person gets one vote. The majority should have the say, not the supermajority, which would negate the ability for people to have their voices heard. It is troubling that this body would move on a measure that would tie the hands of everyday people to use their constitutionally given tool to have policy decisions made while not doing anything to change the way we elect folks like you and other elected officials. If we are going to move in the direction of supermajorities prevailing, then it should be a supermajority for everything on the ballot instead of unfairly revoking the rights of individuals.

Chair Stewart:

Is anyone else in opposition to this bill?

Greg Gardella, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada:

Earlier testimony stated that it is easier for special interest groups to propose and move forward tax-based initiatives. There are two sides of a coin, and the other side of this coin is that special interest groups, especially those that represent a small minority of the populace, would have the ability to block a potentially needed initiative that might come forward from the populace. It not only undermines the power of the people, but it undermines your power and authority. If this legislation passes, there are possible future initiatives that you would not have an opportunity to work for or against based on your perspective. So, you are not only undermining the power of the people but undermining your own power if you choose to pass this legislation. I ask how liberty comes into play with those who profess it to be among the highest of ideals when they seek to impose the will of the minority upon a tangible majority?

Chair Stewart:

Is anyone neutral on this bill? [There was no one.] Assemblywoman Dickman, please come forward with your final statement.

Assemblywoman Dickman:

I want to thank all the people who testified in opposition to this bill because all of them were advocating for the people and the people's choice. If this passes out of our Legislature, it gives the people an opportunity to voice their opinion on whether or not they want to restrict the ballot initiative process to raise taxes and fees just like they restrained us through the Gibbons Tax Restraint Initiative. All those speaking against this bill would then have the opportunity to vote against the initiative.

Chair Stewart:

The hearing is closed on Assembly Joint Resolution 8; we will open the hearing on Assembly Bill 320.

**Assembly Bill 320: Designates certain elective offices as nonpartisan offices.
(BDR 24-923)**

Assemblyman Stephen H. Silberkraus, Assembly District No. 29:

I am presenting Assembly Bill 320 along with Bruce Woodbury, via videoconference from the Grant Sawyer State Office Building in Las Vegas. It has been my pleasure working with Mr. Woodbury on putting this bill together. With me is Daniel Stewart, who will not be offering testimony, but who will be here for questions.

Assembly Bill 320 changes all elected county level offices that are not currently nonpartisan to nonpartisan offices. These offices are constable, county assessor, county clerk, county recorder, county treasurer, county commissioner, district attorney, and public administrator. All of the other offices addressed in the bill are currently nonpartisan. I am now giving the time to someone who many of us know, not only for his 18 years of service as a commissioner in Clark County, or for being the namesake of the 215 Beltway, but most importantly, he is the father of the Chairwoman of the Assembly Committee on Education.

Bruce Woodbury, Private Citizen, Boulder City, Nevada:

I thank Assemblyman Silberkraus for sponsoring this bill, which I believe is long overdue. I practiced law in Las Vegas and Boulder City and served on the county commission for 28 years. I was elected and reelected a total of seven times and always on a partisan basis. Not long after taking office in my first term, I became convinced there was not a good reason why a county-elected position should be chosen in a partisan election. All of our local and state judges, school boards, Board of Regents, State Board of Education, sheriff, mayors, and city council members are elected on a nonpartisan basis. I believe all of the elected officials in the consolidated municipality of Carson City are nonpartisan. Like all of those offices, the duties of the other county offices should have nothing to do with partisan politics.

There is no Republican or Democrat way to pave our roads, operate our parks and recreation centers, or make zoning or licensing decisions. The functions of our county commissions are identical to those of nonpartisan city councils. County commissioners serve on regional boards with their city council counterparts as well as transportation and flood control boards, water authorities, health district boards, and convention authorities. The office of

district attorney which involves the prosecution of people for crimes could be free of any partisan political consideration. The offices of county recorder and assessor, treasurer, clerk, public administrator, and constable are purely administrative or clerical and would be selected on the basis of experience and character, not party affiliation.

Assemblymen Trowbridge and Thompson, who are on your Committee, were outstanding public servants for Clark County during my tenure in office. I cannot prejudge their opinions regarding A.B. 320, but I am confident they are aware of the nonpartisan nature and duties which are the essence of these county offices. Many other states have moved in the direction of nonpartisan elections at the county level, although many others are still partisan. Many voters make a practice of voting a straight party ticket. Offices and local government which are not ideological or partisan in nature should not be elected on the basis of such practices.

During my tenure on the county commission, I was never in the majority in terms of party affiliation. There were many years when I was the only member of my party on the seven-member commission; nevertheless, on at least two occasions, I was elected by my colleagues to serve as chairman of the commission. I was always appointed to key regional boards where I served as chairman. That would never have occurred with partisan political factors if they had been given any consideration in our deliberation. I ask you to recognize the reality of these important elective offices and make their elections nonpartisan just as their duties are nonpartisan. I urge the passage of A.B. 320.

Assemblyman Elliot T. Anderson:

I feel that it is important for voters to have information about who they vote for, and it is critical for them to make informed decisions when they go to the ballot. The ballot can convey a lot of information. A party label next to someone's name can tell you how they approach things. The district attorney has the ability to charge or not charge people and has a huge degree of power. There are differences between how Democrats and Republicans feel about those issues. In that instance, you would have clear distinctions and philosophies that voters need to know. I am concerned that for a rural district attorney in local races, people would not know about the office or about the candidates because it is not highly publicized. Do you think this bill could take away the information people rely on? It seems to me that in nonpartisan races, people stop voting because they do not have information on the candidates. I think the voters hold on to party ideas as a way to have at least some information.

Bruce Woodbury:

While I understand what you are saying, I respectfully disagree. I think that party affiliation is vital information with regard to the President of the United States, Congress, the Senate, your office of the state Legislature, and offices such as governor and lieutenant governor. With regard to offices, including the district attorney, which should be divorced from partisan political considerations as to whether you charge someone with a crime, that is not vital information. When I was campaigning door-to-door, the question I was asked more often than I thought it should be was the question of my party affiliation. I thought, why do you care since it has nothing to do with my office? I think an office that is nonideological should not have anything to do with my political affiliation, but for those who care, it is easy to find out someone's political affiliation. It is not vital information.

Assemblyman Elliot T. Anderson:

I am concerned this would lead to fewer people voting in those races, which I believe is a bad thing. I appreciate your perspective, and thank you for your testimony.

Assemblyman Thompson:

When there are town hall meetings or in campaigns, your party affiliation may be designated. Would this bill penalize a candidate for making known his party affiliation? My understanding is that it would not be designated except on the ballot, correct?

Assemblyman Silberkraus:

Yes. It would just be on the ballot; otherwise you would be free to designate your party affiliation publicly or in your mailers. If you want to run as a clear Democrat or Republican, there is no issue.

Daniel Stewart, Policy Analyst, Assembly Leadership:

Constitutionally, even when we try to restrict people from declaring their party affiliation, I do not think we could. In *Republican Party of Minnesota v. White*, 536 U.S. 765 (2002), the U.S. Supreme Court said you cannot penalize judicial candidates for announcing party affiliations in their campaigns.

Assemblyman Ohrenschall:

In light of the decision referenced by Daniel Stewart, the fact that judicial candidates in nonpartisan races cannot be prohibited from stating their party affiliation, I have seen that the parties are sending out flyers to voters advising them of their party affiliation in these independent races. Even though the goal

is to take the party politics out of these races, I think they are going to be there anyway. I think it would be better to let voters know who is a Democrat, a Republican, or an Independent because in these nonpartisan races, voters will be informed of the candidate's party affiliation by various factions that think it will either be a benefit or be harmful to a candidate. I am not sure what the benefit would be now to take that information away from the voters.

Bruce Woodbury:

I think that anyone who cares will and can find out the candidate's party affiliation, but in our city council races, I could not tell you the party affiliation of many of those individuals in the various cities. I can tell what I think about their abilities and the jobs they are doing. I get those flyers in the mail about a nonpartisan race, and if I do not know anything else about the candidates, it might have some effect on me, but usually most people do not pay attention to that when it is a nonpartisan race.

Assemblyman Ohrenschall:

Very often I will get some constituents around election and early voting time asking me what I think about candidates and their party affiliation.

Assemblyman Trowbridge:

I agree with you that the positions listed on the bill are ones that a person should run for and serve based on their knowledge, experience, and application of existing law rather than from a political philosophy.

Chair Stewart:

Are there any other comments? [There were none.] Does that conclude your statement, Assemblyman Silberkraus? Are there any others who want to testify? [There was no one.] Is there anyone in favor of this bill? [There was no one.] Is anyone opposed to this bill?

Janine Hansen, State President, Nevada Families for Freedom:

I, too, have been in a position of receiving calls about who to vote for. Since 1988, Nevada Families for Freedom has published a voter guide to help people decide who to vote for including races such as district attorney and county commissioner. I think this bill takes away key information from the voter, which is the candidate's political party. It is key since you join a political party because you have a political philosophy that agrees with that party's platform. If you are registered as a Republican, Democrat, or an Independent American, you have some idea at the polls about how you are going to vote. Because the races listed in this bill are low-profile races, voters are seeking information. That is why all of you get calls about candidates. I think a party label is helpful to know the political philosophy of that candidate. It applies to many of the

races listed in this bill. In particular, the county commission has a lot to do with what goes on in the county, such as how taxes are spent and the priorities. It is important for voters to have that basic information. We oppose this bill.

Lynn Chapman, Washoe County Chairman, Independent American Party:

Page 2, line 17, refers to public administrator. I ran for public administrator of Washoe County, not once, but twice. The most important thing is that I ended up receiving over one-third of the votes. The reason is because I campaigned and talked to people about different issues. It was important to do that, but I do not think this bill would let me do that. I would not be going on to a general election because I would be a candidate for a minor party.

The National League of Cities did a survey regarding the difference between nonpartisan and partisan political elections. The proponents of nonpartisan political elections suggest that political parties are irrelevant to providing services, and cooperation between elected officials belonging to different parties is more likely.

Proponents of partisan elections argue that the absence of party labels confuses voters. The voter must choose from a group of candidates who they know nothing about and will have no meaningful basis in casting their ballot. In the absence of a party ballot, voters are turned to whatever clue is available which could even be someone's last name. They make phone calls to others to determine who to vote for. Nonpartisanship tends to produce elected officials more representative of the upper social economic strata than the general populace and aggravates the class bias in voter turnout because in a true nonpartisan system, there are no organizations of local party workers to bring lower-class citizens to the polls on election day. We are opposed to this bill.

Shawn Meehan, Private Citizen, Minden, Nevada:

I am speaking on my own behalf in regard to this bill. I think political parties can serve a purpose. They draw distinctions and can help vet candidates. We all can disagree aggressively, which I think brings out the best in us. If a district attorney is running in a race, you will have an indication of the types of crimes he or she has an interest in. If it is a concern to a candidate, they can register as an Independent.

There is a concept emerging in Nevada that political parties can assist in trying to help remind elected officials of certain promises they make to voters, which I think is a good thing. I am against the first part of the bill to make these nonpartisan offices. I find the second part of the bill very interesting, and I am in favor of the part where we would be electing county commissioners instead

of having them appointed by the Governor. I believe the government that is closest to the people is the best. I do not understand why these are in the same bill.

Chair Stewart:

Is there anyone else in opposition to this bill?

Bonnie McDaniel, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I oppose A.B. 320. We, the voters, have the right to know the parties of each candidate. This helps us be informed voters, which we strive to be during election and campaign processes. It would be great if more people were informed; however, it is helpful to those who are informed. I am opposed to the majority of the bill, but I am in support of section 3, subsection 2. Please vote no on this bill unless there would be an amendment to change the bill.

Tom Jones, Clark County Chairman, Independent American Party:

I agree it is important that the voters know the candidates' party affiliation so they can find out information about the candidates because people vote by name. If I had the Independent American Party after my name, they would know more about me. I am opposing this bill because of that issue. If something is not broken, why fix? I do not understand the advantage of making them nonpartisan, and there could be many disadvantages. Please vote no on this bill.

Jim Sallee, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

Mr. Woodbury is the most nonpartisan politician we have had here in Nevada. I am opposed to this bill because I believe we should know the political persuasion of the candidate, and I think it is difficult to vote for judges if I do not know their political persuasion.

Robert Frank, Private Citizen, Henderson, Nevada:

I am opposed to this bill. I agree that most elected officials should be working for the betterment of all people once they are elected to office. I believe that party affiliation is an important part of the identification and the success of candidates. Those of us who have worked on campaigns know it is difficult to raise money to get elected and to get the visibility and the support needed to be successful. It is difficult for our citizens to get to know the candidates well enough to feel comfortable with them if they do not know their party affiliation. I admit the party affiliation is not a guarantee of the candidate's philosophy or attitude toward the office, but it is important to know. I believe we should not change from our current system.

Chair Stewart:

Is there anyone else in opposition?

Juanita Clark, representing Charleston Neighborhood Preservation:

We are always in favor of different ideas, but we are requesting the Committee to vote no on A.B. 320. Duties performed depend on the bottom line instinct of each person. Their actions may not be what their thoughts are, but whether to put a light signal in a location may or may not depend on party affiliation. [Submitted written testimony ([Exhibit I](#)).

Chair Stewart:

Is anyone neutral on this bill? [There was no one.]

Assemblyman Silberkraus:

This bill does not prevent you from identifying yourself with a party. It makes these offices nonpartisan. I do not see that you are a Republican or Democratic public administrator; I think you are a public administrator, a treasurer, or are in one of these administrative positions that is representing everyone. As a citizen going before any one of these members such as a judge in court, you do not have to think if he is a Republican, Democrat, or a member of the Independent American Party. This is someone who executes his job the best he can in a nonpartisan fashion.

Assemblyman Munford:

Everyone knows the history of political parties. It goes back to George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Alexander Hamilton because they disagreed but looked out for the welfare of people. Everyone has the right to disagree and they agreed. Thomas Jefferson resigned from his position as Secretary of State during the Washington Administration because he and Alexander Hamilton could not get along. That is what started the different political parties.

Assemblyman Silberkraus:

Just like those fine folks, if you take any two of us Republicans or Democrats and put us side by side, that "R" or "D" does not identify our beliefs, who we are, or how we will execute our job, it only represents part of our identification.

Chair Stewart:

The hearing is closed on Assembly Bill 320 and we will open the hearing on Assembly Bill 460. [Assemblywoman Shelton assumed the Chair.]

Assembly Bill 460: Expresses the intent of the Legislature to increase its membership in the next reapportionment and redistricting cycle. (BDR 17-1126)

Assemblyman Lynn D. Stewart, Assembly District No. 22:

I am here to present Assembly Bill 460. There are two parts to A.B. 460. The first part expresses the intent of the Legislature to increase the size to 22 seats in the Senate and 44 seats in the Assembly. The second part assigns the Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB) to study any logistical issues relating to serving the additional members in the Legislative Building.

The *Nevada Constitution* limits the size of the Legislature to 75 members. I have provided a chart regarding the Nevada State Legislature ([Exhibit J](#)), and on six different occasions in the history of our state, we reached 75 members. Article 4, section 5 of the *Constitution* has a formula stating that the Senate shall never be less than one-third or more than one-half of the Assembly. The current size of 63 members, 21 Senators and 42 Assemblymen, was established in 1981—35 years ago. In the history of our state, this is the longest stretch of time when we have not had a change. At that time, Nevada's population was about 800,000 people. Each Senator represented approximately 38,000 people, and each Assembly member represented about 19,000 people. When Nevada redistricted in 2011, the state's population was 2.7 million. It has come closer to 2.8 million over the last four years. Now every Senator represents over 128,000 residents, and every member of the Assembly represents over 64,000 Nevadans. That is a 69 percent increase in the number of constituents served without any increase in the Legislature.

We know that we cannot bind a future Legislature. In 2021, the members will be free to change the number as long as they stay with the cap of 75. I am proposing that we lay the groundwork for increasing the size of the Legislature by three members with A.B. 460.

The second part of this bill concerns the LCB Director performing a study to see what the problems would be to add three more offices and additional staff. I served on the Assembly Legislative Operations and Elections Committee in 2011, and the time constraints at the end of the session prevented us from carrying out difficult assignments such as this. I am proposing that we now start preparing for the future. In 2020, there will be a census count, and we will be redistricting in 2021.

We have one of the smallest legislative bodies in the United States. Alaska, Delaware, and Nebraska are the only states which have smaller legislatures than we do. Utah has 104 members, Arizona has 90 members, and Oregon also has 90 members. We are much smaller than our neighboring states. The purpose of this bill is to get ready for the future. In a lot of ways, Nevada has not entered the twenty-first century, and I believe this would be part of our plan to move forward into the twenty-first century by reducing the number of constituents we serve and making it easier to serve them. When I am not in session, I have constituents calling me regarding individual problems. Without a staff, it is difficult for me to serve them. When I was first elected, I had 223,000 constituents to serve, almost twice as many as the Senators have now. It is my intent to get this idea in your heads that we need more legislators and have the Director of the LCB prepare a study to see what it would entail, and determine if we have the space and what the cost would be to provide additional staff. That is the nuts and bolts of this bill.

Assemblyman Ohrenschall:

With the growth in Clark, Washoe, and Douglas Counties and the population becoming more sparse in our frontier counties, do you foresee the possibility of adding these seats to get a closer relationship between those state representatives and the people in the pioneer counties? There is now a representative who has part of Clark County and 11 of the pioneer counties. Maybe there is someone who could be more oriented to the smaller counties because there would be more seats.

Assemblyman Stewart:

I think that is a possibility, and it would be up to the decision of the legislative body in 2021. If my other bill passes, the Legislative Advisory Commission on Reapportionment and Redistricting could take that into account.

Assemblyman Thompson:

Since the next census is in 2020, I understand your thinking. I also like to forecast and think ahead for the future. Are we sure our population is going to have a significant increase? There is that possibility. It is 2015 and people may relocate somewhere else, and there is a possibility we could have a decrease in population. By committing to increasing the number of Senate and Assembly seats, would that be proceeding with this idea too quickly? Do we have any indicators or trending that would indicate in five more years there would be a significant increase in population?

Assemblyman Stewart:

Presently, the Clark County School District is needing 24 new schools, and since January, there has been an increase of about 1,000 students in Clark County. I think that shows there is a definite trend to go forward with this legislation. Our economy is improving almost monthly. Even during the recession, our population dropped some but the decrease was miniscule. Even if it were to drop, the population is 69 percent greater than in 1981. There was no increase in the number of our legislative members for 35 years and our numbers are way below our neighboring states. We could increase the number of members to our limit, and we would still be lower than the other states. I think this is prudent planning.

Assemblyman Thompson:

Your proposal is to increase the number of Assembly members from 42 to 44 because we serve about 64,000 constituents each. Would the decrease be to 58,000? Would 6,000 less make that much difference?

Assemblyman Stewart:

It would not make a great difference but some difference. It would at least reverse the trend that we are representing more and more people, which is making it more difficult for us to serve them. It would help some.

Vice Chair Shelton:

Is anyone in favor of A.B. 460?

Lynn Chapman, Washoe County Chairman, Independent American Party:

I think more legislators is a good idea since our state is growing. Since 1987, I have seen a huge amount of people coming into the state. We are in support of this bill.

Janine Hansen, State President, Nevada Families for Freedom:

I think this is a good idea except I think we should increase the numbers a little more because with an increase in population, it is more difficult to have a connection with your legislator. We support this bill.

Vice Chair Shelton:

Is anyone opposed to A.B. 460? [There was no one.] Is anyone neutral on this bill? [There was no one.] The hearing is closed on A.B. 460. Is there any public comment? [There was none]. We are adjourned [at 5:54 p.m.].

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Patricia Hartman
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Assemblyman Lynn D. Stewart, Chair

DATE: _____

EXHIBITS

Committee Name: Committee on Legislative Operations and Elections

Date: April 2, 2015

Time of Meeting: 4:02 p.m.

Bill	Exhibit	Witness / Agency	Description
	A		Agenda
	B		Attendance Roster
A.B. 384	C	Carol M. Stonefield, Committee Policy Analyst	Work Session Document
A.B. 289	D	Carol M. Stonefield, Committee Policy Analyst	Work Session Document
A.B. 289	E	Assemblyman Nelson Araujo	Amendment
A.B. 273	F	Carol M. Stonefield, Committee Policy Analyst	Work Session Document
A.B. 253	G	Carol M. Stonefield, Committee Policy Analyst	Work Session Document
A.B. 266	H	Carol M. Stonefield, Committee Policy Analyst	Work Session Document
A.B. 320	I	Juanita Clark, representing Charleston Neighborhood Preservation	Testimony in opposition
A.B. 460	J	Assemblyman Lynn D. Stewart	Legislative Numbers Chart