

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
OF THE  
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, AGRICULTURE,  
AND MINING**

**Seventy-Eighth Session  
April 30, 2015**

The Committee on Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Mining was called to order by Chair Robin L. Titus at 1:41 p.m. on Thursday, April 30, 2015, in Room 3138 of the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada. Copies of the minutes, including the Agenda ([Exhibit A](#)), the Attendance Roster ([Exhibit B](#)), and other substantive exhibits, are available and on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau and on the Nevada Legislature's website: [www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015](http://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](mailto:publications@lcb.state.nv.us); telephone: 775-684-6835).

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Assemblywoman Robin L. Titus, Chair  
Assemblyman Jim Wheeler, Vice Chair  
Assemblyman Nelson Araujo  
Assemblywoman Maggie Carlton  
Assemblyman Richard Carrillo  
Assemblywoman Victoria A. Dooling  
Assemblyman Chris Edwards  
Assemblyman John Ellison  
Assemblyman David M. Gardner  
Assemblyman James Oscarson  
Assemblywoman Heidi Swank

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Assemblyman Ira Hansen (excused)

**GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:**

None



**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Susan E. Scholley, Committee Policy Analyst  
Jim Penrose, Committee Counsel  
Donna J. Ruiz, Committee Secretary  
Cheryl L. Williams, Committee Assistant

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

None

**Chair Titus:**

[Roll was taken. Committee policies and procedures were explained.] We did have a longer meeting scheduled but due to the presenter's inability to be here today, we have moved one of the scheduled items until next week. I will open the meeting with the work session on Senate Bill 476 (1st Reprint).

**Senate Bill 476 (1st Reprint): Amends provisions relating to certain local districts. (BDR 49-826)**

**Susan E. Scholley, Committee Policy Analyst:**

Senate Bill 476 (1st Reprint) relates to conservation districts. It was sponsored by the Senate Committee on Government Affairs and was heard in this Committee on April 28, 2015.

Senate Bill 475 (1st Reprint) makes a legislative declaration regarding conservation districts having special expertise and uniquely suited to coordinate with federal land management agencies. If approved by a majority of the registered voters within a conservation district, the bill requires a board of county commissioners to impose an annual fee not to exceed \$25 on each parcel in their conservation district. Money collected from the fee may only be used for the purposes of a conservation district. The bill also includes a declaration that the Legislature will strive to make appropriations to conservation districts at comparable levels to those provided in other western states. Finally, for a weed district located entirely within the boundaries of one county and within one conservation district, the bill would authorize a board of county commissioners and the supervisors of a conservation district to enter into an agreement allowing the district supervisors to serve as the directors of that weed control district. [Referred to work session document ([Exhibit C](#)).]

Amendments were proposed at the hearing by the bill's sponsor as put together by the Nevada Association of Conservation Districts. The amendments add the option of imposing the per parcel fee based on the results of a vote at

a mass meeting of the electors within a conservation district, similar to the way district supervisors may be chosen under the provisions of *Nevada Revised Statutes*, Chapter 548. The committee counsel has prepared a mock-up of the proposed amendments, which is attached to the work session document ([Exhibit C](#)). The vote in the Senate on this bill was unanimous.

**Chair Titus:**

Are there any comments?

**Assemblywoman Carlton:**

I was just wondering why an amendment is being proposed on this side and why it was not proposed on the other side?

**Susan E. Scholley:**

According to the testimony they ran out of time. The bill came out of committee late, so they did not have time to add the amendment on the Senate side and still make the first committee and first house passage deadlines.

**Assemblywoman Carlton:**

The only concern that I have is the declaration that the Legislature will strive to provide appropriations to conservation districts. I am not used to seeing language like that in a bill. I do not think they should feel like they have any higher or better purpose than anyone else who wants an appropriation from the Legislature. I was trying to figure out what the reasoning is behind that. I apologize because I believe I was gone for part of the hearing. I have some concerns about that, but as long as it does not have any power behind it, I guess it is okay.

**Chair Titus:**

I appreciate that, recognizing that component was vetted in the Senate. That is not new language. It was voted on over in the Senate. The new language is in green on the amendment.

**Assemblyman Wheeler:**

Originally, I was not too thrilled with this bill until I saw that it does take a vote of the people of that district in order to raise any fees. I will be voting to move this out of Committee and then pursuing the amendment a little bit harder. I do want to reserve my right to change my vote on the floor.

**Assemblyman Ellison:**

My problem with this is that there could be several of these districts inside county boundaries. If there are, then it does not take every one of the districts

to create a charge against the parcel. I might be wrong, but I will be voting no unless I can get clarification.

**Assemblyman Gardner:**

I just wanted to put on the record that I have a little bit of concern with section 5.5. Maybe I just do not understand about having a mass meeting. I will vote it out of Committee, but I want to reserve my right.

**Assemblywoman Dooling:**

I would like to reserve my right also, but I will vote to get it out of Committee.

**Assemblyman Edwards:**

I am not so sure I like this approach to funding what the conservation districts do. I would prefer that the Legislature have a case made before it in order to fund projects in a more deliberate manner. I just do not know what all of the projects would ultimately become. I do not want people to be hit with one fee or one little tax after another. I will probably be voting no on this one.

**Chair Titus:**

I understood there are 28 different conservation districts in the state of Nevada. Some of them are within county jurisdictions, some cross-county, and this bill would enable them at the agreement, per a vote of their members, to decide if they want to increase their fees and then how those fees are used. Those monies stay strictly within the conservation district. Each conservation district has different priorities. Some might have weed control and some might have flood control plans. Each conservation district is unique to itself. I would encourage each of you, if you are not familiar with your own conservation district, to see which one you are in and see what activities they do. It is a public entity that represents you on a local level.

**Assemblyman Oscarson:**

I received multiple emails from constituents, particularly in Lincoln County, who were in support of this and asking for this. I will be voting to support it.

**Assemblyman Ellison:**

The districts do a lot of great work. I support that 100 percent. My biggest problem is where districts overlap and the \$25 per lot fee that would be assessed. If it were each district per each county, I would not have a problem with this at all. Where they overlap, and some of my districts are overlapping, I do not think it would be fair. I can always change my mind when I get further information, but I want to make sure that I am right.

**Chair Titus:**

Perhaps if you have questions, you could meet with the concerned individuals.  
I will entertain a motion.

ASSEMBLYMAN WHEELER MOVED TO AMEND AND DO PASS  
SENATE BILL 476 (1ST REPRINT).

ASSEMBLYMAN OSCARSON SECONDED THE MOTION.

**Assemblyman Wheeler:**

I reserve my right to change my vote on the floor.

**Assemblyman Gardner:**

I reserve my right to change my vote on the floor.

**Assemblywoman Dooling:**

I reserve my right to change my vote on the floor.

THE MOTION PASSED. (ASSEMBLYMEN EDWARDS AND  
ELLISON VOTED NO. ASSEMBLYMAN HANSEN WAS ABSENT  
FOR THE VOTE.)

**Chair Titus:**

Assemblyman Gardner will take the floor statement. I am going to close the  
hearing on Senate Bill 476 (1st Reprint). Is there any public comment?  
[There was none.] This meeting is [adjourned at 1:51 p.m.].

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

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Donna J. Ruiz  
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

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Assemblywoman Robin L. Titus, Chair

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

**EXHIBITS**

**Committee Name:** Assembly Committee on Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Mining

**Date:** April 30, 2015

**Time of Meeting:** 1:41 p.m.

<b>Bill</b>	<b>Exhibit</b>	<b>Witness / Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>
	A		Agenda
	B		Attendance Roster
S.B. 476 (R1)	C	Susan E. Scholley, Committee Policy Analyst	Work Session Document