

**MINUTES OF THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

**Seventy-Eighth Session  
April 16, 2015**

The Senate Committee on Education was called to order by Chair Becky Harris at 3:41 p.m. on Thursday, April 16, 2015, in Room 2135 of the Legislative Building, Carson City, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 4412 of the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada. [Exhibit A](#) is the Agenda. [Exhibit B](#) is the Attendance Roster. All exhibits are available and on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Senator Becky Harris, Chair  
Senator Scott Hammond, Vice Chair  
Senator Don Gustavson  
Senator Joyce Woodhouse  
Senator Moises (Mo) Denis  
Senator Tick Segerblom

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Senator Mark A. Lipparelli (Excused)

**GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:**

Assemblyman Randy Kirner, Assembly District No. 26

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Todd Butterworth, Policy Analyst  
Beth Ann Reykers, Committee Secretary

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Daniel Stewart, Assembly Leadership Policy Analyst  
Constance J. Brooks, Ph.D., Vice Chancellor for Government and Community  
Affairs, Nevada System of Higher Education  
Craig Stevens, Clark County School District

**Chair Harris:**

I will now open the hearing on A.B. 150, which began in the Senate Education subcommittee just prior to the beginning of this meeting.

**ASSEMBLY BILL 150**: Revises provisions governing the Governor Guinn Millennium Scholarship Program. (BDR 34-200)

**Daniel Stewart (Assembly Leadership Policy Analyst):**

I am representing Assemblyman Lynn D. Stewart. I read from his written remarks ([Exhibit C](#)) and provided a handout ([Exhibit D](#)) during the subcommittee meeting.

**Senator Denis:**

If a student has a poor grade point average but does well on a college entrance exam, would he or she be eligible for the Governor Guinn Millennium Scholarship Program (GGMSP)?

**Mr. Stewart:**

Yes, this is the scenario addressed by A.B. 150. Students, for many reasons, may not earn a 3.25 grade point average while in high school. Assembly Bill 150 provides an alternate method for a student to qualify for the GGMSP. If a student exceeds the minimum score required by the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) Board of Regents on a college entrance exam, A.B. 150 would qualify the student for the GGMSP.

Assemblyman Stewart is committed to this bill and will work with the Committee to ensure its passage.

**Chair Harris:**

I will now close the hearing on A.B. 150 and open the hearing on A.B. 111.

**ASSEMBLY BILL 111 (1st Reprint)**: Revises provisions relating to the Governor Guinn Millennium Scholarship. (BDR 34-258)

**Assemblyman Randy Kirner (Assembly District No. 26):**

An interim study determined that the odds of a student graduating is significantly reduced if he or she is not enrolled in classes full time, which is defined as 15 credit hours per semester. The NSHE adopted a strategy to promote graduation of students within a 4-year period.

Assembly Bill 111 changes the eligibility requirement for the GGMSF. The 6 credit hour requirement for students enrolled at a community college will increase to a minimum of 9 credit hours to be eligible for participation in the GGMSF. The 12 credit hour requirement for students who are enrolled at a university will increase to a minimum of 15 credit hours to be eligible for participation in the GGMSF.

There is a fiscal note to A.B. 111. The GGMSF fund has a finite amount of money. For that reason, A.B. 111 proposes to phase in the number of credits that would be reimbursable to a student at a 4-year college. During the first year, students who register for 15 credit hours as mandated by the bill will only be reimbursed through the GGMSF for 13 credits. In the second year, a student would receive reimbursement for up to 14 credits. Reimbursement for up to 15 credit hours taken will occur during the third year and each year thereafter.

**Senator Denis:**

How does this differ from S.B. 128, which was heard and approved by this Committee?

**SENATE BILL 128 (1st Reprint)**: Revises provisions relating to the Governor Guinn Millennium Scholarship. (BDR 34-96)

**Assemblyman Kirner:**

I have not looked at S.B. 128. I believe the difference is A.B. 111 phases in the reimbursement of the additional 3 credit hour requirement placed on students, whereas S.B. 128 reimburses students for the additional 3 credit hours immediately.

**Senator Woodhouse:**

Yes, S.B. 128, which was passed by this Committee, requires reimbursement of 15 credit hours simultaneously with the additional requirement that students at the university level enroll in 15 credit hours for GGMSF eligibility.

**Assemblyman Kirner:**

The fiscal note on S.B. 128 is about \$6 million. I think this program is important to our economic development, but we cannot do it all at one time.

**Chair Harris:**

If the fiscal note to increase the reimbursement of credit hours from 12 to 15 is \$6 million, how much is the fiscal note for each year, as proposed in A.B. 111?

**Assemblyman Kirner:**

I do not know the specifics, but I guess it would be \$2 million for each year. It varies based upon interest and investment accrual. The GGMSP money is in a trust and invested.

**Chair Harris:**

By increasing the reimbursement rate, what is the projected student increase of who will be motivated to take an extra class?

**Assemblyman Kirner:**

I do not know how many students will be motivated through A.B. 111. Part of the theory is to motivate students to take more credit hours each semester, with the ultimate goal of graduating more students within 4 years.

The \$10,000 limit per student for the GGMSP does not change.

**Senator Hammond:**

Assembly Bill 150 may increase the number of students eligible for the GGMSP. How will this impact the fiscal note to A.B. 111?

**Assemblyman Kirner:**

I do not know the answer; there are too many variables to make an accurate projection.

**Constance J. Brooks, Ph.D. (Vice Chancellor for Government and Community Affairs, Nevada System of Higher Education):**

The NSHE is neutral on A.B. 111. We appreciate Assemblyman Kirner's support for the NSHE completion agenda. Augmenting the GGMSP so that students have the ability to go to school full-time will help move this agenda forward.

The NSHE struggles with the incremental phase-in portion for reimbursement contained in A.B. 111. Students rarely register for a 1 credit hour class.

**Senator Denis:**

If a student is required to enroll in 15 credit hours to be eligible for the GGMSP, he or she may add an additional 3 credit hour class for which the student may not be fully reimbursed. I am concerned students may take any class to fulfill the requirement, whether or not it applies to their majors.

**Dr. Brooks:**

If a student enrolls in 15 credit hours in accordance with the GGMSP, he or she will only receive reimbursement for 13 credit hours in the first year under the provisions of A.B. 111. A student may not be precluded from taking 15 credits, but would only be reimbursed for 13 credit hours.

The NSHE is concerned with the message this sends to students. It does not want the message obfuscated by a phase-in plan. The message should be the NSHE and the GGMSP supports full-time enrollment. This will change enrollment behavior.

The NSHE is also concerned with the administration of the phase-in provision of A.B. 111.

**Assemblyman Kirner:**

I am supportive of students enrolling in 15 credit hours. The issue is striking a balance between what we are able to afford, and the complete college agenda. Assembly Bill 111 is a fiscally responsible way to get there.

**Craig Stevens (Clark County School District):**

The Clark County School District (CCSD) "Good News Minute" for today concerns three of our CCSD educators who have been recognized recently for their outstanding service to students.

Congratulations to Virgin Valley High School teacher Christy R. Davis, named Kiwanis' Educator of the year!

Congratulations to Laura Willis, Nevada Assistant Principal of the Year, from Canyon Springs High School.

National History Day has nominated Wilbur and Theresa Faiss Middle School teacher Sarah Losofsky for the Patricia Behring Teacher of the Year Award.

Senate Committee on Education  
April 16, 2015  
Page 6

**Chair Harris:**

There being no further comment or business before the Committee, the meeting is adjourned at 4 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

---

Beth Ann Reykers,  
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

---

Senator Becky Harris, Chair

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

EXHIBIT SUMMARY				
Bill	Exhibit		Witness or Agency	Description
	A	1		Agenda
	B	2		Attendance Roster
A.B. 150	C	1	Daniel Stewart	Written Testimony of Assemblyman Lynn A. Stewart
A.B. 150	D	2	Daniel Stewart	Governor Guinn Millennium Scholarship Data Sheet