

**MINUTES OF THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE**

**Seventy-Eighth Session  
April 14, 2015**

The Senate Committee on Finance was called to order by Chair Ben Kieckhefer at 7:58 a.m. on Tuesday, April 14, 2015, in Room 2134 of the Legislative Building, Carson City, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 4412E 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 Ben Kieckhefer, Chair  
Senator Pete Goicoechea  
Senator Mark A. Lipparelli  
Senator David R. Parks  
Senator Joyce Woodhouse

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Senator Michael Roberson, Vice Chair (Excused)  
Senator Debbie Smith (Excused)

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Mark Krmpotic, Senate Fiscal Analyst  
Alex Haartz, Principal Deputy Fiscal Analyst  
Lona Domenici, Committee Manager  
Emily Cervi, Committee Assistant  
Susan McArthur, Committee Secretary

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Sharon Pearson  
Lindsay Anderson, Washoe County School District  
Nicole Rourke, Clark County School District  
Mary Pierczynski, Ed.D., Nevada Association of School Superintendents  
Ray Bacon, Nevada Manufacturers Association

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Frank Woodbeck, Executive Director, Nevada College Collaborative, Nevada System of Higher Education

Michael Richards, Ph.D., President, College of Southern Nevada

Dan Gouker, Senior Associate Vice President, Division of Workforce and Economic Development and Apprenticeship Studies, College of Southern Nevada

Chet Burton, President, Western Nevada College

Collie Hutter, Chairman, Click Bond, Inc.

Kyle Dalpe, Ph.D., Chief of Staff and Associate Dean, Office of the President, Truckee Meadows Community College

Rob Hooper, Executive Director, Northern Nevada Development Authority

George Ross, Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance

Lea Cartwright, Friends of Ace Charter High School

Michael J. Willden, Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor

**Chair Kieckhefer:**

I will open the meeting with Senate Bill (S.B.) 236.

**SENATE BILL 236 (1st Reprint)**: Revises provisions relating to the Advisory Council on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. (BDR 34-655)

**Senator Joyce Woodhouse (Senatorial District No. 5):**

I am introducing S.B. 236, and I will read from my prepared testimony ([Exhibit C](#)).

**Sharon Pearson:**

I am here in support of S.B. 236. As a teacher in the Clark County School District (CCSD), I see the importance of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) to our students and their families every day. As students explore STEM, they become more cognizant of the world, and they are able to see alternate perspectives. When they are adults, they are going to have to make decisions based on science, technology, engineering and mathematics, just as you, our Legislators, have to make these decisions today.

Students need to have a basic respect for and knowledge of STEM so they can make logical choices as citizens and voters. Senate Bill 236 allows Nevada to honor the importance of STEM in our students' lives. It tells the Nation that our

State looks toward the future, that we do support our children in becoming strong citizens of the world and that education is important to us.

Recently, I gave a tour of our school to some prospective parents, and I asked a fifth-grade student who happened to be in the hall why our school was important to her. She said that she was respected in her learning. She mentioned the opportunities in science, technology, engineering and math. Students at our school are working with scientists, and she told the visitors of her collaboration with them. The scientists ask her opinion, they listen to her ideas and then they share with her. The expectation is that their discussion will continue over the next few months.

This experience is something that will not show up on a report card or a gradebook or in a book she is reading. This recognition that shapes her as a person and a learner comes from STEM. It makes learning exciting for her and brings smiles to her teachers.

You can help others feel the same by recognizing teachers and schools who realize the importance of STEM and how it affects our students. You are saying to our citizens: This is Nevada. We care about you, our students, and we are here to support you.

If we want to build Nevada and bring more businesses to Nevada, we start with education. I understand that you are concerned about the demands put on teachers; so am I. Nonetheless, the Legislature and the public need to recognize the many students who are being touched by STEM today. Our community needs to hear about these things. It is time for the public to support us, the teachers and the students, but first the State has to show its support. I urge you to support this bill for stronger STEM education and to give our students and teachers the recognition they deserve. Give them the opportunity to fulfill this mission. The Advisory Council on STEM can help make this happen.

**Chair Kieckhefer:**

You indicated that the Council has already fulfilled a significant portion of its mission, developing a strategic plan and creating a rubric for evaluating schools and pupils. Have those rubrics been implemented?

**Ms. Pearson:**

The rubric to identify high performers has not been implemented yet because we lack the funding.

**Chair Kieckhefer:**

Is the funding in S.B. 236 enough to support the cost of the Council meetings?

**Senator Woodhouse:**

There is no fiscal note regarding the cost of the meetings. The Advisory Council on STEM has been videoconferencing, and those costs have been absorbed by the Department of Education (NDE). This bill would provide travel funds for two face-to-face meetings of the Council and the recognition events for schools and students.

**Chair Kieckhefer:**

There is a direct appropriation of \$10,000 to support the events. Will there be additional costs yet to be determined by a fiscal note for the travel and other associated costs for the two in-person meetings of the Advisory Council?

**Senator Woodhouse:**

Yes, there will be.

**Chair Kieckhefer:**

Are the costs of the two meetings yet to be determined?

**Senator Woodhouse:**

That is correct.

**Chair Kieckhefer:**

Will implementation of the rubric to identify exemplary STEM schools engender additional costs to the State?

**Senator Woodhouse:**

The Council, through the NDE, will make the rubric available to school districts.

**Ms. Pearson:**

The NDE will distribute the rubric to all schools, public, private and charter, throughout the State at no cost.

**Lindsay Anderson (Washoe County School District):**

The Washoe County School District supports S.B. 236. Because STEM is very important to our schools, many have incorporated STEM into their names, such as Glenn Duncan STEM Academy and Lemelson STEM Academy. Galena High School just won a national award for STEM education. Recently, NDE adopted the Next Generation Science Standards. Given the emphasis on STEM, the District hopes that the U.S. Elementary and Secondary Education Act flexibility waiver and our State performance framework will include science testing and performance as criteria for our school ratings.

**Nicole Rourke (Clark County School District):**

The CCSD supports S.B. 236. Most of our schools are implementing STEM initiatives, and the recognition events outlined in this bill are important not only to our students, but also to our hardworking teachers.

**Chair Kieckhefer:**

Are you confident that the rubric developed by the Advisory Council on STEM will identify high-achieving pupils in the CCSD?

**Ms. Rourke:**

Yes, we worked side by side with the Council and provided input to them.

**Ms. Anderson:**

I agree.

**Mary Pierczynski, Ed.D. (Nevada Association of School Superintendents):**

We are very supportive of S.B. 236. Science, technology, engineering and math have become important to rural school districts in the State, including Eagle Valley Middle School in Carson City.

**Ray Bacon (Nevada Manufacturers Association):**

The report by Governor Brian Sandoval's Office of Economic Development (GOED) entitled "State Plan for Industrial Development and Diversification" is largely based upon increasing STEM careers in Nevada, which depends on improving kindergarten through Grade 12 (K-12) education. We all know that K-12 in Nevada has weaknesses, including a low graduation rate. Senate Bill 236 aims to increase STEM education, which is an essential component of the Governor's plan.

Science, technology, engineering and mathematics programs are active in Carson City, and Fernley is holding a STEM conference this year. Career and technical education programs are increasing STEM content statewide. Most of the students at The Academy of Arts, Careers and Technology (AACT) in Washoe County opted out of regular physics classes in favor of advanced placement physics.

Senate Bill 236 is a small investment for a substantial long-term return on investment for Nevada, which has been losing students to out-of-state colleges. The focus on STEM should help us retain these students in the State. The National Association of Manufacturing has identified the largest skills gap for U.S. workers as STEM-related. We lag behind the Nation in STEM education and S.B. 236 is an important part of the effort to catch up.

**Senator Woodhouse:**

I have read the recent Brookings Institution report "Cracking the Code on STEM: A People Strategy for Nevada's Economy," and this bill addresses one of its critical points: increasing awareness of STEM. Recognizing exemplary STEM achievement by pupils and schools will raise that level of awareness, as will allowing the Advisory Council to finish its work within the next biennium.

**Chair Kieckhefer:**

The Committee will consult the NDE to confirm travel costs and other associated costs for the Advisory Council on STEM meetings.

Seeing no further testifiers in favor of, opposed or neutral to S.B. 236, I will close the hearing on this bill, and open the hearing on S.B. 496.

**SENATE BILL 496:** Establishes the Workforce Development Rapid Response Investment Program. (BDR 34-592)

**Senator Joyce Woodhouse (Senatorial District No. 5):**

I am introducing S.B. 496, and I will read my prepared testimony ([Exhibit D](#)).

**Frank Woodbeck (Executive Director, Nevada College Collaborative, Nevada System of Higher Education):**

It is very important that our community colleges develop curricula that will serve industry and the workforce of the future. Senate Bill 496 defines the purpose of the Workforce Development Rapid Response Investment Fund (WDRRIF) and the

grant application process. It contains accountability measures, including industry demand for specific curricula.

Many states competing with Nevada for industry have enacted similar STEM funding over past years, including Utah, Colorado, Arizona, Arkansas, Georgia and Texas.

**Chair Kieckhefer:**

What details would community colleges have to provide to the Advisory Committee on STEM when they apply for grants?

**Mr. Woodbeck:**

The details would include the curriculum being established, the industry it serves, the cost of teachers and capital costs. Every dollar being spent would have to be justified within the grant application, which will be signed by the president of the college. Other accountability measures may be added to the WDRRIF.

**Chair Kieckhefer:**

Is this fund intended to educate the workforce for a specific company or is it targeted more broadly to industry sectors?

**Mr. Woodbeck:**

The fund is more broadly targeted to industry. However, specific companies do drive curricula. Although we have not identified all specific skill sets that Tesla, for one example, will require for its gigafactory workforce, we do know that instrumentation will be an important component. We will need to quickly establish or expand an instrumentation program at one of our colleges to meet that need. That same curriculum will educate workers in aerospace and information technology (IT), to name just two additional industries that will require the same skill sets. So, while a company might be the trigger for a specific curriculum, it will ultimately serve several different industry sectors.

**Senator Lipparelli:**

Since S.B. 496 contains no limit to what the Advisory Council grants to any one applicant, could the entire WDRRIF be spent on a single initiative?

**Mr. Woodbeck:**

The intent was that there would be grant amount limits, and they existed in our initial draft of this bill.

**Chair Kieckhefer:**

What was the financial cap in this bill as originally conceived?

**Mr. Woodbeck:**

I do not remember the exact amount, but allow me to provide an example of how these funds will be allocated. While I was Director of the Department of Employment, Rehabilitation and Training (DETR), Great Basin College needed to expand its instrumentation program to meet the needs of the mining industry. The cost of this curriculum expansion was \$600,000. Half that amount, for staffing a 3-year program, was paid by DETR. The remaining \$300,000 was for equipment, which the Newmont and Barrick mining companies paid. These are typical amounts, approximately \$500,000, that the Fund will be granting.

**Chair Kieckhefer:**

Section 9, subsection 4 of S.B. 496 seems to limit the amount of the grants to the cost of personnel. It reads " ... cost of course instruction for any such program that may be considered may not exceed the costs of 2 years of salary and benefits for course instructors, teachers or professors." However, significant equipment and material costs are needed for STEM instruction, as cited in your mining example. Is it the intent of this bill to limit application amounts to the cost of staff, or could hard costs be included?

**Mr. Woodbeck:**

Section 9, subsection 2 of the bill provides for equipment. The last line refers to "investment in new equipment and repurposed facilities."

**Chair Kieckhefer:**

Is the legislative intent to include full costs of operations of a new program?

**Mr. Woodbeck:**

Yes, the intent is to fully fund new programs for a 2-year period.

**Michael Richards, Ph.D. (President, College of Southern Nevada):**

We enthusiastically support S.B. 496 for the investment it represents in building a trained and educated workforce for Nevada. This legislation addresses the



primary strength of community colleges, their responsiveness to market needs. As businesses and industries seek to relocate to Nevada, we will be able to offer customized training with a quick turnaround. The accountabilities built into this bill will ensure training is consistent with the State's economic development goals.

**Dan Gouker (Senior Associate Vice President, Division of Workforce and Economic Development and Apprenticeship Studies, College of Southern Nevada)**

I will read from my prepared statement ([Exhibit E](#)) in support of S.B. 496.

**Chet Burton (President, Western Nevada College):**

Tesla's move to Nevada represents a considerable amount of hard work for the community colleges in the State. Western Nevada College has met numerous times with Tesla over the past several months, and while it is not able to provide us exact requirements for skill sets, we have learned that the demand for skilled employees will be large and immediate.

The current community college funding formula recognizes growth, but it entails an inherent time lag. For example, WNC's current funding is based on a weighted head count from 2014. Such methodology will not accommodate a dynamic, fast-moving industry sector. Senate Bill 496 will allow us to reassure industry that we can supply employees when businesses are ready for them.

My background includes a number of years in the corporate world, where every point of market share is jealously guarded. Nevada is competing with other states for the market share of high-value, high-skilled jobs. Senate Bill 496 levels the playing field for Nevada compared to other states. This legislation should not be viewed as a cost, but as an investment in human capital. After spending a year or 18 months at college, students will qualify for high-paying jobs—an immediate return on investment.

Tesla and Switch act as fundamental building blocks to the State's expanding economy. Approval of the WDRRIF provides a critical tool to support the training of employees who will play a crucial part in the success of these companies.

**Chair Kieckhefer:**

Does WNC envision developing curricula in alignment with national certification programs?

**Mr. Burton:**

Yes. An example is WNC's Advanced Manufacturing Program, administered in conjunction with Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC), that provides instruction in pneumatics, robotics, electronics and instrumentation. The certification exams will be held at public libraries, granting a national certification to students who pass.

**Collie Hutter (Chairman, Click Bond, Inc.):**

I am the chairman of Click Bond, which started in Carson City approximately 28 years ago with five people. We now employ 322 people in Carson City and another 100 around the world. I am a past president of the Nevada Manufacturing Association, and I was a member of the Nevada System of Higher Education's (NSHE) Fresh Look at Nevada's Community Colleges Task Force in 2011. For 16 years, I have represented Nevada on the National Association of Manufacturers' Board of Directors. I am a member of the Governor's Workforce Investment Board and I am Chair of the TMCC Institutional Advisory Council. I am the founder and director of Dream It Do It Nevada, an IRS code 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization for the development of the workforce for the manufacturing industry, which has been operating in the State for approximately 5 years.

All of this experience has allowed me to forge strong connections with community colleges in the area, and they have provided training for Click Bond's 322 employees in Carson City.

As baby boomers in aerospace and defense are retiring, a younger replacement workforce is needed. Filling vacancies in industry is a challenge. As companies such as Tesla and Switch come to the State, and as Nevada is recognized as a high tech manufacturing hub, more capacity and support will be needed.

Senate Bill 496 goes a long way toward solving a critical problem that prevents manufacturers from hiring skilled workers, workers who will require frequent retraining. Without the funding mechanism this bill represents, industry is at a standstill. Community colleges provide the training known as middle skills that are critical for entry-level positions into high tech manufacturing businesses.

**Kyle Dalpe, Ph.D. (Chief of Staff and Associate Dean, Office of the President, Truckee Meadows Community College):**

Community colleges have multiple missions: workforce training and teaching middle skills chief among them. Truckee Meadows Community College offers training to prepare the local workforce, but we frequently do not have the means to fund new curriculum offerings. The WDRRIF will help us increase capacity, much like the Nevada Knowledge Fund allows for investment in research.

As we prepare for the influx of companies such as Tesla Motors and the ancillary businesses that will follow them, community colleges must be able to prepare the workforce they require in a very short time.

The rapid response aspect of S.B. 496 is key. In 2012, TMCC received a \$2 million GOED grant for our Applied Technology Center. This year, we hope to start the project for which that grant was awarded. That is a lag time of almost 3 years, and we have many wait-listed students.

The TMCC uses a combination of grant money and private donations to modify space, deliver training on weekends and hire additional staff. However, the current funding mechanism is piecemeal. The WDRRIF as defined in S.B. 496 would allow us to build programs more quickly and seamlessly.

The TMCC has experienced declines in funding since 2009, and we will be required to cut \$2 million from our budget for each of the next 2 years. Truckee Meadows Community College would much rather be concentrating on how we can build capacity to serve students and area employers. The passage of S.B. 496 will provide one more much needed tool toward this effort.

**Rob Hooper (Executive Director, Northern Nevada Development Authority):**

The Executive Board of the Northern Nevada Development Authority (NNDA) includes representatives of local manufacturing firms, employment services and contractors. The Board has discussed S.B. 496 and unanimously agrees that the WDRRIF is needed to provide a trained workforce.

The economic drivers of Nevada have substantively changed in the 8 years that I have been involved in economic development. The requirements of manufacturing firms have dramatically evolved. Community colleges are on the

front line of workforce training and technical education, and their funding is an absolute necessity to stay abreast of these changes.

The competitive nature of economic development is also accelerating. Two weeks ago, I attended the SelectUSA Investment Summit in Washington, D.C., sponsored by the U.S. Department of Commerce. This conference boasted 2,500 participants from 72 countries, all 50 states and 2 territories. President Barack Obama addressed the conference, as did U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry.

Another speaker at the SelectUSA conference represented a global petrochemical corporation that is bringing 3,000 new jobs to Louisiana, a state that has a WDRIF to fund employee training curricula. In addition to this rapid response funding, Louisiana committed another \$23 million to build the community college's workforce training center near the petrochemical development.

Manufacturers considering new development always feature workforce training as a prominent factor in their location or relocation strategy. Yesterday, NNDA hosted a large benefits management company from Sacramento that has decided to expand to Nevada. Our conversation quickly moved to their need for IT-literate workers who are also health care certified. This entity intends to encourage their clients, mostly medical technology companies, to expand to our area.

Western Nevada College has the ability to train such a workforce, but they need the funding to develop the curricula. I strongly encourage the Legislature to deliver this funding via S.B. 496.

**George Ross (Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance):**

The Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance (LVGA) is the agency charged with economic development and industry recruitment for southern Nevada. The LVGA is in favor of S.B. 496. A survey of companies that ultimately decided against relocating to Nevada shows 35 percent were discouraged by a poorly educated workforce. Senate Bill 496 directly addresses that deficit in a timely manner.

**Mr. Bacon:**

Dan Gouker was in charge of the electrician training program in southern Nevada. A lot of what happened on the Strip was made possible by him, because he helped electricians to move into the world of electronics. That is the type of change that S.B. 496 will facilitate. It will help employees of existing businesses master new technologies, and it will help train employees for new industries coming to the State. It is possible that half a dozen companies will follow Tesla to Nevada, needing a workforce trained in battery-related applications. Our community colleges provide quality education, but capacity is marginal. The WDRRIF is consistent with GOED policies to expand the economic capacity of the State.

**Chair Kieckhefer:**

As drafted, S.B. 496 is broad and flexible. Would it be possible to limit the program, adding fiscal parameters to ensure that the funding would be granted on a 2-year basis and not become built into the base?

**Senator Woodhouse:**

Yes, those parameters will appear in an amendment to the bill which will be brought before the Committee.

**Chair Kieckhefer:**

The Committee would also like to see some built-in accountability measures, such as how many students are being served, what types of programs are being built and the numbers of job placements.

**Senator Goicoechea:**

Clearly S.B. 496 fills an important need. Community colleges have been struggling over the past 3 to 4 years. Their programs have been pared back to the point where it has been hard for them to respond to industry needs.

**Chair Kieckhefer:**

Seeing no further testifiers in favor of, opposed or neutral to S.B. 496, I will close the hearing on this bill, and open the hearing on S.B. 493.

**SENATE BILL 493:** Establishes a program for awarding STEM workforce challenge grants. (BDR 34-594)

**Senator Joyce Woodhouse (Senatorial District No. 5):**

I am introducing S.B. 493, which creates the STEM Workforce Challenge Grant Fund, and is the second of three recommendations of the "Interim Study Concerning Community Colleges."

We have heard today extensive testimony from DETR, GOED and NSHE regarding their coordinated efforts to develop a qualified workforce capable of meeting the needs of industry sectors our State is targeting for growth.

I will read excerpts from my prepared remarks ([Exhibit F](#)).

**Mr. Woodbeck:**

The Executive Budget allocates \$3 million for the STEM Workforce Challenge Grants. One intent of S.B. 493 is to create a mechanism by which community colleges and Nevada State College can establish STEM programs. Nevada universities have the Knowledge Fund that was established 4 years ago, but smaller colleges lack access to that source. The Challenge Grants provide businesses the opportunity to match funding, dollar for dollar, to establish new college curricula. The STEM Workforce Challenge Grants program is needed to provide training in the State where emerging industries are all STEM-related.

**Senator Goicoechea:**

I definitely support the community colleges that serve my constituency in rural Nevada. When I represented Fallon in the Assembly, the Western Nevada College campus in Fallon had 2,400 students. Now that campus serves only 300 to 400 people because the college is underfunded. We have completely destroyed the base that we now have the opportunity to build up with the STEM Workforce Challenge Grants.

**Chair Kieckhefer:**

Does section 9 of S.B. 493 allow grant application without community college inclusion?

**Mr. Woodbeck:**

There is a preference for community colleges and the State College.

**Chair Kieckhefer:**

Could a regional consortium of nonprofit organizations or private businesses receive a grant without community college involvement?

**Mr. Woodbeck:**

Yes, they could.

**Chair Kieckhefer:**

Is there a requirement that STEM programs become self-sustaining after the grant period has expired?

**Mr. Woodbeck:**

Yes, there is.

**Chair Kieckhefer:**

Is there a requirement that the programs continue after the expiration of the grant?

**Mr. Woodbeck:**

There is no such requirement, but there is an understanding that if it is a needed program, it would be continued. Ongoing evaluation is needed because programs can become outmoded as technology evolves. Programs based on outdated technology must be upgraded or eliminated. The base for community colleges depends on weighted student credit hours. If those credit hours do not exist, the college is not funded. So community colleges are not funded program by program; they depend on weighted credits.

**Chair Kieckhefer:**

A comparison of S.B. 496 and S.B. 493 reveals an identical appointment authority for the two committees. To avoid duplication, could one committee oversee both the WDRRIF and the Challenge Grants?

**Mr. Woodbeck:**

It could be one committee. There is a recognized need for STEM programming and there is a recognized need for industry demand-driven curriculum, and that is why two committees were envisioned.

**Chair Kieckhefer:**

Is the required knowledge base the same for both committees?

**Mr. Woodbeck:**

Yes.

**Mr. Dalpe:**

In my past 3 to 4 years of fundraising for TMCC, I have found that private or nonprofit donors often ask, "What is the State funding?" Senate Bill 493 and S.B. 496 represent an important funding mechanism and selection process to help with specific projects.

Community colleges have multiple missions, and TMCC has a very strong transfer curriculum. Nationally, 46 percent of undergraduates start their education at a community college. It is imperative that our programs not only get these students into the workforce, but also allow them to transfer to universities leading to high-level careers.

For example, TMCC hosts an annual Lighter Than Air (LTA) vehicle competition sponsored by the Nevada National Aeronautics Space Administration Space Grant Consortium. Teams of students build and fly helium-powered aircraft. The teams are not necessarily composed solely of engineering students. Students from various disciplines participate in LTA, and they then proceed to embrace a science education, a path that they might not have otherwise considered.

Other important programs for which there are consistently high wait lists are those associated with allied health. The College cannot accommodate all the students who want to participate in those programs and the careers they support.

Truckee Meadows Community College supports S.B. 493.

**Lea Cartwright (Friends of Ace Charter High School):**

The Friends of Ace Charter High School (FACE) support S.B. 493. Ace Charter High School partners with TMCC in the areas of diesel mechanics and energy technology. These STEM grants will allow us to grow our current programs and develop new programs.

The Friends of Ace Charter High School have good relationships with industry supporters and we can raise matching funds. Senate Bill 493 will help our students transition into the STEM workforce. The FACE is a 501(c)(3) corporation supported by construction companies, engineering firms and professional associations such as the Associated General Contractors of America, Associated Builders and Contractors and the Builders' Association. The FACE is the major funding source for Ace Charter High School. Its success in



graduating students and its partnership with TMCC in STEM dual-enrollment programs with TMCC contributes to our community.

**Mr. Ross:**

The LVGA supports S.B. 493. It is essential that the State develops more STEM programs responsive to industry needs, so that citizens who cannot afford 4 to 6 years of college can still enjoy good solid middle class jobs with good pay.

**Mr. Bacon:**

In Minnesota, a program called Right Skills Now took people off the unemployment rolls and employed them as entry-level machinists in 16 weeks. Collie Hutter implemented the same program in Carson City in October 2014. Those students are working in good jobs today.

Tesla is going to need a pipeline of trained employees. Ace Charter High School and AACT allow students to get dual credit for STEM education that companies like Tesla need.

The National Association of Manufacturers supports S.B. 493.

**Michael J. Willden (Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor):**

The bills discussed in this hearing accomplish three things: creation of a new fund, creation of a committee to distribute the fund and an appropriation of \$3.5 million. The Executive Budget includes \$3 million for this purpose. This Committee has already heard our testimony on this matter. The Governor has created the new Office of Science, Innovation and Technology, budget account 101-1003. Included in that budget request is decision unit E-150.

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Office of Science, Innovation and Technology — Budget Page ELECTED-32  
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Budget Account 101-1003

E-150 Sustainable and Growing Economy — Page ELECTED-32

This decision unit funds \$3 million for STEM Workforce Challenge Grants, \$1 million in the first year of the biennium and \$2 million in the second year.

The criteria the Governor's Office originally conceived is very similar to that of S.B. 493. However, there needs to be strong oversight of those grants. The Executive Budget includes a grants manager, which is not included in this bill. Senate Bill 493 allows for a committee, but no staff. The Governor's Office of Science, Innovation and Technology includes a manager, an IT specialist, a grants manager and clerical support.

**Senator Woodhouse:**

I am aware that the Executive Budget does provide for a similar program and we will work with the Governor's Office to synthesize the best of these proposals. Senate Bill 493 provides a process by which we can assist Nevada and its community colleges to address the STEM needs and workforce needs in the State. These needs were clearly stated in the Brookings Institution report, "Cracking the Code." Nevada is lagging in STEM education, but through funding, we can take big steps forward in addressing the needs of our students and communities.

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**Chair Kieckhefer:**

Seeing no further testifiers in favor of, opposed or neutral to S.B. 493, I will close the hearing on this bill. This meeting stands adjourned at 9:22 a.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

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Susan McArthur,  
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

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Senator Ben Kieckhefer, Chair

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

<b>EXHIBIT SUMMARY</b>				
<b>Bill</b>	<b>Exhibit</b>		<b>Witness/Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>
	A	1		Agenda
	B	5		Attendance Roster
S.B. 236	C	3	Senator Joyce Woodhouse	Senate Bill 236—STEM Advisory Council
S.B. 496	D	3	Senator Joyce Woodhouse	Senate Bill 496—Workforce Development Rapid Response Investment Fund
S.B. 496	E	2	Dan Gouker	Senate Bill 496—Workforce Development Rapid Response Investment Fund
S.B. 493	F	4	Senator Joyce Woodhouse	Senate Bill 493—STEM Workforce Challenge Grants