

SENATE BILL NO. 481—COMMITTEE ON  
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

MARCH 27, 2017

Referred to Committee on Health and Human Services

SUMMARY—Creates the Nevada Commission for Persons Who Are Deaf, Hard of Hearing or Speech Impaired. (BDR 38-604)

FISCAL NOTE: Effect on Local Government: No.  
Effect on the State: Yes.

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EXPLANATION – Matter in *bolded italics* is new; matter between brackets ~~omitted material~~ is material to be omitted.

AN ACT relating to disabilities; transforming the Subcommittee on Communication Services for Persons Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing and Persons With Speech Disabilities of the Nevada Commission on Services for Persons with Disabilities into the Nevada Commission for Persons Who Are Deaf, Hard of Hearing or Speech Impaired in the Office of the Governor; requiring the Governor to appoint a Director of the Commission; requiring the Aging and Disability Services Division of the Department of Health and Human Services to provide personnel, facilities, equipment and supplies to the Commission; revising the duties of the Commission; requiring the Legislative Committee on Health Care to study the sources of money available for certain purposes; making an appropriation; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

**Legislative Counsel's Digest:**

- 1 Existing law creates the Subcommittee on Communication Services for Persons
- 2 Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing and Persons With Speech Disabilities of the
- 3 Nevada Commission on Services for Persons with Disabilities. The Subcommittee
- 4 consists of persons with knowledge of issues relating to communications
- 5 disabilities who are appointed by the Administrator of the Aging and Disability
- 6 Services Division of the Department of Health and Human Services. The
- 7 Subcommittee is authorized to: (1) make recommendations to the Commission
- 8 concerning programs for persons with communications disabilities; (2) review



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services of the Division for persons with communications disabilities and advise the Division concerning such services; and (3) advise the Department of Education on ensuring the availability of language and communication services for children with communications disabilities. The Subcommittee is required to make recommendations to the Commission concerning the practices of interpreting and realtime captioning and to the Division concerning certain programs to provide assistive technology to persons with communications disabilities. (NRS 427A.750)

**Section 5** of this bill changes the name of the Subcommittee to the Nevada Commission for Persons Who Are Deaf, Hard of Hearing or Speech Impaired. **Section 5** also places the Commission in the Office of the Governor and requires the Governor to appoint the members of the Commission. Additionally, **section 5** provides for the Commission to: (1) review the services and practices of all state and local governmental entities relating to persons who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired and advise those entities directly; and (2) provide persons who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired with information concerning services and resources that promote equality of opportunity for such persons. **Section 4** of this bill makes a conforming change. **Section 3** of this bill requires the Governor to appoint a Director of the Commission, who serves without compensation and performs such duties as directed by the Commission. **Section 5.5** of this bill requires the Legislative Committee on Health Care to study grants and other sources of money that may be available to transform the position of Director of the Commission into a full-time, paid position. **Section 3** requires the Aging and Disability Services Division to provide the personnel, facilities, equipment and supplies required by the Commission to fulfill its duties.

**Section 5.3** of this bill makes an appropriation of \$25,000 from the State General Fund to the Commission in each fiscal year of the 2017-2019 biennium for per diem, travel and administrative costs of the Commission.

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WHEREAS, Persons who are differently abled make up a significant part of the population of this State; and

WHEREAS, Persons who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired contribute significantly to the general welfare of the people of this State; and

WHEREAS, Assisting persons who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired to communicate effectively is necessary to maximize such contributions and allow such persons to achieve equality in education, employment and socialization; and

WHEREAS, Services that persons who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired receive from state and local governmental agencies help them communicate effectively, maximizing their contributions and allowing them to achieve greater equality; and

WHEREAS, Persons who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired need the ability to communicate effectively with state and local governmental entities to ensure that such persons receive services that are helpful to them in a manner that ensures their dignity and equality; now, therefore



THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, REPRESENTED IN  
SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

**Section 1.** Chapter 427A of NRS is hereby amended by adding thereto the provisions set forth as sections 2 and 3 of this act.

**Sec. 2.** *As used in this section and NRS 427A.750 and section 3 of this act, unless the context otherwise requires, "Commission" means the Nevada Commission for Persons Who Are Deaf, Hard of Hearing or Speech Impaired created by NRS 427A.750.*

**Sec. 3. 1.** *The Governor shall appoint the Director of the Commission. The Director:*

*(a) Serves without compensation, at the pleasure of the Governor.*

*(b) Shall perform such duties as are directed by the Commission.*

*2. The Division shall provide the personnel, facilities, equipment and supplies required by the Commission to carry out the provisions of this section and NRS 427A.750.*

**Sec. 4.** NRS 427A.1213 is hereby amended to read as follows:  
427A.1213 1. The Commission shall, at its first meeting and annually thereafter, elect a Chair from among its voting members.

2. The Commission shall meet at least quarterly and at the times and places specified by a call of the Director, the Chair or a majority of the voting members of the Commission.

3. A majority of the voting members of the Commission constitutes a quorum for the transaction of all business.

4. The Commission shall establish rules for its own governance.

5. Except as otherwise provided in NRS 426.731 , ~~and 427A.750,~~ the Chair may appoint subcommittees and advisory committees composed of the members of the Commission, former members of the Commission and members of the general public who have experience with or knowledge of matters relating to persons with disabilities, to consider specific problems or other matters that are related to and within the scope of the functions of the Commission. A subcommittee or advisory committee appointed pursuant to this subsection must not contain more than five members. To the extent practicable, the members of such a subcommittee or advisory committee must be representative of the various geographic areas and ethnic groups of this State.

**Sec. 5.** NRS 427A.750 is hereby amended to read as follows:

427A.750 1. The ~~{Subcommittee on Communication Services}~~ *Nevada Commission* for Persons Who Are Deaf , ~~for~~ Hard of Hearing ~~{and Persons With Speech Disabilities of the~~



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~~Nevada Commission on Services for Persons with Disabilities~~ or *Speech Impaired* is hereby created ~~{}~~ *within the Office of the Governor*. The ~~{Subcommittee}~~ *Commission* consists of nine members appointed by the ~~{Administrator}~~ *Governor*. The ~~{Administrator}~~ *Governor* shall consider recommendations made by the Nevada Commission on Services for Persons with Disabilities and appoint to the ~~{Subcommittee}~~ *Nevada Commission for Persons Who Are Deaf, Hard of Hearing or Speech Impaired*:

(a) One nonvoting member who is employed by the ~~{Division}~~ *State* and who participates in the administration of the ~~{program}~~ *programs* of this State that ~~{provides}~~ *provide* services to persons ~~{with communications disabilities which affect their ability to communicate}~~ *who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired*;

(b) One member who is a member of the Nevada Association of the Deaf, or, if it ceases to exist, one member who represents an organization which has a membership of persons who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech-impaired;

(c) One member who has experience with ~~{for an interest in}~~ and knowledge of ~~{the problems of and}~~ services for ~~{the}~~ *persons who are* deaf, hard of hearing or speech-impaired;

(d) One nonvoting member who is the Executive Director of the Nevada Telecommunications Association or, in the event of its dissolution, who represents the telecommunications industry;

(e) Three members who are users of telecommunications relay services or the services of persons engaged in the practice of interpreting or the practice of realtime captioning;

(f) One member who is a parent of a child who is deaf, hard of hearing or speech-impaired; and

(g) One member who represents educators in this State and has knowledge concerning the provision of communication services to persons ~~{with communications disabilities}~~ *who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired* in elementary, secondary and postsecondary schools and the laws concerning the provision of those services.

2. After the initial term, the term of each member is 3 years. A member may be reappointed.

3. If a vacancy occurs during the term of a member, the ~~{Administrator}~~ *Governor* shall appoint a person similarly qualified to replace that member for the remainder of the unexpired term.

4. The ~~{Subcommittee}~~ *Commission* shall:

(a) At its first meeting and annually thereafter, elect a Chair from among its voting members; and

(b) Meet at the call of the ~~{Administrator}~~ *Governor* or the Chair ~~{of the Nevada Commission on Services for Persons with~~



1 ~~Disabilities, the Chair of the Subcommittee}~~ or a majority of its  
2 voting members as is necessary to carry out its responsibilities.

3 5. A majority of the voting members of the ~~{Subcommittee}~~  
4 *Commission* constitutes a quorum for the transaction of business,  
5 and a majority of the voting members of a quorum present at any  
6 meeting is sufficient for any official action taken by the  
7 ~~{Subcommittee}~~ *Commission*.

8 6. Members of the ~~{Subcommittee}~~ *Commission* serve without  
9 compensation, except that each member is entitled, while engaged in  
10 the business of the ~~{Subcommittee}~~ *Commission*, to the per diem  
11 allowance and travel expenses provided for state officers and  
12 employees generally if funding is available for this purpose.

13 7. A member of the ~~{Subcommittee}~~ *Commission* who is an  
14 officer or employee of this State or a political subdivision of this  
15 State must be relieved from his or her duties without loss of regular  
16 compensation so that the person may prepare for and attend  
17 meetings of the ~~{Subcommittee}~~ *Commission* and perform any work  
18 necessary to carry out the duties of the ~~{Subcommittee}~~ *Commission*  
19 in the most timely manner practicable. A state agency or political  
20 subdivision of this State shall not require an officer or employee  
21 who is a member of the ~~{Subcommittee}~~ *Commission* to make up  
22 the time he or she is absent from work to carry out his or her duties  
23 as a member of the ~~{Subcommittee}~~ *Commission* or use annual  
24 vacation or compensatory time for the absence.

25 8. The ~~{Subcommittee}~~ *Commission* may:

26 (a) Make recommendations to ~~{the Nevada Commission on}~~  
27 ~~Services for Persons with Disabilities}~~ *any state agency, including,*  
28 *without limitation, the Division*, concerning the establishment and  
29 operation of programs for persons ~~{with communications disabilities}~~  
30 ~~which affect their ability to communicate.}~~ *who are deaf, hard of*  
31 *hearing or speech impaired to ensure equal access to state*  
32 *programs and activities.*

33 (b) Recommend to the ~~{Nevada Commission on Services for}~~  
34 ~~Persons with Disabilities}~~ *Governor* any proposed legislation  
35 concerning persons ~~{with communications disabilities which affect}~~  
36 ~~their ability to communicate.}~~ *who are deaf, hard of hearing or*  
37 *speech impaired.*

38 (c) Collect information concerning persons ~~{with}~~  
39 ~~communications disabilities which affect their ability to~~  
40 ~~communicate.}~~ *who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired.*

41 (d) Create and annually review a 5-year strategic plan consisting  
42 of short-term and long-term goals for services provided by or on  
43 behalf of the Division. In creating and reviewing any such plan, the  
44 ~~{Subcommittee}~~ *Commission* must solicit input from various  
45 persons, including, without limitation, persons ~~{with}~~



~~communications disabilities~~ who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired.

(e) Review the goals, *policies*, programs and services of *state agencies, including, without limitation*, the Division ~~for~~, that serve persons ~~with communications disabilities~~ who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired and advise ~~the Division~~ such *agencies* regarding such goals, *policies*, programs and services, including, without limitation, the outcomes of services provided to persons ~~with communications disabilities~~ who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired and the requirements imposed on providers.

(f) Based on information collected by the Department of Education, advise the Department of Education on research and methods to ensure the availability of language and communication services for children who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech-impaired.

(g) *Consult with the personnel of any state agency, including, without limitation, the Division, concerning any matter relevant to the duties of the Commission. A state agency shall make available to the Commission any officer or employee of the agency with which the Commission wishes to consult pursuant to this paragraph.*

9. The ~~Subcommittee~~ *Commission* shall ~~make~~ :

(a) *Make* recommendations to ~~the~~

~~(a) The Nevada Commission on Services for Persons with Disabilities~~ the *Division* concerning the practice of interpreting and the practice of realtime captioning, including, without limitation, the adoption of regulations to carry out the provisions of chapter 656A of NRS.

(b) ~~The~~ *Make recommendations to the* Division concerning all programs and activities funded by the surcharge imposed pursuant to subsection 3 of NRS 427A.797.

(c) *Provide persons who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired with information concerning services and resources that promote equality for such persons in education, employment and socialization and referrals for such services and resources;*

(d) *Review the procedures and practices of state and local governmental entities to ensure that persons who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired have equal access to resources and services provided by those governmental entities; and*

(e) *Make recommendations to state and local governmental entities concerning:*

(1) *Compliance with laws and regulations concerning persons who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired,*



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1 *including, without limitation, the Americans with Disabilities Act*  
2 *of 1990, 42 U.S.C. §§ 12101 et seq.;*

3 *(2) Improving the health, safety, welfare and comfort of*  
4 *persons who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired; and*

5 *(3) Integrating services and programs for persons who are*  
6 *deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired and improving*  
7 *cooperation among state and local governmental entities that*  
8 *provide such services.*

9 10. As used in this section:

10 (a) ~~“Nevada Commission on Services for Persons with~~  
11 ~~Disabilities” means the Nevada Commission on Services for~~  
12 ~~Persons with Disabilities created by NRS 427A.1211.~~

13 ~~“(b)”~~ “Practice of interpreting” has the meaning ascribed to it in  
14 NRS 656A.060.

15 ~~“(c)”~~ (b) “Practice of realtime captioning” has the meaning  
16 ascribed to it in NRS 656A.062.

17 ~~“(d)”~~ (c) “Telecommunications relay services” has the meaning  
18 ascribed to it in 47 C.F.R. § 64.601.

19 **Sec. 5.3.** 1. There is hereby appropriated from the State  
20 General Fund to the Nevada Commission for Persons Who Are  
21 Deaf, Hard of Hearing or Speech Impaired created by NRS  
22 427A.750, as amended by section 5 of this act, for per diem, travel  
23 and administrative costs of the Commission the following sums:

24 For the Fiscal Year 2017-2018 ..... \$25,000

25 For the Fiscal Year 2018-2019 ..... \$25,000

26 2. Any balance of the sums appropriated by subsection 1  
27 remaining at the end of the respective fiscal years must not be  
28 committed for expenditure after June 30 of the respective fiscal  
29 years by the entity to which the appropriation is made or any entity  
30 to which money from the appropriation is granted or otherwise  
31 transferred in any manner, and any portion of appropriated money  
32 remaining must not be spent for any purpose after September 21,  
33 2018, and September 20, 2019, respectively, by either the entity to  
34 which the money was appropriated or the entity to which the money  
35 was subsequently granted or transferred, and must be reverted to the  
36 State General Fund on or before September 21, 2018, and  
37 September 20, 2019, respectively.

38 **Sec. 5.5.** During the 2017-2018 interim, the Legislative  
39 Committee on Health Care shall study grants and other sources of  
40 money that may be available to transform the position of Director  
41 of the Nevada Commission for Persons Who Are Deaf, Hard of  
42 Hearing or Speech Impaired, appointed pursuant to section 3 of this  
43 act, into a full-time, paid position. On or before September 1, 2018,  
44 the Committee shall submit its findings to:



1       1. The Aging and Disability Services Division of the  
2 Department of Health and Human Services;

3       2. The Governor; and

4       3. The Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau for  
5 transmittal to the 80th Session of the Legislature.

6       **Sec. 6.** Notwithstanding the amendatory provisions of this act,  
7 a member of the Subcommittee on Communication Services for  
8 Persons Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing and Persons With  
9 Speech Disabilities of the Nevada Commission on Services for  
10 Persons with Disabilities who was appointed pursuant to NRS  
11 427A.750 as that section existed on June 30, 2017, and who is  
12 serving a term on July 1, 2017, is entitled to serve the remainder of  
13 the term to which he or she was appointed as a member of the  
14 Nevada Commission for Persons Who Are Deaf, Hard of Hearing or  
15 Speech Impaired created by NRS 427A.750, as amended by section  
16 5 of this act.

17       **Sec. 7.** This act becomes effective on July 1, 2017.

