

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
OF THE  
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

**Seventy-Ninth Session  
March 6, 2017**

The Committee on Education was called to order by Chairman Tyrone Thompson at 3:20 p.m. on Monday, March 6, 2017, in Room 3142 of the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 4406 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/79th2017](http://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/79th2017).

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Assemblyman Tyrone Thompson, Chairman  
Assemblywoman Amber Joiner, Vice Chair  
Assemblyman Elliot T. Anderson  
Assemblywoman Olivia Diaz  
Assemblyman Chris Edwards  
Assemblyman Edgar Flores  
Assemblyman Ozzie Fumo  
Assemblywoman Lisa Krasner  
Assemblyman William McCurdy II  
Assemblywoman Brittney Miller  
Assemblyman Keith Pickard  
Assemblywoman Heidi Swank  
Assemblywoman Jill Tolles  
Assemblywoman Melissa Woodbury

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

None

**GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:**

None



**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Amelie Welden, Committee Policy Analyst  
Karly O'Krent, Committee Counsel  
Sharon McCallen, Committee Secretary  
Trinity Thom, Committee Assistant

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Joana Peraza, Intern for Assemblyman Edgar Flores, Assembly District No. 28  
Lindsay Anderson, Director, Government Affairs, Washoe County School District  
Craig M. Stevens, Director of Intergovernmental Relations, Government Affairs,  
Community and Government Relations, Clark County School District  
Luis F. Valera, Vice President for Government Affairs and Compliance, University of  
Nevada, Las Vegas  
James Campos, Senior Advisor, Office of the President, Nevada State College  
Kenneth G. Ladd, Special Assistant to the President for Innovation Based Economic  
Development, Desert Research Institute  
Astrid Silva, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada  
Natha Anderson, President, Washoe Education Association  
Mary Pierczynski, representing Nevada Association of School Superintendents;  
and Nevada Association of School Administrators  
Constance J. Brooks, Ph.D., Vice Chancellor, Government and Community Affairs,  
Nevada System of Higher Education  
Jessica Ferrato, representing Nevada Association of School Boards  
J. Kyle Dalpe, Ph.D., Interim Dean of Technical Sciences, Truckee Meadows  
Community College  
Michael Flores, Director of Communications and Government Affairs, College of  
Southern Nevada  
Steve Jimenez, Extern, Nevada Hispanic Legislative Caucus  
Ed Gonzalez, representing Clark County Education Association  
Paul J. Moradkhan, Vice President, Government Affairs, Las Vegas Metro Chamber  
of Commerce  
Patrick V. Naranjo, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada  
Megan K. Rauch, Director of Education Policy and Director of Policy Outreach,  
Kenny Guinn Center for Policy Priorities  
Ray Bacon, representing Nevada Manufacturers Association  
Dr. Tiffany G. Tyler, Chief Executive Officer, Communities In Schools of Nevada,  
Las Vegas, Nevada  
Molly Latham, Chief Executive Officer, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southern Nevada  
Lisa Morris Hibbler, Director, Department of Youth Development and Social  
Innovation, City of Las Vegas  
Beverly Mason, Director, School-Community Partnership Program, Clark County  
School District  
Tina Burse, Chief Executive Officer, It's Ok 2 B Different, Las Vegas, Nevada

Theresa Davis, Chief Executive Officer, Brand New Horizon Inc., Las Vegas, Nevada  
Arnold Bell, Professor, Department of Communication, College of Southern Nevada  
Dr. David L. Roby, Professor, Department of Human Behavior, College of Southern Nevada

Henry Thorns, Founder, Chief Executive Officer, President of DogCatchers Youth Foundation, Las Vegas, Nevada

Shawn Smith, President, 100 Black Men of Las Vegas, Inc., Las Vegas, Nevada

Tyler Nicoletti-Scott, Member, 100 Black Men of Las Vegas, Inc., Las Vegas, Nevada

Gentry Richardson, Mentor Chair, 100 Black Men of Las Vegas, Inc., Las Vegas, Nevada

Christopher Hilton, Member, 100 Black Men of Las Vegas, Inc., Las Vegas, Nevada

Xavier Tillman, Member, Gentlemen By Choice Community Development Corporation, Las Vegas, Nevada

Jared Amezcua, Member, Gentlemen By Choice Community Development Corporation, Las Vegas, Nevada

Quintin Favors Jr., Member, Gentlemen By Choice Community Development Corporation, Las Vegas, Nevada

Julian Ramirez-Simon, Member, Gentlemen By Choice Community Development Corporation, Las Vegas, Nevada

Antonio Mosby Jr., Member, Gentlemen By Choice Community Development Corporation, Las Vegas, Nevada

Antanus Pullum, Cofounder, Gentlemen By Choice Community Development Corporation, Las Vegas, Nevada

Curtis Coleman, Founder and President, Save Our Sons, Las Vegas, Nevada

Ricky D. Gourrier, Sr., Manager, Government Affairs and Community Relations, Communities in Schools of Nevada, Las Vegas, Nevada

Andrew-Bryce Hudson, Coordinator, Academic Affairs, College of Southern Nevada

Patrina McKinney, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada

Tyre L. Gray, representing Las Vegas Metro Chamber of Commerce

Christine Clark, Ed.D., Professor and Senior Scholar in Multicultural Education, Founding Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Michelle Kim, Director, Strategic Initiatives, Clark County Education Association

Brenda Pearson, Director, Professional Learning Program, Clark County Education Association

Lindsey Dalley, Private Citizen, Logandale, Nevada

Rosemary Q. Flores, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada

Ruben R. Murillo, Jr., President, Nevada State Education Association

Dena Durish, Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness and Family Engagement, Office of Superintendent of Public Education, Department of Education

**Chairman Thompson:**

[Roll was taken. Committee protocol and rules were explained.] Today we are going to hear three bills. We will open the hearing for Assembly Bill 117.

**Assembly Bill 117: Requires certain educational personnel to take certain actions to ensure pupils in grade 11 in public high schools are college and career ready. (BDR 34-292)**

**Assemblyman Edgar Flores, Assembly District No. 28:**

I will ask Joana Peraza to join me. Joana is in her sophomore year at the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR). She is one of our externs and volunteered to be here beside me. At the end of my presentation, Joana will give some personal testimony.

To my constituents in District No. 28, which is northeast Las Vegas, this bill is for you. I would like to give a synopsis of the history of the bill. I would then like to present the issue I am attempting to address, go into the actual proposed language, and follow with a line-by-line reading of the bill. I will conclude with two conceptual amendments that I am proposing.

Last session, I had the privilege of presenting a very similar bill, with the exceptions of some of the amendments I am bringing forth today. It passed unanimously out of the Assembly. However, when it got to the other side, we did not have an opportunity to vote on it. The genesis of the bill came about because we do not always address, on an individual basis, the objectives or goals of a student. We tend to have a blanket approach and a blanket statement we give to our students on how to graduate. They have to take a certain amount of credits, do it in a certain amount of time, pass a certain type of coursework, and then pass these tests. As we know, not every student is the same.

More importantly, not every student has the same objective. The issue I am trying to address is that I want to create a mechanism where each student has a road map to success; success being whatever end objective that student has. I want to begin this process by saying that every year, in the ninth grade, a student should meet with a counselor or personnel and identify their objectives—whether that is a trade school, a university, or community college. Once that objective is defined, we provide them with a road map to that end. We should revisit that road map each year. If the student has deviated from that path, school staff needs to meet with that student's parents or guardian, and explain how we can get them back on track.

As I walk the Committee through the bill, I will talk about two amendments that I am proposing. Section 1, subsection 1 of Assembly Bill 117, reads as follows: "The board of trustees of each school district shall adopt a policy for each public high school in the school district to ensure that a counselor, administrator or other licensed educational personnel from the public high school offers to meet individually at least once with each pupil enrolled in grade 11 in the public high school to review with the pupil the academic plan developed for the pupil pursuant to NRS 388.205."

The reason for not just saying "counselor" and adding "administrator or other licensed educational personnel" is because we do not want to tie the hands of the counselor and say that only the counselor can have this conversation. We want to open it up for anyone in the school to help create this road map for the student.

The purpose of the amendment in changing the eleventh grade to the ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades is that the spirit of the bill is to start the road map discussion in the ninth grade and have that revisited each academic year.

Furthermore, this bill serves a different purpose. We do not want the twelfth grade to be the year where students are just sitting there because they have completed all of their requirements by the end of the eleventh grade. We want to maximize whatever time the student has, whether the student is about to graduate and is taking advanced courses to ensure preparation for college, or is taking the SAT. This bill lets us be more proactive with that student. For those students needing remediation at any point during the four years, we can address that promptly. That is the intent.

Subsection 2 reads "At a meeting conducted pursuant to subsection 1, the counselor, administrator or other licensed educational personnel must use the results of the pupil's college and career readiness assessment administered . . . ." This is where I will have the second amendment ([Exhibit C](#)). Clark County School District (CCSD) provided an amendment to that specific subsection which adds ". . . or a preliminary National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test . . . ."

In the eleventh grade, our high school students are taking career readiness assessment tests. Originally, what I envisioned was that we would take the results of those tests, we would sit down with the students, and look at both of the tests to see if the students were where they needed to be. However, in having conversations with the different stakeholders, constituents, and students in my district, I realized that conversation needed to start sooner, and CCSD understands that conversation needs to start sooner. For that reason, in tenth or eleventh grades, we still want the students to look at their career-readiness assessment results, but we also want to say in tenth grade, that if we already have the Preliminary SAT (PSAT) scores or any other scores, we want to look at those as well. Preliminary SAT scores are a great indicator of whether or not students are on track to go to the top-tier universities that they say they want to attend. We want the students to take advantage of the fact that we have those results.

This is very broad in that we allow flexibility for each school to have this conversation whenever they want. We do not want to put it at the front end, back end, or in the middle. We want each school to decide when it is best for them, based on timing or testing issues, or the student's performance—possibly after midterms.

Last is subsection 3 which says, "If it is determined that the pupil requires remediation, the counselor, administrator or other licensed educational personnel must coordinate with the pupil and the pupil's parent or legal guardian to revise the academic plan for the pupil to

ensure that the pupil is prepared for college and career success before he or she graduates." This is the most important part of this bill. We need to make sure the student is following a very detailed, narrowly tailored plan for success. If they are not following that plan, we take immediate action, as a school, and also putting that burden on the family, letting them know that their son or daughter has an ambition, and they are not on track to that objective.

I want to address whether this is an unfunded mandate and whether we are adding additional burdens on our counselors, administrators, or licensed personnel. Currently in *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS), students are already expected to meet with their counselor, administrator, or licensed personnel in the ninth grade and create a success plan. All that we are asking is that when they have that conversation, they are including this topic; specifically, this road map.

In my own story, I received the blanket statement of "This is what you need to go to college," but no one ever asked me what college I wanted to go to. The road maps to Harvard and the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) are very different. Often, the students who are left out are the students in the middle. Many high-achieving students, because they are high-achieving and so involved academically, have a lot of mentors and tutors who are working with them and keeping them on track. Others are struggling and in the remediation phase. They are surrounded by individuals who are telling them what they need to work on. Then there are those students who are in the middle who are often forgotten. We think they have it under control, and they are fine and on the track to graduate. I want to move our focus from just graduating to graduating toward their objective. Those are two very different things. One is specific and data driven and benefits only one side of the equation, but when we have a road map to success, it benefits both sides of the equation. That is imperative in moving this dialogue forward.

**Joana Peraza, Intern for Assemblyman Edgar Flores, Assembly District No. 28:**

I am here to support A.B. 117. I am a second-year student at the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR), and I would not be there if it were not for my high school counselors. I am a first-generation college student and throughout high school, it was difficult to find support from my parents when it came to information and advice on Advanced Placement (AP) classes, SATs, ACTs, college admissions, or anything related to my higher education. They did not attend high school or college in the United States. Everything that was new to me was completely new to them. I knew that I wanted to go to college, and I found that support system with counselors such as Ms. Grunert and Ms. Hendee from Carson High School. They are the ones who recommended the classes I needed, explained what the tests were about, and how they could help me go to college. They helped me with letters of recommendation and with sending transcripts even when the due date was approaching really fast. They helped me waive some test fees that would have been really hard for my family to afford. I am sure you know, but APs and ACTs are pretty pricey. I had to take three or four at a time. Ms. Grunert and Ms. Hendee always had the answers for the questions that I had. When they did not have the answers, they did everything in their power to find them for me.

Although I appreciate and thank these counselors for their help and commitment, it was hard to meet with them. I had to make many appointments and had to be constantly emailing them in order to reach them. I was close to them because I tried to stay on top of all of my schooling.

In other cases, students could probably only see them once a semester when they had to create their schedules, and maybe a few more times in their senior year when making sure they were on the right track to graduate. I believe the counselors have the power to impact the lives of students in a positive way and help them reach their academic and life goals. Unfortunately, not many students see this and decide not to take advantage of these amazing people who have knowledge and information. Therefore, I believe A.B. 117 is necessary. Every student in Nevada should feel like they have someone to support them in whatever career path they want to take. They should have a positive experience with someone encouraging them not to give up on their education just as I did.

**Assemblyman Pickard:**

I love success stories, and I really appreciate the idea of making sure that every student gets an opportunity to advance beyond their graduation. I love the paradigm shift.

Having been an educator, I know that some students already have a clear idea of where they are going. They already have support in getting there, and they just do not need to take time out of class, or before or after school, to meet with a counselor. Is there any reason we could not do this on an opt-out basis, thus relieving the counselors to spend their time elsewhere?

My second question is regarding what I thought you said with respect to expanding this to Grades 9, 10, and 11 and leaving it up to the school to decide. My concern is, what happens when you end up with a student who transfers from one school to another, is now out of sync, and misses the opportunity? How do we capture those students?

**Assemblyman Flores:**

Can I invite you to go to subsection 1, which says ". . . or other licensed educational personnel from the public high school offers to meet individually . . . ." The emphasis is on the word "offers." That goes exactly to your question. It is not mandated that they "must" meet, but the offer must be put on the table. I agree with you that there are going to be scenarios where a student is overperforming or overachieving, and already has everything on lockdown. They do not need to waste anyone's time with a meeting. Hopefully, the term "offer" will streamline that process.

With regard to your second question of what happens with a student who transfers, it is my intent that the road map follows the student. That is why it is so important that the emphasis on the PSATs and the career assessment tests that take place in Grade 11 follow the student. Regardless of where they are in the state of Nevada, that is something that will continue to be a part of the conversation. That is also why we are expanding it to each year. If a student is at Valley High School in the ninth grade and in the tenth grade at Desert Pines High School,

that conversation is going to happen twice. It allows the student to let his or her tenth grade counselor know where their pathway and objective is to date. In addition, it will not be limited if the student takes the PSAT to use in that conversation. More importantly, we are having these conversations and doing something we typically did not do—which is when students move, we focus on them graduating and do not focus on helping them reach their objective. It is difficult, but if we are having these conversations, it is a way to ensure that we focus on helping them reach their goals.

**Assemblywoman Tolles:**

This is exactly the kind of thing we need to be talking about as a Committee; aligning our educational goals with career and college readiness. As I look back historically at how we all grew up viewing what a high school counselor does, I think this is the job description. I want to continue to hear from all of the stakeholders. I appreciate that you have reached out to them and brought their amendments before us, but I want to hear from them in terms of their workload, and the feasibility of implementing this. I am also glad that we are talking about moving it up a bit. By the eleventh grade, my concern would be that we might discover things, and it is too late to remediate them in time, leading to graduation delays.

**Assemblyman Flores:**

I appreciate your enthusiasm and as the stakeholders come to the table, it is going to grow because we have a lot of support.

**Assemblywoman Diaz:**

I want to commend Ms. Peraza for coming to the table and for sharing her experience. It is sad to realize that things have not changed much from when I was in the hallways of a high school, especially for students in our school system who are first generation college-goers whose parents lack the knowledge to help their child navigate and have this access. It is of utmost importance that we make sure they get the information so they can be career- and college-ready upon exiting the high schools in our state. I want to be a cosponsor on your bill.

I believe that by the time a student is in high school, it might be a little too late. Being an educator myself, I see the transition of my fifth graders into middle school. I think we need to begin the work a little sooner, because sometimes our students might have an interest in a career technical education (CTE) track, and they want to be more career-ready by the end of their schooling. Sometimes there are missed opportunities when we are not educating them on all of the institutions in their communities that offer the CTE track. If students are not made aware of the possibilities early enough, they are going to miss applying for a magnet school and getting that exploration firsthand. They could think that they had wanted to be a welder, and then discover that it was not for them. Sooner might be better, especially for our first-time kiddos being the first in their families to have access and opportunity for conversation with the counselor.



In your conversations with the stakeholders, have they expressed any concerns over beginning these conversations as early as the fifth grade, or maybe early middle school so that our children have a little more direction in terms of selecting the institutions that will benefit their career tracks long-term?

**Assemblyman Flores:**

I had some of your same thoughts in 2015. I want to begin my discussion regarding your question with the caveat that I want to make sure there is not a presumption that counselors do not want to have this conversation. Many of the reasons these conversations do not happen is specifically because of how much we throw on to the counselors—we overwhelm them. We see them being hall monitors and more, instead of doing what they would prefer to do in sitting down with the student one-on-one. If we force the conversation into elementary or middle school, it would be more difficult in terms of creating that mandate as opposed to high school. In high school, it is already in NRS that educators must have that conversation in the eleventh grade. It will mesh together neatly when that conversation is happening, and we will have the conversation about the road map simultaneously. If we move it to middle school and/or elementary school, we move into an arena where we are creating a new mandate for them. That is where my concern lies. I do echo your concern that if students want to go to a specific school, it is important for them to have that conversation in fifth grade because of all the different magnet programs we offer, and the same is true at the high school level. This is the beginning—educators test it in high school, get comfortable with the formula, and then they can replicate it in middle and elementary school. Eventually, a road map is something that follows students' academic portfolios. It is their ideas and visions. Educators have to make sure we are helping them with those visions throughout their academic careers.

**Assemblywoman Krasner:**

The eleventh grade is a good starting point. See how it goes there and maybe move to the tenth or the ninth grades. Have you spoken to the school districts and the counselors and asked if this bill will make it necessary for them to hire more counselors? What has your feedback been?

**Assemblyman Flores:**

I had that conversation with the stakeholders when I first presented this in 2015. I have an amendment proposed to what you have in front of you that this conversation will happen in ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades. It is important that I clarify whether or not this adds a burden. The fact that we added the flexibility of saying it could be a counselor, administrator, and/or licensed educational personnel opens it wide enough to encompass almost anyone in that school to have this conversation. If we mandated it specifically to a counselor, we would have had to ask if it was feasible for them to do this with everything else they have to accomplish in an academic year. It is my opinion, having opened up the categories of those who are able to counsel the students, that it is very feasible and is not a mandate for them to hire more people.

**Assemblyman Elliot T. Anderson:**

The importance of counselors is something the Legislature has discussed for the past couple of sessions, and passed legislation requiring the districts to hire more social workers. We need to build these relationships, and as Assemblyman Flores said, getting counselors out of the business of being hall monitors and attendance takers. When we talk about the problems of bullying and career-readiness, that is what counselors are designed to do. We need to stop giving them other things to do and focus them on topics that help build those relationships with the students. Certainly, you cannot make anyone have that relationship, but this is a good way to facilitate that.

**Assemblyman Edwards:**

I like the bill, and I agree with your amendment. Starting earlier is definitely important. The one change I would like to recommend is that we do not just offer it; that we require it. All students need to have a check on where they are. The educators are the ones who are supposed to do that for them and with them. Even with those students who are focused and have a great idea where they are going, it is still a good idea to spend that ten minutes just to make sure that they are on track when they start and are staying on track each year. For those who are not so eager to have those kinds of meetings, they may very well need them more. If it does not work the first time to get them on track, maybe the seed will be planted so that by tenth or eleventh grade, they will recognize what they need to do and still have time to accomplish it, graduate, and move on to whatever objective they have. I applaud the bill and look forward to supporting it.

**Assemblyman Flores:**

If the stakeholders come to the table and are comfortable with that, I would not mind having "must" meet as opposed to "offer" to meet. However, that specific language was in there because of the issue brought up by Assemblyman Pickard. I know there are scenarios where some students are surrounded by mentors, and they have it on lockdown. They really do not need the conversation and that is why we wanted to have that flexibility. If the stakeholders wanted to force a quick, one-minute counseling session, I am not opposed to it and I am comfortable with it.

**Chairman Thompson:**

I really love this bill, and I just have a logistical question. With the academic plan, for example, a student moves to a different school, is there a case management system where that plan would be transferred? If a student is doing really well at a school, then moves for whatever reason, we want the new counselor or educator to be able to pick it up, build that relationship, and continue it.

**Assemblyman Flores:**

It is my understanding that the current academic plan follows the student. Is there someone here who can attest to that?

**Lindsay Anderson, Director, Government Affairs, Washoe County School District:**

I can only speak for my district, but I do know that our academic plans are incorporated into our Infinite Campus program. That lives with the student. Parents have full access to that as well as the student's teachers. If they move within our district, they will continue to have access. Since Infinite Campus is now statewide, there either is, or will be, a system by which that information can move with the student within Nevada. I cannot speak to out-of-state.

**Craig M. Stevens, Director of Intergovernmental Relations, Government Affairs, Community and Government Relations, Clark County School District:**

Ditto.

**Assemblywoman Miller:**

I appreciate your amendments because I think they improve the bill by starting the students earlier, as well as opening it up to include administration or licensed teachers, so it is not just the counselor. If I want a career in music, my music teacher may be the one I want to develop this plan with.

Something I do in my class is student-driven goals because we know there is more of an investment when you are part of the plan instead of just given the plan. Have you thought about how much of this plan would be student-driven with the students actually guiding it? I know we are concerned about putting more work on educators, so how much of this would be where the student is accountable to participate?

**Assemblyman Flores:**

You highlighted a point that is very important, and I forgot to cover in my opening remarks. This bill not only focuses on achieving the objective of the student, but it also puts them in the driver's seat again. Students are so accustomed to us telling them what they are supposed to do; this asks the student what they want to do, but then tells them how they can accomplish it. It puts them in control of their own destiny. I often speak to high school students one-on-one throughout my district, and I ask them what they want to do when they graduate. They will tell me they want to go to college, and I will follow up with "Which one?" Sometimes they will tell me they are not sure, and sometimes they will tell me a specific school. I will ask them what the requirements are, and they tell me they do not know. That is the trigger of this bill. By my asking the question, I can see a lightbulb going on for them and a sense of empowerment. They know where they want to go, but do not know how to get there. This is holding them accountable. More importantly, when we talk about remediation, subsection 3 says the parents need to be involved in this dialogue as well. All of us, collectively, have to work toward this objective. The student determines the objective; the school facilitates the framework.

**Chairman Thompson:**

We will go to support for Assembly Bill 117 and begin in Las Vegas.

**Luis F. Valera, Vice President for Government Affairs and Compliance, University of Nevada, Las Vegas:**

I was in support of this bill in the last session and happily do so again. I want to echo the comments of Assemblywoman Diaz. The amendment to the bill is incredibly important because the earlier the better. It is certainly an indicator for those students who decide to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), and we see that the earlier they become focused and receive that support, the more success they have.

**James Campos, Senior Advisor, Office of the President, Nevada State College:**

We are also in full support.

**Kenneth G. Ladd, Special Assistant to the President for Innovation Based Economic Development, Desert Research Institute:**

I will be brief as we have some of Nevada's brightest young students here today to speak also. We are in total favor of the bill and the amendments. We would let the Chairman know that the faculty of the Desert Research Institute stands at the ready to help the counselors and the others in the school districts any way we can.

**Astrid Silva, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:**

I hope this is a bill that is strongly supported. As a product of the Clark County School District, I wish I had this available when I was in ninth grade. I completely support that we move forward with not just "offering" it, but "making" it so students have to do this. If we can get a few students who have extra support versus a few that fall through the cracks, it is much more important that we offer this to all students.

**Craig Stevens:**

Clark County School District (CCSD) fully supports A.B. 117. We already require ninth grade students to meet two times per year. This builds on the plans we have our students formulate as well. I appreciate the sponsor's bill accepting our friendly amendment which was to add a preliminary, national merit scholarship qualifying test, the PSAT. When we get the results of the ACT back, it is usually not until the summer before the senior year. We wanted another test to be built into this "meet and confer" in order to ensure that in tenth grade, when they actually take this test, we can get with the student earlier and begin the planning process. In CCSD, every student has to take the PSAT, so we are able to not only use the PSAT, we can use the ACT as well for the guide map and are able to build upon the testing requirements we have.

**Natha Anderson, President, Washoe Education Association:**

I represent teachers as well as counselors, and also nurses, deans, and others. I am very excited about A.B. 117. I met with Assemblyman Flores about it this past week. I am happy he brought up the time frame because that was one concern that we had; the junior year is just too late. The freshman year is perfect. We also appreciate the fact that he is trying to allow counselors to be counselors, and not have to administer tests and do other things.

I prepared for today by contacting a few of our members who are counselors and asking them what they thought. One of them, Jaoni Zunino from North Valleys High School, was very excited about it because she was just getting ready to go to one of our middle schools and talk about one of our signature programs, which many of our schools have. I believe CCSD also has signature academies. Preparation is starting in eighth grade already. I hope you support this bill.

**Lindsay Anderson:**

I am here for the Washoe County School District (WCSD), which is in full support including the amendments. I appreciate Assemblyman Flores' comments about counselors wanting to do this. I would agree that, by and large, our counselors are doing this already with the academic plans we spoke of earlier, but are overwhelmed with other responsibilities we ask of them. As a point of information, in WCSD, our ratio of counselor to students is roughly 1 to 400 or 1 to 450. The national goal is 1 to 250. I want to make that plug that we constantly need to be investing in our counselors because there are too few of them.

I also appreciate the comment about being student-driven, but oftentimes, many of our students have adults around them with low expectations, so we need those adults to be pushing those students to have higher expectations for themselves. It is a fine balance between allowing students to set their own destiny and educating the adults around them to encourage them to do more.

In terms of "require" versus "opt-in" versus "opt-out," we will continue to work on that. Our preference at this point would be to offer it, or have a parent "opt-out" option. We agree that we are not allowing students to bypass meetings, but we are also not requiring students and counselors to meet who do not need to because the parents are already on it. We also require the PSAT to be taken by all of our sophomores. We appreciate that early indicator.

**Mary Pierczynski, representing Nevada Association of School Superintendents;  
and Nevada Association of School Administrators:**

We are in support of A.B. 117. A really great feature is that it is not limited to the high school counselor; it is an administrator or other licensed educational personnel who can do this. As a former Carson High School counselor, I am so happy that our young lady who spoke earlier talked about the help she received from her counselors. These meetings are very important, having done many of them. Thank you. This is a great bill.

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

We would like to thank Assemblyman Flores for reaching out to us to get our support for this important piece of legislation. We were happy to support it in 2015, and we are happy to see it resurrected this session. This bill addresses one of our most pressing challenges, which is making sure that students are college- and career-ready. Currently in Nevada, only 10 percent of our ninth graders who graduate from high school on time go directly to college,

then also persist to their second year within Nevada's System of Higher Education (NSHE) institutions. We feel this bill is an excellent remedy to help with raising those rates so we look forward to working more collaboratively with the school districts to ensure our students are better prepared.

**Jessica Ferrato, representing Nevada Association of School Boards:**

We are here in support of the bill and would like to thank the sponsor for bringing forward such important legislation. I would like to highlight one portion that we are appreciative of in section 1, subsection 3. The language about coordinating helps us when parents have different needs on how they can communicate with their students' counselors. That helps us because every family is different and the ability to get together with the counselor is different. That gives the districts a little more flexibility. I also echo the comments made by the Washoe and Clark County School Districts regarding the few provisions that they are working out. We are supportive of those as well.

**J. Kyle Dalpe, Ph.D., Interim Dean of Technical Sciences, Truckee Meadows Community College:**

Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC) supports A.B. 117. Our mission is to help students get to their educational goals. The more information they have and the better prepared they are when coming to us, the more efficient their higher education road map will be. I am pleased to see it moving down to the ninth grade. One of the key transition points is seventh and eighth grade, if not earlier, to have them look at what they can be doing so they can pick a career or college track, or even a signature academy. They would know that going into the ninth grade. Younger is better. One example mentioned earlier was welding, and TMCC has a virtual welding unit that we have used. This is just one small tool that a student can use to try a computer-based welding simulation without getting themselves hurt. They can then decide if welding is for them, or not.

We work regularly with the counselors and the school district personnel to provide information and would continue to do so under this framework.

**Michael Flores, Director of Communications and Government Affairs, College of Southern Nevada:**

I will say ditto for much of what Kyle Dalpe said. We supported this bill last session. It is a great bill, and we are happy to see so many pieces of legislation coming forward to work on college and career readiness. We know the challenge our students are facing when they come to College of Southern Nevada (CSN), or any higher institution. We know this will be of great support to them. We want to thank the bill's sponsor, Assemblyman Flores—no relation. We fully support this bill.

**Steve Jimenez, Extern, Nevada Hispanic Legislative Caucus:**

I am a current University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), William S. Boyd School of Law student. I personally support this bill, as does the caucus. I had one conversation with my counselor throughout my entire process of high school—it was in twelfth grade. I know for a fact that if it was not for that conversation, I would not have gone to college, be a law student, and now be able to present in front of the Nevada Legislature.

**Ed Gonzalez, representing Clark County Education Association:**

We are in support of this bill and appreciate the amendment from Assemblyman Flores to put this into the ninth grade. Being from Los Angeles, there were many students in my school who wanted to go to the University of California, Los Angeles, or the University of Southern California. As Assemblywoman Diaz brought up, most of those were first generation students and would have had no idea how to get there if they had not met with their counselors in the ninth grade. I also want to say that we always need more counselors, and we like the fact of it being "offered."

I took the community college route because that was my goal. Most counselors would have talked me out of it, but it was mostly for financial reasons. I was going to pay for it, so I received a phenomenal education at the community college before I moved to a four-year college. We appreciate anything that can be done for people on their college and career paths.

**Paul J. Moradkhan, Vice President, Government Affairs, Las Vegas Metro Chamber of Commerce:**

On behalf of the Las Vegas Metro Chamber of Commerce, I would like to thank the sponsor of this bill. We think it is a great bill. As you know, the Chamber supports career development, college, and career readiness as part of our education principles at the Chamber of Commerce. On behalf of the employers that we represent, we would like to offer our support for the bill today.

**Patrick V. Naranjo, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:**

I am an employee of UNLV, but I wanted to speak on behalf of an advisory role, which I maintain at the institution which provides mentorship for Native American students at CCSD and at UNLV. This bill is very important in terms of reinforcing heritage components for postsecondary success at UNLV. It also provides guidance for students who have a very low success rate in high school and within postsecondary institutions on a national level. I am in support of A.B. 117 and just wanted to express the need for mentorship for young Native American students within the state of Nevada.

**Chairman Thompson:**

Is there anyone else in support of A.B. 117 here in Carson City? [There was no one.] I will move to opposition. Is there anyone in Las Vegas in opposition to A.B. 117? [There was no one.] Is there anyone in opposition in Carson City? [There was no one.] Is there anyone neutral in Carson City? [There was no one.] Is there anyone neutral in Las Vegas?

**Megan K. Rauch, Director of Education Policy and Director of Policy Outreach,  
Kenny Guinn Center for Policy Priorities:**

We believe that A.B. 117 addresses the educational journey of the student and access to a high-quality education. We also believe it is relevant to the system of our educational ecosystem, which encourages the alignment of legislation of programs and integration of K-12 and postsecondary opportunities. The intent of this proposed legislation should be commended, and we applaud Nevada's decision-makers for taking steps to institute a college and career readiness exam. However, the proposed legislation is an example of the intervention failing to solve the problem because existing legislation (NRS 388.205) had similar intentions, and the proposed intervention comes years behind the optimal time. It therefore fails to be strategically-based on the assessment of best practice.

Currently, the NRS requires an academic plan be developed for ninth-grade pupils. It reads to include that parents and legal guardians must sign the plan and review it once every school year in consultation with a school counselor and revise the plan if necessary.

In 2016, at the request of the Department of Education, the Kenny Guinn Center conducted a needs assessment gap analysis of career pathways for high school students. We discovered that while Nevada law requires that every high school student submit an academic plan and keep it in place, very few educators are using the academic plan with fidelity. Additionally, many parents, including those who teach in high schools, knew about the academic plan and did not realize their own child or student was required to have one in place. In the instances where it was used, it is largely abused as a tool to monitor credit deficiencies. On a personal note, as a former teacher at a Title I turnaround school in North Las Vegas, I had not heard of the academic plan until I began working at the Kenny Guinn Center.

We have some concerns and questions that we hope the Legislature will address as this bill moves forward. First, Nevada statute currently requires that an academic plan be in place by ninth grade; however, it is not being implemented with fidelity. Are there ways to introduce greater accountability to ensure that school districts are meeting the existing statutory requirements as laid out in NRS 388.205? Second, requiring that education professionals such as counselors, administrators, and other licensed personnel discuss career plans in the eleventh grade is often too late to connect high school students with meaningful career and college pathways.

While we applaud the amendment that would encourage these conversations to begin in ninth grade, our research of best practices from other states has found that these conversations really need to be starting in seventh and eighth grades. Educators in Colorado began using individual career and academic plans as early as seventh and eighth grades. When eighth graders in Colorado are preparing to enter high school, part of the required registration paperwork contains a copy of the student's Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP) which must be signed by the student's parents or guardians. Evidence from the school districts in Colorado has shown that the ICAP is an effective measure to help



guide students who are preparing for college and a career. For example, the Adams County School District, which is located near Denver, had a 12 percent increase in the district's graduation rate since the school district began using the ICAP with their middle school students as they transitioned to high school.

As another point, we have transition teams for special education students. Middle and high schools meet together with students as they are preparing to enter high school. We think having that structure in place to facilitate the transition for all students would be ideal ([Exhibit D](#)).

**Chairman Thompson:**

Thank you, and if you could please talk to the bill's sponsor offline, I think he would really appreciate that, and it would be a great conversation.

**Ray Bacon, representing Nevada Manufacturers Association:**

I will echo everything Ms. Rauch just said, and I will add a couple of additional points. One of the things that happened during the last couple of sessions is that we created the sector councils that started out in the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation (DETR) and are now in the Governor's Office of Workforce Innovation (OWINN). As part of that operation, we specifically endorsed the manufacturing sector council, of which I was the vice chair, and the National Career Readiness Certificate which looks at the skills that are needed in the workplace since the largest portion of Nevada's students are still headed toward the workplace and not to college. I know we would like that to be different, but that is the reality we face. The certificate is not a pass/fail test. It is a bronze-, silver-, gold-, or platinum-rated test, and it does a really good job as far as getting students to recognize the reality of their situations.

Additionally, the Nevada Manufacturers Association is the main driver behind a program called "Dream It Do It Nevada" which was started by the National Association of Manufacturers. We have modeled much of our program from the Virginia Manufacturers Association, which has a career resource tool in it that will basically take students to see the criteria for every career they may want to be in. There are 900 different careers in there. They can find out what is required and how to get there. It is available through [dreamitdoitnevada.com](http://dreamitdoitnevada.com). The tools are there, and I would say this is a bill that could be made a bit better by taking another look at how we can pool all of these tools together so the parents can get there.

To go along with Assemblywoman Diaz, I also happen to be a "first generation" to go to college.

**Chairman Thompson:**

Is there anyone else neutral for [A.B. 117](#) in Carson City? [There was no one.]

**Assemblyman Flores:**

I have nothing else to add.

**Joana Peraza:**

I would like to thank all of you for allowing me to be here and to speak out for this bill. As Assemblywoman Miller said about having licensed educational personnel for the public high school, I think that is very important. I am a political science major, and I still have conversations with my government teacher from high school about where I want to go. It is something that follows a student, and it is important to begin these conversations.

[([Exhibit E](#)) is a letter submitted by Ruben R. Murillo, Jr., which was not discussed but is included as an exhibit.]

**Chairman Thompson:**

At this time, we will close the hearing on Assembly Bill 117, and I will turn the meeting over to Vice Chair Joiner for the hearing on Assembly Bill 144.

[Assemblywoman Joiner assumed the Chair.]

**Assembly Bill 144: Creates the Nevada Advisory Commission on Mentoring.  
(BDR 34-31)**

**Assemblyman Tyrone Thompson, Assembly District No. 17:**

This bill will create the Nevada Advisory Commission on Mentoring. I will open up with a short video that pretty much sums up the dire need to establish the Nevada Advisory Commission on Mentoring. I will walk the Committee through the bill. Then we will have supportive testimony here in Carson City as well as in Las Vegas. We will begin with the video. [A short video was presented titled "Mentor: The National Mentoring Partnership" ([Exhibit F](#)).]

**Vice Chair Joiner:**

We are hearing that we had a small technical problem. Could we please reflect that we have officially opened the hearing on Assembly Bill 144? Please include Assemblyman Thompson's remarks regarding the video.

**Assemblyman Thompson:**

As you saw in the video, mentoring is a movement. I want to make it very clear that this bill is not creating a program. It is creating a think tank that we need in our state to continue to drive the conversation, create the resources, and open up the doors to ensure we have strong grassroots organizations that are out there mentoring our children. I really like how the gentleman said, "We need to treat this as a business problem." This is an opportunity for us to create a mentoring business model for our state.

At this time, I would like to walk the Committee through the bill. This was a bill that was presented in 2015, and we have been doing some interim work on it. The bill was amended down to where we were to work on some guidelines around mentoring but bring it back because there truly is a need for us to have a commission on mentoring.

Section 2 explains that we will be establishing the Nevada Advisory Commission on Mentoring.

Section 3 notes the membership of the Commission. As you see, we will have a pretty sizable Commission. However, when you look at this for our state, we wanted to make sure we had some appropriate stakeholders. There will be five appointments from the Governor and four that will come from the Legislature. The others will also come from areas pertaining to juvenile justice. I am really proud of this. It has taken a think tank to get this bill massaged and make it stronger and better. Our representative from the College of Southern Nevada (CSN) suggested that we needed to have the voices of our young people. I am excited about section 3, subsection 2(c) which reads, "Two members between the ages of 16 years and 24 years who have a vested interest in supporting mentorship programs in this State." As we saw in the video, it said that 90 percent of those that are mentored want to be mentors as well. This actually creates that cycle within our community where people want to mentor.

Again, the text talks about the parameters of how the Commission will operate. I want to go to section 4, subsection 5, where it says, "The Commission shall appoint a Mentorship Advisory Council . . . ." I know this is an advisory commission, but they also need expert advice from the best people, so they can stay on track. The best people are the people who are doing the mentoring day to day.

I had a conversation with one of my colleagues, Assemblyman Edwards, this morning who was having concerns with section 5, subsection 1(a)(2), "The process for identifying socioeconomically disadvantaged children in need of mentorship and geographic areas of need within this State." We talked about the socioeconomically disadvantaged, and he wants to make sure it is inclusive, but we have to get through the layers. We have to get to those that are most likely to be getting into the juvenile justice system. I hear what he is saying and I would be fine with striking out socioeconomically disadvantaged because we are going to serve children regardless. As you will hear today, we have mentoring groups who are working with that subpopulation anyway. I am okay with that. That will be coming forth in an amendment.

On page 4, line 39, it says that the Commission will work in tandem with the ". . . Office of Grant Procurement, Coordination and Management of the Department of Administration on a plan for seeking gifts, grants, donations and contributions from any source for the purpose of carrying out a mentorship program." I am going to add that they also need to create a method of disbursing that funding. That is going to be the key here because, as you will hear in the testimony, there are a lot of great organizations that have students who really desire to be mentored, but the challenge is dollars; not usually a lot of money, but you do need money to operate these programs. You need the resources, and you need the capacity building.

On page 5, line 19, we will take out the words "Socioeconomically disadvantaged child." However, we will keep the other three factors, which will serve as a focus for the Commission to look for those children who are being deprived of the opportunity to develop and maintain a competitive position in the economy and are failing to make adequate yearly progress in a public school. I want to change that to simply "school." This was drafted a long time ago. It does specify a "public school," but we are now having the conversation around charter schools. It is about children throughout our state. I want to take out "public" and just say "school." We also need to look for those children who are entering the juvenile justice system of the state. I am going to include "or the criminal justice system" because students, as we know, can go all the way to the ages of 22 to 24.

I also want to emphasize that we have a partner onboard. In your Nevada Electronic Legislative Information System (NELIS), there is an interim report from the Clark County School District ([Exhibit H](#)). I am very proud to say that CCSD has joined the Committee on this bill to actually create guidelines around mentoring. As you saw in the video, there are actual best practices for guidelines that a successful mentoring program should adopt.

In January 2017, to show you how recent this is and it is an ongoing thing in the community, we teamed up with CSN, North Las Vegas Campus, Communities in Schools (CIS), Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southern Nevada, and the Nevada Black and Hispanic Legislative Caucuses and hosted a Mentoring Matters summit for National and Nevada Mentoring Month. We had more than 80 people in attendance who represented approximately 40 organizations in the community that do mentoring. They want to continue to build their capacity. As you will hear again, they need funding, and they need to know how they properly match, because they want to make sure it is a safe place for our young people. They are very dedicated soldiers in our community.

**Assemblyman Elliot T. Anderson:**

The question I have is in regard to your crossing out "public." My understanding is that "public school" would be inclusive of charter schools unless that term is defined. I think that "public school" would include charter schools. Are you trying to include private schools? I think that would be the effect.

**Assemblyman Thompson:**

Yes. I did not want to get into the debate. I just want to say "school." There are programs throughout the community and, whether they are in a public or private school, we have students who need to be mentored.

**Assemblyman Pickard:**

I appreciate the intent of the bill. Mentorship is critically important for all sorts of people, not only those who are disadvantaged, but all children. My question is essentially, why is this necessary? For example, we have Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southern Nevada, a very well-established organization that has tried to do these things. Ultimately, why is the state doing this versus encouraging the nonprofits that are out there to do this? Could you explain that for the benefit of the Committee?

**Assemblyman Thompson:**

First of all, it is not a versus. It is all of us working together. As you heard, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southern Nevada was at the table with us. Why is there a need? Because it bothers me when an organization that has the right kids and wants to do the right thing has to have car washes or fish fries just to have enough money to make things happen for the program. When we have volunteers that give up so much of their time and personal expenses, and when looking at all of the federal dollars that are bypassing our communities, this is the opportunity for us to bring those dollars to Nevada. As you can see, we are going to have a very able Commission. We have people from the business industry, and you will read some of the letters from some of the industries in the community that get this. We are getting ready to make some great things happen. The organization should not have to want for anything. They are very humble, so they are not going to be asking for outrageous amounts of money. You would be amazed at the dollars some of us may think is not a lot of money that are a treasure for some of these organizations. This is very important.

**Assemblyman Pickard:**

The fiscal note was only a touch over \$14,000, which, in the grand scheme of things, is a drop in the bucket compared to the need. As I understand it, this is about helping them with grants and trying to get the federal dollars that do pass right by us. I know there are programs to help nonprofits obtain grants. Rather than creating this large commission, maybe we could put those resources into providing the support for the grant writing for these other organizations. You seem to be presenting that it is not feasible. That is what I would like you to get into.

**Assemblyman Thompson:**

We are all speaking the same language. We already have a grants procurement department here at the state. I have met with her, and she is very excited about the mentoring program. Again, we do need to look at it on a bigger scale, and we are going to see better results. There are some cities where the mayors have adopted such commissions, and they have done remarkably well. In talking about socioeconomic communities, there are some commissions that are straight-up "committees on black boys" because those communities have seen that if that population is worked with now, that school-to-prison pipeline is not going to exist anymore.

That is where we need to start investing our money. I know we are not a money committee, but I was kind of shocked with the fiscal note, too, because, as you see, the way in which the bill is written is for a coordinator. That is one thing I have also learned at the state. If you do not have someone looking at this every single day, it is pretty much just in the books. This is not my vision. This is to be an everyday, working machine. You will hear in the testimony that there are a lot of people doing some great work and they need support.

I appreciate the questions, and I hope we are resonating the importance of this. People may hear "well, it is just a commission," but this is going to be a jewel for our state.

**Assemblywoman Krasner:**

Right now, I have children that go to public school. If I want to volunteer, I have to fill out a form, give them a copy of my driver's license, and they do a background check. While I think this mentoring program is great, and I love seeing your enthusiasm, what kind of safeguards will be in place? Will the people who want to be mentors have to go through a background check before they get to be with the children?

**Assemblyman Thompson:**

I want to reiterate, this is not establishing a program. The programs are already there. Representatives of the programs are going to speak today. One part of the Commission's guidelines is to help with the capacity building for these mentoring groups. We want to make it a safe environment for our children. Some organizations already mentor, but you have to realize there is still a cost to go through background checks. The Commission could help draw in more dollars, and they can push those dollars down to some of the organizations so they will not have to worry about background checks. We definitely want to make it safe for all of the children.

**Assemblyman Fumo:**

I think a bill like this is long overdue. I thank you for bringing this forward. On page 5, line 26, where it says those "Entering the juvenile justice system of this State," would you be open to expanding that, because sometimes victims of crimes could also use the mentoring? Could you say any person in "contact" with the juvenile justice system, so it is not just those who are charged with a crime, but maybe the victims as well? It is a fantastic bill.

**Assemblyman Thompson:**

I like that. I will get with you so we can word it correctly.

**Assemblywoman Tolles:**

Thank you for bringing this bill forward. It ties in to so many of the discussions that we have in this Committee and others. Perhaps because I come from a background with more experience with a task force approach to things, I was expecting to see a deadline when I look at section 5. All of the subsections deal with developing a model financial plan, developing a resource plan, or potential sources. I was looking for a deadline by which those things would be developed. Maybe it is because I am not as familiar with setting up a new commission. I seek your input on that. However, I wonder if it does beg the question, do we need the full commission as an ongoing commission with as many members meeting four times per year once those things have been developed? Can you speak to that?

**Assemblyman Thompson:**

Those are very good questions. I actually did not include any deadlines because I would think that the Commission would establish that. I do not make it an ad hoc; it is going to drive itself. Should we find the need to compartmentalize it a little bit more—make it a little bit smaller—then I think we can look at that in two or four years. I think this is a good starting point. We can revisit it after it is approved and adjust accordingly.

**Assemblyman McCurdy:**

I echo the same comments as Assemblyman Fumo. This is very much needed and long overdue. As a representative from District No. 6, I definitely value a mentorship and, being a previous high school dropout, I know what having a mentor means. Thank you, and we look forward to supporting A.B. 144.

**Assemblyman Edwards:**

I appreciate your meeting with me and discussing the changes I recommended and accepting them. I look forward to getting a friendly amendment to you and working with you to get this passed.

**Vice Chair Joiner:**

Are there any questions from the Committee? [There were none.] Is there anyone in support of this measure in Las Vegas?

**Dr. Tiffany G. Tyler, Chief Executive Officer, Communities In Schools of Nevada, Las Vegas, Nevada:**

I am here from several perspectives. One is as a leader with the opportunity or privilege of leading an affiliate of the nation's largest dropout prevention organization who, at its core, is about a one-to-one relationship with adults, accountability, and evidence-based practice. I fully endorse the establishment of this commission. I think about some of the questions responded to this afternoon, particularly why a commission and not an investment in grant writing or supports. I can tell you that, as I look across our communities statewide, every day I see adults committed to investing in young people. As an organization who has long had the benefit of a national network for this work and to see folks willing to move the needle by investing in our youth, but not necessarily having the support in terms of standards of practice, I am dismayed. We should ensure, as part of our commitment to building a safety net for our children, that the individuals that wish to invest in them, equally have a safety net of support, standards of practice, or an eye toward sustainability or capacity building. I think we do ourselves a great disservice from that perspective.

As a member of The Links, Inc. [([Exhibit I](#))] and the National Coalition of 100 Black Women [([Exhibit J](#))], I can tell you that I am equally encouraged by things like the nature of the proposed membership, so I think about who was noted on this proposed bill, including systems like the Clark County Department of Juvenile Justice Services and Clark County Department of Family Services. We will bring those together with youth voices and individuals who are committed to the education of children, including superintendents, as well as the Legislature.

I am encouraged by the quality of communication, coordination, and the mitigation of duplication that could occur. We now have a number of systems impacting families and children in our communities, formally talking, even if it is just four times a year. As we think about the time to end that kind of work, when will that discussion really materialize or reach fruition? I am not certain I can identify a date, but what I can tell you is, as an organization that is doing this work and partnering with other great organizations, I applaud

the fact that the state would take the bold move of making sure that there is a formal network committed to a standard of practice. This is attending to the sustainability needs to ensure that the generations that will come after us will have the benefit of great mentors.

Because those individuals will be provided training or support as part of that process, there will be some expectation of commitment. When a great match happens, we can retain great mentors because we are thinking through about what it looks like from beginning to end. Not only is it encouraging, but it is something I wholeheartedly endorse and ask you to consider.

I want to thank each of you for giving thought to and hearing this matter today. I also want to say to you, as we think about what we hope for our children and the investment needed to help them reach their full potential, that something like establishing a formal network and infrastructure to ensure that the individuals that are committed or charged to that task and who fully embrace it, also have the support of our state in concrete ways. I think this is something we can fully embrace and should consider moving forward.

**Molly Latham, Chief Executive Officer, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southern Nevada:**

The author of the bill started out with a video produced by the National Mentoring Partnership, and there are many mentors in the room. Many of us represent organizations that follow the essentials of evidence-based mentoring that have been established by the National Mentoring Partnership. We are proud to be an evidence-based program—a program based on science and research. We follow standards of practice that we know will have positive outcomes for our children.

Someone raised the issue of background checks. One of the essentials of effective mentoring is child safety, and it never ends at a background check. For one thing, 85 percent of all child predators have never been arrested. Therefore, their fingerprints, names, or social security numbers do not exist in a criminal database anywhere. That is why the essential, effective practice of mentoring includes continual staff follow-up on all of the matches we make for as long as that match exists in our program. That is one of the best practices of mentoring.

That is also why it takes money. That staff does not come free. We are blessed to have hundreds of great volunteers who I believe to be some of the best people in southern Nevada, but it also takes staff, so the funding aspects of this bill are appreciated. Also, the recruitment efforts of this bill, to bring all of this together to have a greater, bigger, and united voice with the name of our great state on it, can be very welcome.

Perhaps we can consider one other population for special identification in this bill, and that is those children in the child welfare system. Six years ago, when I first looked at the data of youth who were arrested under what was then called child prostitution in our community, the vast majority of them were from other parts of the country. If you look at the data on the youth identified last year, 80 percent of them came from Clark County, and 85 percent of



those had child welfare experience. If we can improve the relational capacity of youth in child welfare, so they could build healthy, sustaining relationships with a mentor, they deserve inclusion in this bill. [Supporting documentation was submitted, ([Exhibit K](#)).]

**Lisa Morris Hibbler, Director, Department of Youth Development and Social Innovation, City of Las Vegas:**

I do not think the importance of mentoring can be understated. I have a few national statistics I would like to read, and then give the Committee some of the local statistics. One in three young people will grow up without a mentor and mentoring has a significant positive effect on two early-warning indicators that a student may be falling through the cracks. One is a high level of absenteeism, and the second is the recurring behavioral problems.

A 2015 study estimated that the human potential lost as a result of the educational achievement gap is the economic equivalent of a permanent national recession. When we talk about that, we are talking about the greatest possible loss of our youth—youth who do not reach their greatest potential, not because they are bad kids, but because they have bad circumstances. Too many of our youth are defined by those circumstances. We know that in terms of the school-to-prison pipeline, African Americans currently represent less than 12 percent of the student population, but they make up more than 34 percent of the juvenile justice system. Most of these young people could have been averted from that system if they had positive adult interactions in their lives. That speaks volumes as to why we need to have mentoring.

In the city of Las Vegas, we have had several out-of-school and after-school programs for more than 30 years. We have also had the Batteries Included Youth Initiative program for a decade. All of those programs provide adults in those young people's lives. Sometimes those adults are the only caring adults that they have because too many of our families are in crisis and are unstable. We also know, as the backbone of the Las Vegas My Brother's Keeper that we have been involved in for more than four years in partnership with Nevada Partners, that student-success mentors and parent coaches have demonstrated that they keep families intact and keep kids on track to graduate and to go to college.

The aspects of the bill that are really important are the model guidelines and parameters, as well as the model protocols for the management of mentors, mentees, and matches. Two speakers have already addressed that, but I will say I do not think it is necessary to develop new protocols. There are protocols that have already been developed that are best practices, and we also have an opportunity to participate in a national movement around the importance of mentoring. [Supporting documentation was submitted, ([Exhibit L](#)).]

**Beverly Mason, Director, School-Community Partnership Program, Clark County School District:**

We support A.B. 144 for several reasons. I want to address two things I have heard today in the reading of this bill. First of all, I love the idea that we have a unified group that will be supporting all of the mentoring groups. The Clark County School District (CCSD) has had

a mentoring program for K-12 students since 1993 to address the many needs of our students and to allow the flexibility of the schedules of our volunteers. One of the things that we could use assistance with is the need. That was addressed in the video we saw earlier. There are not enough volunteers to go around for our students. Even through the variety of different mentoring programs including eMentoring, face-to-face mentoring, FaceTime mentoring, and group mentoring, we still need more adults that are trained and know how to work with our students, and that are willing to be with our students and work with them through their mentoring process. That will be addressed by this mentoring commission.

I want to respond to the comment regarding student safety. One of the things CCSO does to address student safety is that all of our programs are school-based. Other programs allow a stronger background check to take students on trips and visits, but CCSO has a school-based mentoring program, or through email or facetime mentoring.

Also, this commission will allow for continuity of our programs as well as collaboration and comprehensive networking and training for all of our mentors. In my statement, I would like to give a quote from Frederick Douglass, "It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men." I hope that you support this bill.

**Tina Burse, Chief Executive Officer, It's Ok 2 B Different, Las Vegas, Nevada:**

Mine is a different approach. I am a former corrections officer. I worked at the men's state prison. I saw a lot of our young men coming in and out of the system. Seventy percent of those children, if they do not receive effective proper intervention, will end up there themselves. Our organization works with the Assembly District No. 6 area. We focus on that area because a lot of our children are going through hard times like single-parent homes and more. I am a single-parent mother with five boys. When I was looking for assistance for my young son, I had phones hung up on me. Being an officer of the state, I had people telling me that I had to wait for my son to be in the system before he could receive any assistance.

While doing research in my community and asking other parents in reference to what I was told—unfortunately, other parents were told the same thing—I made a vow to myself that day that I would never allow another parent or child to hear those words again. This is where It's Ok 2 B Different began. I support my own organization as it is difficult for me to get grants because they are focused on larger organizations. I believe that grant monies should be disbursed out to smaller organizations because we are doing a lot. My organization goes out and talks to the parents and the children about what we provide. We not only provide mentoring services, but we also provide behavioral health mentoring as well. If we do not step up for our children, who else is going to? It takes a village to raise a child. We need to get together because there are a lot of children in this community, and there are enough for everyone to reach. We need support from our state, and I cannot say it enough—we need support. Thank you.

**Theresa Davis, Chief Executive Officer, Brand New Horizon Inc., Las Vegas, Nevada:**

I am also in support of the bill and thank Assemblyman Tyrone Thompson for bringing it forward. I have done work in the community for 16 years. I have worked with youth who dropped out of school, and I work with parents who are frustrated with CCSD and want to know if I can get their students to pass high school. Sometimes it is due to behavior challenges, and sometimes it is due to the environment they are in. However, because they have not been able to pass and become a high school graduate, Brand New Horizon came into existence.

I would also like to tell you about Lady Davis, Etc., which is etiquette training that will be launched in July 2017. Within that program will be another program called Ladies in Waiting and Gents in Training. We will be working with young men and young ladies in the community and teaching methods of etiquette, manners, and the social engagement that many of them have lost or not been taught. Under our umbrella, we look to be able to teach our young men and ladies how to engage socially with each other and the community.

**Arnold Bell, Professor, Department of Communication, College of Southern Nevada:**

I am a Ph.D. student at the College of Southern Nevada in the Division of Workforce and Economic Development leadership program. I am currently collecting data for my dissertation on the role mentoring plays in leadership development. What I did in particular was look at mentoring and how it plays an effective role in improving our workforce. I have an excerpt I would like to read because I totally support this bill and initiative and I have worked with Assemblyman Thompson for the past year. I want to help you understand how mentoring can have a key role in improving our workforce. It says that mentoring has existed throughout the years in a variety of forms and settings. Although it has been defined differently in the fields of psychology, human development, human resource management, and education, the overriding purpose of mentoring has been a professional and personal development of the individual.

Mentoring is defined as an interactive process between two individuals with different levels of experience and expertise that creates interpersonal, psychosocial, career, educational, and socialized functional societies. Studies suggest that minorities may not have access to mentors and are left out of a mentoring relationship with the dominant members of the organization's power structure who could provide needed career advice. Organizations have utilized mentoring as a means to attract and develop a diverse talent pool of individuals. It is important to note that mentored individuals report more job satisfaction, career satisfaction, and tend to be more committed, perform better, advance more rapidly, and express low turnover tendencies than non-mentored individuals.

As I conclude, it says related resources indicate that mentoring has been widely used in many organizations and has been acknowledged as a valuable tool for retaining and promoting employees. As stated by David Shapiro, the Chief Executive Officer of a national mentoring partnership organization, mentoring can also be used effectively as a way to utilize intervention strategy to help redirect a young person's life toward a healthy and productive future. According to youth.gov, an interagency working group on youth programs, which is

composed of representatives from 19 federal agencies that support programs for mentoring, mentoring is often one component of a program that involves other elements such as tutoring, life-skill training, and coaching.

The benefits of mentoring include increased high school graduation rates, lower high school dropout rates, a healthier relationship in lifestyle choices as well as a better attitude about school, higher college enrollment rates, enhanced self-esteem, improved behavior both at home and at school, a stronger relationship with parents, teachers, and surrounding communities and peers, and improved interpersonal skills.

I say that all of the information that I have is from my director, Christopher Stream, at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV). He is the director of the School of Public Policy and Leadership.

**Dr. David L. Roby, Professor, Department of Human Behavior, College of Southern Nevada:**

I am a psychologist at the CSN North Las Vegas campus. I am in support of this wonderful, wonderful bill. I want to thank Assemblyman Thompson for presenting it because it is so important. I started having mentors right away. I was fortunate to have two parents that raised me and helped me, as well as my teachers, coaches, and my supervisors all through my career. This is a second career for me. My first career was as a police officer for 27 1/2 years. I have been in the trenches for a long time. I saw a lot during those years as a police officer. I think mentoring is vitally important. I cannot tell you how many young minority men, unfortunately, have gone astray. I talked to many of the young men while I was processing them, so I learned and understood what many of their issues were. Again, I stress that this is so important. Now I am a professor and I see a few of these young men who are not in class. As a police officer, I saw that our jails were full of these young men who probably did not have any support.

I enjoyed the comment that Assemblyman Thompson made about this being a business model. We have a lot of mentoring programs here, but they need support. I was part of the National Association of Police Athletic/Activities League (PAL), and it was very wonderful. The young men and young women that I helped really looked up to me. It gave me a lot of satisfaction. Now that I am a professor, I am a volunteer for the BUMP Up program at CSN. I mentor one student, and we meet twice and sometimes three times a month. I take him out for a meal, and we just sit and chat. There is something about talking and connecting and I am there for them and for whatever they need to talk about. That trust issue is so important. They can feel comfortable talking to me about anything. I am also a volunteer for Child Haven. These are little children who are there, and for whatever reason, have been taken away from their home and here they are—in the system. There are programs all over the country, but it is about getting more support, keeping these young people out of the prison system, and getting them around more adults who really care about them.

**Henry Thorns, Founder, Chief Executive Officer, President of DogCatchers Youth Foundation, Las Vegas, Nevada:**

We have been volunteering in the community for 36 years. We have sold barbeque on corners and washed cars to try to keep these kids off the streets. My program is a little different; it is a prevention program. I am trying to prevent my kids from seeing the inside of a juvenile hall. I am trying to prevent their fathers from seeing jail. Mentoring is very important. When I was a little kid, I went to Matt Kelly Elementary School and I had mentors. They changed my whole life. I was running around beating up and slapping everybody around. They grabbed me and told me that this was not the way to go.

They asked me if I would like to play basketball. From right then, basketball taught me how to be a man. I came back to Las Vegas and attended UNLV. I graduated from Ed W. Clark High School and played professional ball in Canada. I opened up clothing stores in Las Vegas, and I put kids to work. As I put kids to work in my community, I found out that their parents needed help too, so we set up mentoring programs for the parents.

Not only did we mentor these kids, we had to feed them also. We use people like those at Mario's Westside Market, and other people in the community that donate hot dogs and hamburgers to feed these young people so they will not go home hungry. Mentoring is very important, and I have been doing it for 36 years. I have written many, many grants, and they have been turned down. I discovered that grants actually go out to pay staff that is already onboard. What about money for the kids in our community? We need money to trickle down to the kids in the community so they can better their lives. Like me, why do I have to wash cars and sell barbeque on the corner? I have been doing it for 36 years—free.

Just the other day, a man was killed in the community I work in. He lost a basketball game, got mad, got into a fight, got beat up, and then he turned around and killed the guy. If someone had been there to mentor the kids right there that would never have happened. Kids need jobs. Kids in our community need jobs from 12 years old to 36 years old because they are being left out. I appreciate Assemblyman Thompson for bringing this bill up. I spoke in 2015 about the same thing and I remember telling you then that soon ISIS would be on our streets. Where is ISIS now? On our streets. Let us do prevention. Let us try to stop these kids from being in trouble and cut it off ahead of time. Send some funding down here to help everybody.

**Shawn Smith, President, 100 Black Men of Las Vegas, Inc., Las Vegas, Nevada:**

Behind me and with me, you see other gentlemen who are also a part of the organization. We felt this was so important to come out to support A.B. 144 that we wanted to come and show you our strength and that we care about mentoring in the community. This commission would help bring collaboration between business leaders, educators, nongovernmental, and nonprofit organizations. That is critical. It is vital that all of this brainpower comes together, so we can figure out how to do things smarter and how we can work together. When we have multiple organizations working individually, we sometimes lose that collective brainpower. We all know that education and mentoring works together.

As a former assistant principal, I can tell you that mentoring helps to fill the gaps. Right now we are looking at a lot of key legislation regarding education, but mentoring is one of those things that fills the gap where education leaves off. Mentoring helps the families fill that gap.

The national organization of 100 Black Men is approximately 100 chapters across the United States, London, United Kingdom, and the Turks and Caicos Islands. We volunteer and mentor youth all across the U.S. as well as internationally. We mentor more than 100,000 youth. Locally, we mentor across education, health and wellness, and economic empowerment. One of the important things we want the Committee to understand is that there are a lot of words that talk about mentoring, but a picture is worth 1,000 words.

The young man sitting to my right is a mentee, Mr. Tyler Scott. This young man attended the school where I was and, if you would have met this young man in the sixth grade, you would never believe he would be sitting here today. I do not think he would have believed it, but when we tie in education and mentoring, this is a living example of how it works together. He has been sitting here for the past three hours listening to Assembly Bill 117, following A.B. 144, understanding how bills are being passed, understanding how you do what you do, and understanding how people from the community come in here and speak to address this issue. Exposing this young man to what is going on today is mentoring in action. When we pull together that brain trust that this commission can create, it allows us to affect many more young men just like this as we continue to move forward to make progress as a state. I am going to let this young man speak for a moment to tell you a bit about himself. [Supporting documentation was submitted, ([Exhibit M](#)).]

**Tyler Nicoletti-Scott, Member, 100 Black Men of Las Vegas, Inc., Las Vegas, Nevada:**

At a young age, before mentoring, I was having a lot of problems at home, and I got into fights and was very disrespectful. I just did not know how to carry myself as a man. Through 100 Black Men, they taught me how to do so. They guided me down the right path and exposed me to things such as chess and baseball, and allowed me to travel and experience things I would not have without 100 Black Men and mentoring in my life. If it was not for that, I do not know where I would be right now. I would just end up being another statistic. Hopefully, I will continue to go on and achieve better things with the help and support of mentoring.

**Shawn Smith:**

I would just like to comment on something mentioned earlier in the video. About 90 percent of mentees wind up wanting to be mentors. This young man, as we mentioned, mentored through chess. He comes in on Saturdays and helps to mentor the younger mentees—the ones who are in kindergarten, first and second grades, and other elementary school children. Already, as a junior in high school, he is part of that 90 percent trying to give back to other youth in the community.

Please, with all due haste, pass this bill to allow this commission to be established, so we can continue to build that brain trust to put the minds together, so we can work and continue to support the mentoring initiative across the entire state.

**Gentry Richardson, Mentor Chair, 100 Black Men of Las Vegas, Inc., Las Vegas, Nevada:**

On behalf of 100 Black Men of Las Vegas, we express our strongest support for the concept of A.B. 144. Members of the 100 Black Men of Las Vegas are the catalyst for youth engagement and believe that mentoring and education are the pathways to youth's success. We, together with families, community leaders, and sponsors, have successfully provided impactful mentoring activities in multiple communities since our chapter's inception more than 16 years ago. We believe in mentoring through a lifetime. We believe in mentoring not only in first grade, but all the way through college and into adulthood.

The overall motto of 100 Black Men is, "What they see is what they'll be." We have heard a lot about mentoring and the concept of mentoring, but one of the things that I have mentored in California and in Nevada, is something that came over me and is a phenomenon called projection. When you are mentoring a young man or young girl, you are not just helping that person at that time; you are having an impact on their children, their grandchildren, and on their great-grandchildren. You are creating a lineage of success and survival, not just with that one child. That is what motivates me when I am mentoring. I see beyond that individual. As I watch young children turn into adults and the effects we are having on their future, we are having an effect on the next generation and the one after that.

**Christopher Hilton, Member, 100 Black Men of Las Vegas, Inc., Las Vegas, Nevada:**

I am 17 years old, and I am a senior in high school. I joined 100 Black Men in seventh grade. If it was not for that, I do not know where I would be. I talked back to my teacher and got sent to the principal's office. Mr. Smith was my mentor and told me to be in chess practice on Saturday. I was thinking, chess? But, it changed my life. Like their motto, "What they see is what they'll be," surrounding myself with so many positive men, inspired me to be one of them one day, or better. Here I am, years later, as a senior, and they are still by my side, giving me this chance to speak to you. My friends ask how I am able to do this and how do you know this person? It is a great experience with putting myself in so many positive groups like 100 Black Men, Alpha Men, and Divas of Tomorrow, and so many positive programs to give me more hope. It is a very learning and humbling experience.

**Xavier Tillman, Member, Gentlemen By Choice Community Development Corporation, Las Vegas, Nevada:**

I am 11 years old and part of the Gentlemen by Choice group, and I will be speaking on their behalf. Mentoring guarantees that young people know that there is someone out there who cares about us. It assures us that we are not alone in dealing with life challenges,

and it makes us feel like we matter. It is a wonderful experience to have a mentor and I would love to be one when I am older. My mentors have helped me strive to become a better young man with my own personal growth and development and given me social and economic opportunities.

**Jared Amezcua, Member, Gentlemen By Choice Community Development Corporation, Las Vegas, Nevada:**

I am representing Gentlemen by Choice. A few things that I have learned in the Gents are that we make mistakes, and sometimes we need someone to pick us up from our mistakes. My mentors have picked me up and shown me how to be a proper gentleman. They have taught me that we are all men by birth, but gentlemen by choice. It is our actions that define who we are, and if it were not for my mentors, I would not have known the difference.

I was not perfect before I started the Gent program. I am not perfect right now either, but my mentors have helped me and taught me that you can never be the best. You can always do more; you can always write one more sentence; do one more chore; spend another hour practicing. You are not always perfect, but we should strive to be the best. In summary, I would not be here in front of you if it were not for my mentors. They will always care for us in times of need and push us to be better.

**Quintin Favors Jr., Member, Gentlemen By Choice Community Development Corporation, Las Vegas, Nevada:**

I will be speaking on behalf of Gentlemen by Choice. It is great to have mentors because they can change you as a person. They can teach you life skills, leadership, image, the importance of your appearance, financial awareness, and etiquette training. I am so grateful to have mentors that will help me change the world. I love all of my mentors.

There are some boys who do not have anyone in their lives. When they do not have mentors, they can grow up and make poor choices that will affect them the rest of their lives. For an example, I have a Gent brother that does not have a dad. He used to make poor choices until he came into the Gent brotherhood. That is why it is important to have resources for the mentors, so they can spend their most valuable resource with us, and that is their time. Thank you for your time and my name is Quintin Favors Jr., also known as little Martin Luther King, Jr.

**Julian Ramirez-Simon, Member, Gentlemen By Choice Community Development Corporation, Las Vegas, Nevada:**

I have been in the Gentlemen by Choice program since the fourth grade. For me, being part of the Gents means having dedication. Now, dedication is not just showing up to Thursday meetings; it means applying the best ability of oneself to the task at hand. That is what I see from my mentors and it inspires me to be the best I can be.



Nowadays, it is not easy to find true inspiration, but my mentors always make it possible to inspire me to be the best me. How, you ask me? Let me tell you. Every time I see my mentors, they always give me the extra push I need. Read another word, open another door, and every time I have their support, it gives me the strength to do the things I need to do. Thank you for your time.

**Antonio Mosby Jr., Member, Gentlemen By Choice Community Development Corporation, Las Vegas, Nevada:**

I represent Gentlemen by Choice. As a young black man, I have realized that things are not going to be given to me. I have to work hard. Also, positive images are not normally shown for the black and Latino communities. When we see these negative images, like drug dealing, murder, and disrespecting women, we become conditioned to believe this is normal and okay. Young men are taught not to show emotion and not to fight and use aggression to get what they want. The psychologists and therapists disagree because it is dangerous to bottle up emotions, and it is better to talk out your problems. When young men grow to become men, they develop a deadly weapon, pride. These men with pride have sons, and they are taught what their fathers learned. In absence of the father, the son needs more guidance. This is why mentorship is important, because in both scenarios, the child is taught something new and receives male guidance. In order to be mentored, right off the bat takes stress, and you learn to respect your mentor and dedicate time. You develop integrity and reenact what you learn when no one is watching.

Speaking of dedicating time, our Gent building is a product. As Gents, we chipped the paint off of the walls, painted the building, took out the carpet, and put in the floor. Just like the Gents, that building was our vision—our dream that turned into a reality through hard work. Thank you.

**Antanus Pullum, Cofounder, Gentlemen By Choice Community Development Corporation, Las Vegas, Nevada:**

I am the cofounder of Gentlemen by Choice. It is hard to follow these young men. Like one said, the greatest resource we have is time, but the next greatest resource is money. We do not want to stand on the corners and have to do barbeques and car washes when we could spend that valuable time with our young mentees. I am behind A.B. 144. I hope that you support it because here in Las Vegas, we are huge supporters of it. At the end of the day, we are in the trenches, and we want to make sure that we put out the best product; that is our children, that is our future. Please support this bill.

**Curtis Coleman, Founder and President, Save Our Sons, Las Vegas, Nevada:**

I want to thank Assemblyman Thompson for bringing this bill. It is a very important bill. Our organization mentors through group mentoring, sports programs, and more. This bill is important to help us gain the resources that we do not have, but other groups have. We could all come together to do what is best for these kids. We work in these communities every day, putting the footwork in, so we see the good, the bad, and the ugly, and this bill will help us tremendously. Thank you.

**Ricky D. Gourrier, Sr., Manager, Government Affairs and Community Relations, Communities in Schools of Nevada, Las Vegas, Nevada:**

As much as I would love to sit here and spin out all of the statistics that I have, I think the most powerful thing that you could hear was from the gentleman that came before me. I wish you could see the overflow room, and the support that this bill has. That room is full of individuals who are passionate about this bill. Thank you for your time, and you have our full support for A.B. 144.

**Andrew-Bryce Hudson, Coordinator, Academic Affairs, College of Southern Nevada:**

This is the first mentoring program at CSN that dedicates itself to giving students of color, men of color, black and brown, an opportunity of knowing how to navigate through CSN in terms of graduating, and we provide all campus mentors. Our program is one which we strive for success through academics and also strive to provide life lessons and life skills. The bill is very important for us because, in higher education, you always look at the best practices, and with those best practices, you try to go from theory to applied theory. We believe this bill takes out all of the uncertainties. If we have one training and one qualification in order to access additional resources, it would be beneficial to us. We are in full support of the bill and want to thank Assemblyman Thompson for this opportunity.

**Patrina McKinney, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:**

I am speaking in support of A.B. 144. I am a mother, a youth mentor, as well as an active member within the community. I want to say that A.B. 144 is a program similar to one that I am involved with, the Alpha Men and Divas of Tomorrow youth organization. We have been in existence since 1995 working with high school students to help them graduate and to attend a four-year college or university. For the past five years, we have had more than 90 percent of our students actually be accepted and attend college. The majority of the students we work with are from low-income, single-parent homes. Many of them are the first in their families to be able to attend college. This bill is very beneficial to a smaller organization such as ours that wants to definitely increase its capacity to assist more youth in our community. Thank you so much for the opportunity to speak to you today.

**Vice Chair Joiner:**

Is there anyone else in Las Vegas to speak in support of A.B. 144? [There was no one.] We will move to support in Carson City.

**Natha Anderson, President, Washoe Education Association:**

I also represent the Nevada State Education Association. We represent 40,000 teachers and education support professionals across Nevada. We care deeply about our students. We also realize the events that happen outside of the classroom have a huge impact on what happens inside the classroom. We have heard the importance of mentoring, so we want to add our voices in support of A.B. 144.

Another item I would like to bring up, though it pains me that I have to give credit to UNLV, is the fact that two appointees should be coming from our students. The two appointees are between the ages of 16 and 24 years and, as a high school English teacher, I love that.

Too often we sit back and think this is what the students need, and including them in this discussion will make this program so much stronger. [Supporting documentation was submitted, ([Exhibit N](#)).]

**Tyre L. Gray, representing Las Vegas Metro Chamber of Commerce:**

I am here on behalf of the Las Vegas Chamber. We want to support the bill. You have heard the great testimony from the young men, and I wish I could top that. I would like to say that many of our members support mentoring and engage in mentoring, not only with their time, but also with their resources. We look forward to continuing to work with this Commission. As a personal point of privilege, I am a product of mentoring and would like to give recognition to two of my most important members—Kate Gordon, who, when I was in seventh grade, took me to my very first play, and to Daniel Eaton, who was an attorney, and I ultimately decided to follow in his footsteps. Mentoring does work and this is a great opportunity to continue to foster those opportunities. Thank you.

**Steve Jimenez, Extern, Nevada Hispanic Legislative Caucus:**

I want to say thank you to Chairman Thompson for bringing this bill forward. Like Mr. Gray, several of my mentors are in this room right now. I would not be here without them. The Nevada Hispanic Legislative Caucus supports A.B. 144.

**Mary Pierczynski, representing Nevada Association of School Superintendents; and Nevada Association of School Administrators:**

I think you have seen why mentoring is so important with all of those wonderful testimonies, especially from the young people. This Commission will help with one thing that is critical and that is developing a model of protocols for recruitment and screening of mentors. That is so important. We are in support of the bill. Thank you.

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

I am also a product of mentoring, and a former big sister with Big Brothers Big Sisters of America. Yea! I had to put in that plug. We are in support of A.B. 144, but respectfully, we ask that the Commission also keep an eye toward our nontraditional student population. Those would be students who are over the age of 24. At our community colleges, that rate is about 40 percent and at our universities, about 35 percent. These are a group of students who also need mentoring. Many of them have been out of school for a while; they have life obligations and really struggle to complete their college careers. I would respectfully ask that the Commission keep that population in mind as well. Otherwise, we are in full support. Thank you.

**Michael Flores, Director of Communications and Government Affairs, College of Southern Nevada:**

I really want to thank Assemblyman Tyrone Thompson for this bill. We worked a lot with him during the interim along with Assemblyman McCurdy to make this happen and provided our input. We did have that Mentoring Matters event in January, which was huge. It was incredible to see so many people show up on a Saturday morning who wanted to get involved

and wanted to give more help for their nonprofit. As you heard Andrew-Bryce Hudson talk about our BUMP Up program, we also have a Sister 2 Sister program. The reason these programs came about at CSN is that our president, Dr. Michael D. Richards, noticed how low the graduation rates were for men of color. He wanted to do something about it. We know that mentoring works. We are looking forward to the results.

I have had a nonprofit for approximately seven years where we mentor. It is actually in Assemblyman McCurdy's district. We do our mentoring in these housing projects where the annual income in the neighborhood is about \$11,000 per year. Ninety-one percent of the heads of the households are women. There is a lack of male role models in that neighborhood. We are open Tuesdays and Thursdays, but one thing I have learned is that, in addition to the lack of resources, there is a lack of infrastructure in coordination with all of the nonprofits that are doing this great work. You heard that many of these organizations, even in the same neighborhood, are doing the same work. There is so much help that is needed. It is amazing when we can connect the work being done in Carson City with what is happening in our communities and neighborhoods. Assemblyman Thompson, this bill does that. It helps bring it all home. I am grateful for that and support this bill.

**J. Kyle Dalpe, Ph.D., Interim Dean of Technical Sciences, Truckee Meadows Community College:**

Echoing my colleagues, Truckee Meadows Community College supports this bill. Mentoring is a way to help students find their pathway, stay on it, and learn about it. You have heard many testimonials today. We agree with Vice Chancellor Brooks that mentoring continues on for all ages and particularly for nontraditional populations at the community college. Thank you.

**Ed Gonzalez, representing Clark County Education Association:**

We, too, support A.B. 144 and also agree with my colleague from the north regarding having appointees from 16 to 24 years of age, and appreciate her finally acknowledging how good UNLV is.

**Vice Chair Joiner:**

Is there anyone else in favor of A.B. 144 either in Las Vegas or Carson City? [There was no one.]

**Assemblyman Flores:**

I want to say thank you to all of the different organizations that came up. You do all of this work within the community, and you often do not get enough credit. In fact, you do not get any credit. You do this for free, out of your hearts, and are committed because you are invested in your community. I want to let you know that we are with you even though we often do not do enough or say enough. We are honored and proud to have you fighting in the trenches in our communities. I look forward to seeing you when we get back home.

**Vice Chair Joiner:**

Is there anyone in opposition to A.B. 144 in Las Vegas? [There was no one.] Is there anyone in opposition in Carson City? [There was no one.] Is there anyone neutral in Las Vegas? [There was no one.] Is there anyone neutral in Carson City? [There was no one.]

**Assemblyman Thompson:**

Thank you all for just listening. When I mentioned this in January at our Mentoring Matters event, there were about 80 people there, and I think all 80 came today. It made my heart feel very warm. Most importantly, I want to let you all know that this was not staged at all. These were very authentic, genuine testimonies, and I would hope that each and every one of you felt like. Wow! It was great for the young people to come forth and to share their testimonies that they wrote themselves, and to say that if it were not for the programs they were in, who knows what they would be doing. Again, I would like to give a shout-out to what Assemblyman Flores said. Thank you to the mentors, they are angels in disguise—not in disguise—we know that they are angels.

I want to mention that there is a proposed amendment from Clark County ([Exhibit G](#)) that I agree with, and I forgot to mention earlier. It is what Ms. Latham from Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southern Nevada was talking about which is including the children in the child welfare system. I will take into consideration the ones that are over 24 years old. We will be working on a comprehensive amendment and thank you so much for your time.

**Vice Chair Joiner:**

I will now close the hearing on A.B. 144.

[Assemblyman Thompson reassumed the Chair.]

[Letters submitted by Judy Stokey ([Exhibit O](#)) and Robert L. Green, Ph.D. ([Exhibit P](#)) were not discussed and are included as exhibits for the meeting.]

**Chairman Thompson:**

We will now open the hearing for Assembly Bill 196.

**Assembly Bill 196: Provides for an endorsement that a teacher, administrator or other educational personnel may obtain in culturally responsive educational leadership. (BDR 34-659)**

**Assemblyman William McCurdy II, Assembly District No. 6:**

I have Assemblywoman Diaz with me today who is also going to testify, and in Las Vegas, we have Dr. Christine Clark and Michelle Kim.

Assembly Bill 196 would require the Commission on Professional Standards in Education to adopt requirements for any teacher, administrator, or educational personnel to be licensed in culturally responsive educational leadership.

Existing state law requires the Commission on Professional Standards in Education to adopt regulations establishing the qualification for the licensure and endorsement of teachers. Assembly Bill 196 proposes the Commission establish, by regulation, requirements for a teacher, administrator or other educational personnel to obtain an endorsement on his or her license in culturally responsive educational leadership. These requirements must include at least 18 semester hours of postgraduate coursework or the equivalent thereof, in multicultural education. This includes cultural competence training and culturally responsive educational training.

Cultural competency is having an awareness of one's own cultural identity and views about differences, and the ability to learn and build on the varying cultural and community norms of students and their families. It is the ability to understand the "within-group" differences that make each student unique, while celebrating the "between-group" variations that make our country a tapestry. This understanding informs and expands teaching practices in the culturally competent educator's classroom.

Cultural competency is a key in today's culturally diverse classrooms. It can be learned and practiced to better serve diverse students, their families, and their communities. This entails developing certain personal and interpersonal awareness and sensitivities, understanding cultural differences, and mastering a set of skills that, collaboratively, builds the foundation in effective cross-cultural teaching and culturally responsive teaching.

Here in Nevada, the majority of students come from a minority population. According to Nevada's Department of Education, there are a total of 467,527 Nevada students enrolled across the state. Of this, nearly 1 percent are American Indian or Alaskan Native, 1.39 percent are Pacific Islander, 5.48 percent are Asian, 10.5 percent are black, 41 percent are Hispanic, and 33 percent are white.

In 2012, Nevada had the second largest "teacher diversity gap." This is an issue. In the Clark County School District—which educates the majority of Nevada children—70 percent of students are non-white, while 76 percent of its licensed educators are white. The need for culturally responsive educational training in our state is undeniable. It is an honor to bring forth this bill.

**Assemblywoman Olivia Diaz, Assembly District No. 11:**

It is an honor to cosponsor A.B. 196 with you. District No. 11 is northeast Las Vegas and part of North Las Vegas. When I am not in the halls of the Legislature, I am a public elementary school teacher. I have always worked in the inner city. Fortunately for my students who came through my classrooms, we had something in common. When I taught at C.C. Ronnow Elementary School, which was predominantly Latino or Hispanic, I could relate to my students culturally. I could talk to them about the Dia de Los Muertos (Day of the Dead), and I could talk to them about what Cinco de Mayo meant. I found ways to infuse that into my lesson plans when we had to either read, research, or write about something. It was something I knew my students were going to gravitate toward and were going to be excited about learning. Oftentimes they do not hear about these things in their homes.

As stateswomen and statesmen who sit on the Assembly Committee on Education, we continually wonder how we can improve the quality of education in our state and how we can ensure that every Nevada student graduates college and is career-ready. I believe A.B. 196 is a bill that can help with both of those objectives. Through these 18 semester hours of multicultural education, teachers would voluntarily seek the tool set that they need to meet the needs of their students in their classrooms—very diverse classrooms.

Assemblyman McCurdy spoke to you about statewide numbers, but I took a snapshot of the 2015-2016 Fast Facts in the Clark County School District (CCSD) where we had 320,400 students—45.7 percent were Hispanic or Latino, 26.2 percent were Caucasian, 13.3 percent were black or African American, 6.4 percent were Asian, 6.4 percent were multi-racial, 1.6 percent were Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and 0.4 percent were Native American. I totaled all of those ethnicities and 73.8 percent of our students in CCSD are of very diverse backgrounds.

As practitioners, we know that effective educators in multicultural classrooms relate teaching content to the cultural backgrounds of their students. Leading researchers state that motivation is inseparable from culture. If you are an individual that does not know much about your pupil's cultural background and heritage, it is going to be very difficult to establish inclusion with that group. That is a learning environment where both the teacher and the students feel safe. It is going to be difficult to develop the attitudes that are appropriate for that learning environment so they have a favorable disposition and outlook and are excited to come to school every day. It will be difficult to enhance meaning—"You are making me learn about how you celebrate Christmas, but that might not be how I celebrate Christmas in my house. In my house, we do not do the turkey and ham thing. We do pozole and tamales for Christmas." Then I feel that I am part of that project that you are putting before me. It is about engendering competence. It is about understanding that students are effective in learning when we use something they value and that they can connect to.

When we look at the lack of achievement in the Latino/Latina subgroup, or the African-American community, we need to be really thoughtful and reflect on this piece. Are we providing culturally responsive education in our very diverse classrooms in this state? I would say that, unfortunately, as Assemblyman McCurdy stated, the makeup of the teachers does not reflect the makeup of the classrooms. Therefore, these individuals do need to have that multicultural lens and that training in order for them to be effective teachers.

**Christine Clark, Ed.D., Professor and Senior Scholar in Multicultural Education,  
Founding Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion, Department of Curriculum  
and Instruction, University of Nevada, Las Vegas:**

It is a pleasure and I appreciate the opportunity to speak to you today. Also, I want to thank our primary sponsors and cosponsors. I think it is important to show that this was a bill that started as a conversation with Assemblywoman Olivia Diaz just a very few months ago, and it is thrilling for us to be able to be at this stage already and having this conversation with you at the state level.

I am a faculty member at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) which, in light of previous comments, is an incredibly amazing place to work, and there is no other place in the world I would rather work. It is one of the most racially and ethnically diverse institutions in the country. We understand that we have a lot of educational challenges in southern Nevada and in the CCSD, even at UNLV. However, we also have a tremendous wealth and that wealth is multicultural; cultural capital and cultural wealth that comes from the diversity of our communities, our campus community, our school community, and our local community. Again, there is no other place I would rather work, and no other place where this work that we are talking about today is more important.

The previous testimony on Assembly Bill 117 and Assembly Bill 144 demonstrates that this bill, A.B. 196, really reinforces both of those bills—culturally responsive, educational leadership, supports, and a particular approach to college and career readiness. What we witnessed with the young people's testimony on A.B. 144 was an example of culturally responsive mentorship. Through A.B. 196, we make it possible for educational leaders, whether they are teachers or school administrators, or occupy other licensed personnel positions, to also become culturally responsive. Through counseling, we make it possible for them to support culturally responsive, career and college readiness, and then also cultural competency—cultural responsiveness in the work that they do, in their primary roles as educational administrators, as teachers, school nurses, and other licensed personnel roles [slides 2 and 3, ([Exhibit Q](#))].

It is important to note that the proposed endorsement through A.B. 196 is aligned with what is already expected. What is important is that what is expected of teachers, educational leaders, and nurses by various accreditation bodies—federally, nationally, at state level, and even at the local and district levels—is not meaningfully supported yet in the educational and professional preparation programs that we have. Despite evidence-based research and related practice underscoring that this is imperative, we do not yet have it. We are asking teachers to do things that we do not have the preparation programs in place to make it possible for them to learn to do well. Through A.B. 196, we provide a new platform. It is just one, but it is an important one that will provide opportunities for educational and professional development, ongoing growth, and retention of all school-licensed personnel.

In broad strokes, this bill will address the need to develop educational leaders with the knowledge bases, skills, and dispositions required to effectively administrate, teach, and serve in Nevada's diverse urban, rural, and suburban educational contexts. It will reinforce the educational leader role and the professionalism of all licensed personnel. It provides support opportunities for high-quality professional development and growth beyond initial licensure for administrative leaders, teacher leaders, and other licensed personnel leaders consistent with, for example, CCSD's new professional growth plan. It will enhance opportunities for educational leaders to walk the talk of being "high-quality" as spelled out in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).



This also includes those who work in small and rural schools. It will provide an effective pathway to recruit, develop, and retain culturally responsive educational leaders to serve in all of Nevada's schools, but especially in our high needs schools, as defined in ESSA by the number of unfilled available teacher positions—and we know there are approximately 800 to 1,200 per year here in southern Nevada—and/or by the presence of a student or family population in which 30 percent or more have incomes below the poverty line.

It will also retain classroom teachers by recognizing and incentivizing their leadership skills and contributions without them having to become school district administrators. It will also increase the likelihood that Nevada can secure federal Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) grants. The most recent TQP grant calls for submissions focused on improving teacher quality for tribal and rural student populations.

I mentioned briefly that cultural responsiveness was originally defined by an academic named Dr. Geneva Gay who was really trying to codify what she was seeing happening in diverse school communities and what should be happening in those communities. She said that it affirms all students' cultural connections, and that is important. It builds personally, culturally, and physically inviting educational environments for students in classrooms, in schools, and even in the communities that host our schools. It stresses students' academic achievement; it promotes instructional practices that accommodate all of the differences that students bring with them to school. It requires firm, consistent, loving classroom management, and it encourages individuality and collaboration.

Becoming culturally responsive as a teacher, administrator, counselor, nurse, or in another school leadership role is important because all students do better academically on multiple measures of achievement when school leadership at all levels is adapted to students' cultural experiences and frames of reference. Culturally responsive educational leadership then affirms all students intellectually, socially, and emotionally by using cultural references as a way of imparting knowledge and skills. As a result, culturally responsive educational leaders create culturally responsive school communities, which can have the effect of not only decreasing bullying, but also of improving equitable educational opportunities for all students.

Through A.B. 196, the proposed endorsement will enable Nevada's educational leaders to become better prepared to meet priorities of many education policies. To name a few, it will enable our educational professionals to meet the priorities of ESSA, the National Professional Standards for Educational Leaders, the teacher leader Model Standards, the Nevada State Education Performance Framework for administrators and teachers, the State of Nevada's education goals, CCSD's Pledge of Achievement, including a strategic plan, and the Washoe County School District's (WCSD) strategic plan. Those are just a small number of the standards that it will help our educational leaders to meet [slides 4 and 5, ([Exhibit Q](#))].

As I mentioned at the outset, in all of these standards, goals, and frameworks, we already have an expectation that our educational leaders are performing in ways that are culturally responsive, but we are not meaningfully preparing them to actually do what we have the expectation for them to do. Through these priorities—for example, using a culturally responsive framework—our educational leaders will be able to provide targeted support of student proficiency by racial and ethnic subgroups and for first language. They will be able to create and sustain an educational culture that supports continuous academic improvement. They will engage diverse learners in learning tasks that have high-cognitive demand and enable students to make meaning through discourse and other innovative instructional strategies. They will be able to ensure that all students progress in school, develop personal and civic responsibility, graduate college and be career ready in order to succeed and contribute to the twenty-first century global society. They will be able to eliminate the achievement gap by ensuring every student is challenged to learn at or above grade level. Those are just a few examples from those policies and standards that I mentioned earlier.

Cultural responsiveness includes and benefits students and families from all racial and ethnic backgrounds and all geographic communities; all genders; all socioeconomic backgrounds; all religions; faith communities; spiritual and secular belief systems; all ability groups; and among other dimensions of diversity. Oftentimes, white populations do not think of themselves as included in benefiting from cultural responsiveness, but they are, and it is really important to note that cultural responsiveness benefits everyone. It is particularly important to note this with respect to white rule, or working class white populations who, like their racially and ethnically diverse peers from all socio-economic class backgrounds and geographic locations, often do not have teachers who are familiar with their home life and community concerns. Thus, they are also often ill-prepared to meaningfully differentiate instruction to meet their unique learning needs.

The cultural diversity of the state of Nevada is a resource for business and industry that can be further leveraged through the development of culturally responsive educational leaders in our schools.

Large bodies of mostly social science research on the educational benefits of diversity also show that all students who are educated in robust, culturally responsive, academic environments, as opposed to culturally unresponsive ones, accrue certain benefits. First, they do better academically, and they are more likely to graduate. Second, upon graduation they are hired first, promoted faster, and earn more money sooner than peers who attend schools and colleges where these conditions are not met. These benefits have to do with the increasingly globally diverse nature of virtually all jobs today. In order to compete, one has to have effortless skill and comfort for cross-group interaction and collaborative productivity in the work place.

In the new Nevada plan, student graduation rates are discussed relative to the urgent need to improve the educational engagement of all students, but especially specific groups of students in high-needs schools. Additionally, ESSA requires that educational leaders be prepared to support all students' achievement of high academic standards that prepare them to

be both college-and career-ready. Through this endorsement, supported through A.B. 196, Nevada educational leaders will be more adept at meeting accountability and enacting expectations to especially improve our lowest performing schools where students have not made progress, and where graduation rates have remained low over extended periods of time.

Nevada would not be the first state to adopt culturally responsive education leadership legislation. Many states—notably, Alaska and Maryland, both of which have a similar mix of urban, suburban, and rural school communities like Nevada—have enacted an array of culturally responsive educational practices at this same time. Though Nevada will follow a precedent set in other states, it would still be a leader ahead of many other states.

The last slide that is up right now [slide 7, ([Exhibit Q](#))] is one example of what this endorsement could look like in practice. Obviously, that is something that will be discussed in the future, but we wanted to give people an understanding that it could, in theory, be divided into three stages with six credits each that would have an introductory, intermediate, and advanced component. It could be differentiated by three district or school leader roles.

This would allow the same educational leader to pursue the endorsement in more than one role. That would add depth and breadth to the kinds of experiences, knowledge, and skill sets that our school leaders have. They could get this endorsement as a teacher, then go back and get it as an administrator. While the endorsement would be the same, the content would be differentiated for the role. The proposed endorsement opens another pathway for Nevada to realize Governor Sandoval's declaration that in terms of education, "Nevada will be at the bottom no more."

**Michelle Kim, Director, Strategic Initiatives, Clark County Education Association:**

I represent 18,000 Clark County School District (CCSD) licensed professionals. I am speaking in support of A.B. 196, a bill that, if passed, would provide an optional endorsement for culturally responsive, educational leadership for all licensed professionals. I would like to thank Assemblyman McCurdy and all of the sponsors of this bill for their leadership. This bill will help ensure that all licensed professionals have the support and professional development in culturally responsive, educational leadership in order to succeed in Nevada's culturally rich and diverse schools.

Some of you may recall that in the 2015 Session, the Clark County Education Association (CCEA) was very vocal about the over-750 vacancies that existed in CCSD. Most of these vacancies, approximately 95 percent, existed in the overwhelming number of at-risk schools. In these at-risk schools, we had high numbers of ethnic minorities and socioeconomic minorities. Since then, with the additional funding and programs that targeted the at-risk schools, things have improved.

However, what has slowed the pace of success in filling these hard-to-fill vacancies has been the simple fact that at least 50 percent of all new teachers coming into the district are coming from out of state. They are being placed into classrooms with student population and diversity that they are just not experienced or skilled to handle.

I want to remind everyone that the number of struggling educators in these diverse classrooms is not an insignificant number. Currently, the vacancies are at 450 in CCSD, and again, most of these would likely be in our at-risk schools. The CCEA has worked hard with the school district and other educational partners to provide additional support and resources for educators, including a peer assistance and review program that mentors new teachers at the at-risk schools. This program was initially funded by the CCEA.

My colleague, Brenda Pearson, the director of CCEA's professional development, will go into much more detail on the research and data behind the critical role diversity plays in education and what the CCEA has been doing to support the success of educators in teaching in the at-risk classrooms. For the record, CCEA fully supports A.B. 196. This bill will provide needed professional support for all licensed professionals that will not only ensure success in the classrooms, but also make a great impact on the lives of those students and the communities in which they serve.

**Brenda Pearson, Director, Professional Learning Program, Clark County Education Association:**

The CCEA, as Michelle said, represents nearly 18,000 educators and licensed professionals in the CCSD. During the 2016-2017 school year, our professional learning program will have offered more than 100 courses to approximately 5,000 educators and licensed professionals within our district. A common concern voiced by these educators and licensed professionals is a desire to learn about and hone their instructional practices that will meet the needs of our diverse population. We currently offer three courses focusing on meeting the needs of English learners, the English learner population, understanding culturally diverse teaching, and how living in poverty impacts the educational experience of learners. We know that we have impacted the instructional practices of teachers across our district, but this is simply not enough.

We are here to speak in support of A.B. 196. I know my other colleagues have spoken about the diversity gap, but I want to speak about it a little bit more. The difference between the percentage of students of color and the percentage of teachers of color is referred to as a diversity gap. The diversity gap negatively impacts student outcomes, the development of constructive relationships between students and teachers, parental engagement, and teacher retention. The Nevada Education Data Book reported a diversity gap of 44 percent in the 2012-2013 school year which was well above the national average of 30 percent. Nevada's diversity gap is one of the largest in the United States. The CCSD reports the highest diversity gap within the state of Nevada. A comparison of three similar school districts was conducted. The CCSD, which is the fifth largest school district in the nation, reported a diversity gap of 46.7 percent. The Miami-Dade County public school system,

which is the fourth largest school district in the nation, reported a diversity gap of 14.6 percent. The Houston Independent School District, which is the eighth largest school district in the nation, reported a 21.2 percent diversity gap. The Clark County School District reported a diversity gap of more than two times that of the Houston Independent School District. This information is provided in more detail in the table on your handout ([Exhibit R](#)).

Research has demonstrated that Caucasian teachers tend to struggle to form constructive relationships with students of color. This may lead to the development of stereotypes that impact a teacher's perspective of the academic abilities of students of color. In addition, there is a lack of familiarity with the communities where students of color reside, resulting in curriculum that is often disjointed from students' experiences. This cultural mismatch impacts students' engagement in learning and their success in the schools and their futures. This often leaves Caucasian teachers ill-equipped to work with students of color, especially in our low-income areas, resulting in high teacher attrition in our most needed areas.

Assembly Bill 196 addresses the structural foundation that leads to the formation of the diversity gap, and its subsequent impact on student outcomes. Exposing teachers to the experiences of students and families they serve will strengthen the relationships between students, families, and schools. An endorsement in culturally responsive, educational leadership will enable teachers to view differences in students as a source of knowledge and strength. Again, we are here in support of A.B. 196.

**Assemblywoman Krasner:**

I do think diversity is very important. I am looking at page 4, line 39, "Establishing the requirements for obtaining an endorsement . . . ." It further says to obtain an endorsement that you must complete "18 semester hours of postgraduate coursework, or the equivalent thereof . . . ." What do you foresee the "equivalent thereof" as being?

**Assemblyman McCurdy:**

That would probably be a question for Dr. Clark. She is the expert on the matter.

**Christine Clark:**

I would say that those of us who put the idea together of what this could look like [slide 7, ([Exhibit Q](#))] have actually gone a little further and begun to think through what the courses might be, what they might cover, and how they might be differentiated by level. We would be happy to share that information with the Committee. We were thinking that at least for some of those credits, we would want folks to have an internship experience that would be the same number of contact hours as a particular credit would be. We say three credits are 45 contact hours. We were thinking that for at least one part of each of the components for teachers, school leaders, and other licensed personnel, there would be an extended practicum in a high-needs school. That would be something that would be coached and mentored, so there would be an intense engagement in trying to figure out how actually to walk the talk of cultural responsiveness in that particular role as a teacher, as a leader, or school administrator, or in another licensed school personnel role. This would be in the

real-world of the school community, not just classroom-based learning, but also school-based mentorship engaging with parents, colleagues, and members of communities, so that the experience is not just about what people learn in a classroom, but what they learn when applying what they learned in the classroom to the real world of educational leadership.

**Assemblyman Pickard:**

I was not sure this would be germane to the bill, but since four of the five presenters talked about it, I wanted to touch on it. This is a voluntary program. It requires additional time and financial resources from those that are going to be taking the courses. There seems to be a focus on the lack of diversity. I assume that what we are saying is that we have a whole bunch of Caucasian teachers, and there are no other teachers in the pipeline.

I fully recognize and acknowledge that diversity is important, particularly as it means that a teacher is connecting with a student. Having been an educator, I understand the importance of that connection. I certainly think it makes sense to encourage this kind of program, but how does this bill increase the diversity in the classroom? How does it put the underrepresented teachers into education programs, so that they are the ones in there? How do we fix the problem? That seems to me to be part of the problem.

**Assemblyman McCurdy:**

That is an issue. That is the elephant in the room. There is a lot of conversation going on around our state as to how we allow for a more diverse workforce in the educational setting. For now, we will look at what we have and how we can further expand knowledge and skills in teaching to those groups that need a teacher or an administrator with a culturally competent background. That is what we seek to do with this bill. It is a starting point. It is by no means a be all, end all. We have a lot of work to do. It is important for us to note that this opportunity is voluntary; it is not a mandate. We want to incentivize teachers to have an opportunity to be able to connect with our students. Again, we have a majority of minority students, and we have to seek to identify how we can better serve them.

**Assemblywoman Diaz:**

Knowledge is power. Something we did not mention in our testimony is that just because you have a Caucasian teacher, it does not mean that teacher cannot be effective and cannot connect. I had many wonderful teachers to whom I owe being here today and for having opened my mind and the doors for me and saying that I had the ability to achieve and to set my course, to put my mind to it, and telling me I could do it. This bill is not at all about saying that black or brown is better than white. This is saying that we have a certain population to teach that is increasingly becoming more diverse, and we want to give you the tool set so that when you walk out of those doors every day, after a full day of teaching, you feel you are accomplishing your mission. You are indeed fulfilling the needs of your students.

I can tell you that there are many educators who want to do it, but they were not trained in the colleges where teachers should be given these tool sets. They are coming into the districts wanting to do the best that they can, but they just do not have the pedagogy,

or the approach, or they lack the understanding or the knowledge. It is no different from being trained to teach English language learners. There are many incentives that are created in our school systems by which principals might look for teachers who have this endorsement. If I am in a highly urban school, and I am a principal who is hiring, I might start by saying I really want to look for candidates applying to my school to have this endorsement because I know they will have what my students need to succeed. It is about making sure that we are also meeting the needs of teachers who want to be teachers, so they can feel empowered to continue doing their work. We do not want to lose more than we need to.

**Assemblyman Pickard:**

I did not mean to imply that I thought Caucasian teachers were not competent or not able to do this. My point was that this is a voluntary program that requires teachers go above and beyond. They are already overwhelmed. It causes them to have to spend money and time outside of their classrooms or away from their families. I think you just spoke to the answer, which was, as the leadership sees the value in this, then they will look for those people. This will be an interesting proposition given the fact that we are already deficient of so many teachers in the first place. Now we are narrowing the focus to those that already have the endorsement. That is the answer I was ultimately going for and did not comprehend until you mentioned it. There is no funding necessarily associated with this as I saw the fiscal note was zero. We talk about incentivizing them, but where is the incentive? There it is. It is in the administration seeking those with this endorsement, which then gathers the momentum. I apologize for misdirecting the point, but you have hit on it, and I appreciate that. Thank you.

**Assemblywoman Diaz:**

Different districts have different programs, but I know there are some incentives for teachers to seek more knowledge, to better educate their students, based on the coursework they do, after they accumulate certain credit hours. It does not even have to be through a college or university. In CCSD, we have our own professional growth plans in which we seek to become better educators. With this plan, over time, comes an increase also in terms of compensation. We want educators that are working in highly urban schools also to be more intentional in what they are seeking to become—educated and informed versus just grabbing odds and ends that will not benefit the students long-term.

**Assemblyman McCurdy:**

It actually helps us to retain more teachers as well. We are not even talking about how fast this revolving door is. I will talk about District No. 6 that I represent. We have a lot of students that have a lot of need. The better qualified and culturally competent an administrator or teacher is, coming into that area, the better performance we will get from those students that live in this area. Again, this is not going to fix everything, but it does allow us to incentivize teachers to get this endorsement on their license and to better serve multiple communities. We could have teachers that come from the south that go to the rural areas. They need to know what to expect when they get there. It matters, and that is what we seek to do with this piece of legislation.

**Christine Clark:**

The work this bill is seeking to have teachers, administrators, and other licensed personnel do, will also improve our ability to recruit a more diverse teacher workforce. I have the good fortune of being the recipient of a grant from the Nevada Department of Education right now. The Abriendo Caminos/Opening Pathways project is opening pathways for students of color into the teaching profession. We were funded for this particular grant during the most recent funding cycle. We are working in six high schools in southern Nevada right now. What we are learning from our students of color is that part of the problem for them, in terms of their interest in teaching, is the way that we teach them in teacher education programs in the state is not engaging to them. The kinds of questions they are asking are questions about cultural responsiveness. They want to pursue careers in teaching that will allow them to engage students in the way they know they need to be engaged and the way that they know they want to be engaged.

Many of the young people we are working with are asking those questions right now. If I become a teacher, how much control will I have over how I am able to teach in the classroom? Will I be able to do things that are innovative, based on real experiences, on the cultural norms and expectations of other students like me from my community? Providing that this is an incentive, will it also change who wants to become a teacher? It will begin to make teaching look like a career that speaks to a diverse population of practitioners. It will not just be a career that appeals to one particular pool of practitioners. It does address the issue of retention. It also addresses preparing the teachers that are already there, and it will also help us to recruit new and more diverse teachers. It will not only address the diversity gap, it will address teacher shortages.

**Assemblyman Pickard:**

To confirm, this endorsement could lead to increased income for the teachers.

**Assemblyman McCurdy:**

Most certainly.

**Assemblywoman Tolles:**

I love this, having taught for ten years at the community college and the university and seeing a more diverse student population, which speaks to our K-12. They have graduated, and they are coming into our community colleges and into our universities, many of them as the first in their family. It is wonderful and rich. Part of my discipline is that we teach our cultural communications. I have also seen the connection when students feel included; they feel engaged. What excites me about this concept is that not only will it benefit teachers connecting with their students, but as those students do come through and carry on, many of them will graduate and then become the teacher's coworkers. They are not just going to be connecting with the teachers as students; they will be connecting with them as peers someday. They will feel like education is not only something they can learn, and receive from, but actually participate in, be a part of, and lead in someday.



If I understand correctly, an endorsement is voluntary. It is a personal investment on the part of teachers to participate, but on the other end, it can increase their likelihood of getting hired, promoted, or a raise in pay. Is that part of the motivation?

**Assemblyman McCurdy:**

Yes. It is definitely optional, not a mandate. They do have to do it independently. It makes them a better candidate. A principal of a school in an urban area is going to look for individuals who can best connect with the student population in that school.

**Assemblywoman Diaz:**

Being an educator and holding several endorsements—for example, bilingual education, gifted and talented education, and special education—endorsements are additions to your license. You get one educational license that you obtain from the Department of Education, but then you add these specialty areas that you went to school for. That makes you qualified to teach those different components. Multicultural education would be another manifestation of an endorsement. Principals do sometimes say that multicultural endorsement is preferred, or English language learner endorsement is preferred when they are filling positions for their school. It is an additional little notation on your license to teach that basically says you are competent in that area. It depends on the endorsement you seek.

**Assemblywoman Tolles:**

It sounds like UNLV is already having these conversations about how to prepare. I am assuming we would go to our university system in order to supply the classes to meet this endorsement requirement. Are the universities prepared? I would guess by your presence that the answer is yes, but I just want to confirm that. Would it be ready by the deadline of January 1, 2018, to begin that program?

A few sessions ago there was some conversation about endorsements and teachers pursuing multiple endorsements on top of endorsements just to get increases in pay that may or may not have directly tied to their work. This, of course, ties to everyone's work. I just recall those conversations and wondered how it fits into the endorsement conversation.

**Assemblywoman Diaz:**

Professor Clark can speak to the involvement of the other universities. However, were you saying that teachers' plates are already so full and seeking an endorsement would be hard on them? I did not quite capture the essence of your question.

**Assemblywoman Tolles:**

Maybe it is a question for offline. I was just trying to determine the appropriateness of how many endorsements are sought and stacked up. Do they correspond with the requirements of a teacher in the classroom? I would just like to be reminded of those conversations from a few sessions ago. I want to make sure we are not creating that system where a teacher gets five endorsements, just for the sake of stacking up endorsements for higher pay, but it does not necessarily tie into what it is they are teaching or required by what they are teaching.

**Assemblywoman Diaz:**

No one forces the teachers to pursue an endorsement. That is very self-driven as to which endorsements you wish to pursue. I have never had an administrator tell me that I needed to get an endorsement in a particular area. Some of my colleagues say that because they have not finished paying their loan debt, that they cannot afford these postsecondary classes at the graduate level. It is case-by-case, and it depends on what the teacher can do and wishes to do. I do not feel that we force someone to take up an endorsement. Again, it is a voluntary thing.

**Christine Clark:**

I wanted to speak to whether or not higher education institutions in the state are prepared to offer coursework to meet the needs of the endorsement. I can say that I know that we have support from Nevada State College (NSC) and from College of Southern Nevada (CSN), and we also hope to build support from our partners in the north. We have had this conversation about how we might differentiate the kinds of courses that we offer by institution type. For certain, UNLV is taking the lead in terms of being able to immediately meet the needs of those who want to pursue this endorsement right now. We have 13 graduate-level courses that have the kinds of content area focus that we are thinking about being appropriate for this endorsement. Again, those would be things that would have to be worked out with the Department of Education.

As I understand the way legislation works in Nevada, we will pass the endorsement, then we will work with the Department of Education to determine how we will actually meet the requirements of the endorsement, and what it could look like. That is the process that has to be vetted through the Commission on Professional Standards Committee (COPS) and through an advisory committee. Many of these questions are questions that would be answered at that time. While we have lots of ideas on how we could accomplish that goal, it is a process we want to work on collaboratively and in partnership with the folks we have worked with on previous bills very recently. It would be similar to the one we just did for teacher relicensure focusing on a 3-credit multicultural educational course for any teacher who is pursuing relicensure after five years. We went through that collaborative process with the Department of Education and the COPS to accomplish the particulars of what that requirement would look like, and we would do the same here. I want to be very clear about that. We have ideas; we have courses; we have a framework we think might be interesting to propose; and we can meet the needs of anybody who wants to get this certificate. We have talked to our colleagues at NSC, CSN, and at Touro University in the south, and even some of the online providers. There is a menu of high-quality courses that would be available and presumably meet the needs of anybody pursuing this particular endorsement. I do not think that is an issue.

**Chairman Thompson:**

I will ask for those in support from Las Vegas to come forward.

**Lindsey Dalley, Private Citizen, Logandale, Nevada:**

I am an elected member of the Moapa Valley Water Board, as well as a member of the Moapa Valley Community Education Advisory Board, which is located within a rural community within CCSD. However, today I am just representing myself and here to support A.B. 196.

While many of the speakers have discussed why this is needed in our urban areas—and I agree—there are many CCSD rural schools. I want to express how this bill could help us in our rural communities, which also have different cultural norms from the urban areas.

What most do not know is CCSD has one of the largest rural school populations in the state. When we get a new teacher or administrator into our rural Moapa Valley community, the experience is something of a cultural shock, and there is a struggle to connect because rural way of life is very different from living in the urban areas of the state.

To be inclusive, I believe this new endorsement, and any professional training that comes from it, needs to include curriculum to assist teachers and administrators serving in these areas to be adequately trained to adjust to life in a rural community. This will help rural communities retain educators, as they will better understand the culture of the area and better connect with the students and parents.

Mr. Chairman, I wanted to make sure that our rural communities are taken into consideration when establishing the requirements for this endorsement and to have it on the record. Thank you.

**Rosemary Q. Flores, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:**

From 2008 to 2015, I ran the Family Leadership Initiative here in Las Vegas. I oversaw a family network program within the Family Leadership Initiative that was comprised of more than 100 parents. I am currently at the College of Education at UNLV, working on the Abriendo Caminos/Opening Pathways project, as they are family engagement specialists. I strongly support A.B. 196. I believe this bill will improve outreach and collaboration to a diverse community of families by increasing a comfort level of interaction among a diverse group of parents, students, and administrators. It will increase family engagement by building respectful relationships, thus elevating the achievement of all students, preparing them to succeed and to give back to a global society.

Earlier, we did have the support of three of our parents from the Family Network, who are now volunteering with us on the Abriendo Caminos/Opening Pathways project. Unfortunately, they had to return to their families as it was getting late. They did sign in support of A.B. 196. They are just a very small example of how they learned to break down barriers and to work alongside their children's teachers. Even though there

was a language barrier, they broke those barriers. They took a much more purposeful role in their home, and they also transferred that into their school and into the community. With their presence here today, they now demonstrate a much more purposeful role in their interest in policy to make the education experience better for many more students in the state.

During my years working in family engagement, many teachers who worked alongside of us with their parents truly appreciated learning how to connect and build relationships with families even though there was a language barrier. It was because they understood that they could, through good communication and because of the talents of parents who could contribute back to the classroom, increase the relationship, not only between them and their child's teacher, but also with other children in the classroom. It benefited all.

**Chairman Thompson:**

Is there anyone else in Las Vegas in support of A.B. 196?

**Christine Clark:**

There were several other people here who had to leave because of the time who want to go on record. They have written comments they could make available to the Committee.

**Chairman Thompson:**

Is there anyone in support of A.B. 196 in Carson City?

**Ruben R. Murillo, Jr., President, Nevada State Education Association:**

I would like to give thanks to Assemblyman McCurdy and Assemblywoman Diaz for bringing this bill forward. I represent more than 40,000 teachers and support staff in every county in Nevada. We are very proud to help support this bill because as I look back on my upbringing,—I grew up in central Kansas—we were a small pocket of Mexican-Americans. That is what we called ourselves back then and we lived south of Second Street, the tracks, and we lived in a really diverse community where the Caucasians—or as my grandfather said, the Anglos—and the Mexicans lived well together. We worshiped together and went to school together. I had really wonderful teachers who were not Mexican-American or Latino or Hispanic, but were absolutely wonderful in terms of embracing our community, our mores and our cultures and wanting to understand more and more about that. They encouraged us to be better students.

However, I remember there were certain teachers who had a sense of coldness around them. It was like there was no warmth or an embracing of wanting to understand. One time, there was a teacher who we brought tamales for Christmas. She said, "Oh, that was nice." Later on, we saw them in the trashcan. Those are the kinds of things that we notice that other people may not notice; those things we see on a day-to-day basis.

We absolutely do have a teacher shortage. We know that we are not going to get a lot of diverse teachers into the community in the next two or three years. It is not possible. So what do we do? We look for a way to help those teachers who are teaching in our schools who, whether by choice or not, teach in schools where there are large minority populations

and who should have a better understanding of the cultures they are teaching. It is about wanting to be better at your craft and having an avenue in which to take it. This bill does that.

I have been president of the Nevada State Education Association (NSEA) for three years and prior to that, I was president of the Clark County Education Association. I had the wonderful opportunity to become a trainer under the National Education Association (NEA) on minority leadership training, social injustice, cultural competency, English language learner (ELL), and many more of the programs that the NEA provided. I was grateful to bring some of those trainings to Clark County about ten years ago, and I am very happy about what the Clark County Education Association and the district have done up until now.

I do remember one time when I was having a meeting with teachers and my members. We were sitting at a school that was roughly 50 percent ethnic minority and the rest Caucasian. We were talking about the problems they were having in the classroom such as overcrowding, and they all said to me, "It would really be better if we could just get rid of these illegal children." I am sitting there thinking, did you not see who you are talking to or understand the words you are saying? There are people out there who definitely need this training and to have an understanding of what our children are going through and how to make them better in education and getting them to graduate.

We fully support A.B. 196 and know that it is 18 credits toward an endorsement and it is a choice, but understand that there are other ways to bring cultural competency to our teachers and support staff.

To the gentleman who said he was in the rural communities, I will tell you what—part of my job is to travel to every county and every local affiliate to meet my members. I was really surprised when I was in Ely, and heard people speaking Spanish in the grocery store. I thought, "What? We are here?" It dawned on me that when you are traveling, and you hear Spanish-speaking radio stations across the state; we are everywhere. It does not mean you have to change the way you teach; you just have to change the way you understand how culture impacts our education system. We are fully in favor of A.B. 196. [A supporting letter was also submitted, ([Exhibit S](#)).]

**Lindsay Anderson, Director, Government Affairs, Washoe County School District:**

I am here in support of A.B. 196. Our district will look for ways to incentivize teachers to take advantage of an endorsement like we do for English Language Acquisition and Development and Teaching English as a Second Language (ELAD/TESL) and all of the other endorsements we find so valuable in our district.

**Craig M. Stevens, Director of Intergovernmental Relations, Government Affairs, Community and Government Relations, Clark County School District:**

We fully support A.B. 196 and thank the bill's sponsors for bringing this forward. We think it is critical and important. We also believe this is building upon the work being done in the district by the Equity and Diversity Department within CCSD. In fact, the Department has

increased the number of employees trained in cultural competency diversity over the past two years. I have numbers here if you should want them. They have developed a mandatory, online "embracing diversity" video to increase accessibility which every single employee receives. We continue to provide professional learning opportunities districtwide on cultural competency and diversity.

We participated in Assembly Bill 234 of the 78th Session, the multi-cultural license workgroup to provide recommendations to the Commission on Professional Standards. We collaborated with the CCSD School Improvement Department to design the structure of the school performance plan, which is to increase the percentage of staff trained in cultural competency diversity, and to support the root cause analysis.

We plan on 140 CCSD police officers to be trained in cultural competency, and each school has selected an individual to serve as the equity and diversity school site liaison. These individuals receive blended professional development learning about equity and diversity on a monthly basis.

These are just some of the things that the school district is trying to do in this area, and we believe this endorsement will help support all of this work.

**Mary Pierczynski, representing Nevada Association of School Superintendents;  
and Nevada Association of School Administrators:**

I cannot add anything to what has already been said about the importance of this endorsement. I was happy to hear that the classes are available, and the assurance that we can get the classes. That was one of our administrators' concerns. We are in support of the bill. Thank you.

**Steve Jimenez, Extern, Nevada Hispanic Legislative Caucus:**

Thank you to Assemblyman McCurdy for bringing this bill forward and to all of the supporters for not only recognizing, but also addressing, the need for culturally responsive leaders for our education system. The Nevada Hispanic Legislative Caucus supports A.B. 196.

**Chairman Thompson:**

Is there anyone else in support of A.B. 196 in Carson City? [There was no one.] Is there anyone in opposition to A.B. 196 in Las Vegas? [There was no one.] Is there anyone in opposition in Carson City? [There was no one.] Is there anyone neutral in Las Vegas?

**Dena Durish, Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness and Family Engagement, Office of Superintendent of Public Education, Department of Education:**

Part of my role as the Deputy Superintendent is to oversee the work of the Commission on Professional Standards as well as the Office of Educator Licensure. We are here not in opposition or in support.

First of all, as the agency that would carry out the implementation of this bill, we look forward to continuing to work with the sponsor. I would like to say a few things for the record.

Several members of the Committee have mentioned the voluntary nature of this, and we, at the Department, as well as in talking with the Chair of the Commission on Professional Standards, believe that there already exists a vehicle through which to offer this program. The Commission on Professional Standards, for example, worked with the English Mastery Council (EMC) as well as several members of the community in implementation of what is called an ELAD specialists endorsement that is very similar to this endorsement.

To be clear, it does not necessarily allow anyone to teach anything different. Currently, it has not been mandated or required in order to teach anything, nor does it equal additional pay or additional job opportunities. I absolutely agree with the testimony that it certainly makes candidates more marketable.

However, I really want to clarify that it does not lead, in and of itself, to any additional salary endorsement. As you all know, salaries are collectively bargained, so whether or not a district, school, or a charter would want to offer an additional endorsement or require this for anything, it would be strictly up to them.

The Commission on Professional Standards already has the authority, through *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS) 391.031, to establish all different types of licensure. In fact, many of you, I am sure, are familiar with JAG Nevada—Jobs for Nevada's Graduates program. They successfully worked with the Commission on Professional Standards over the past two years to create a new endorsement for anyone who is working in that program. So there are many vehicles.

It is my understanding in talking with the Chairman, and as the staff who supports that, this proposal was not brought to the Commission on Professional Standards prior to having legislative action. We certainly would be open to considering that. Having said that, we would like to talk with the sponsor of the bill about a couple of concerns that were already raised regarding College of Southern Nevada (CSN) as a partner.

The way the bill is currently written, it references postgraduate coursework. If, in fact, it goes through the way that it is, that would not include CSN because they do not offer postgraduate-level coursework.

I appreciate the comment regarding the "equivalent thereof," but it also presents a really large difficulty for my licensure staff. If it is not on a transcript, it is extremely difficult for my—only five—licensure analysts across the state who are issuing all licensure renewals, all initial endorsements, and all initial licenses, to be able to determine what is considered the "equivalent." If it does not come from a college or a university, it is extremely difficult.

Additionally, I have some questions about the number of semester hours; 18 is high for an endorsement. In fact, for some background, Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) endorsements only require 12 credits, ELAD, formerly TESL, also only requires 12 credits, literacy endorsements only require 16 credits, and a computer applications endorsement only requires 12 credits. To get an entire library endorsement to become a school certified librarian is 21 credits. We do think that 18 credits is quite high. In fact, it is half of a master's degree. We would like some flexibility to allow the Commission on Professional Standards to do that.

Finally, the Nevada Educator Performance Framework (NEPF) that was referenced earlier, already has several vehicles within the Professional Responsibilities Standards and Instructional Practice Standards by which principals and administrators evaluate teachers on cultural competency.

**Chairman Thompson:**

I would really hope that you would work with the bill's sponsor. It sounds like quite a few amendments, more so than suggestions. Please reach out. Is there anyone else neutral in Las Vegas for A.B. 196? [There was no one.] Is there anyone neutral in Carson City? [There was no one.] There was a follow-up question from Assemblywoman Miller.

**Assemblywoman Miller:**

I have taught in the school district for six years, and my experience is a little different from Assemblywoman Diaz's. I have worked in some of the most beautifully diverse classrooms in the country, and that is one of the best things about the CCSD and the state of Nevada—just how diverse we are.

However, there have been times when I was the teacher of color. Even though my classrooms were completely diverse, I was that teacher of color. I am now excited that I actually work with a few more teachers of color. To get down to the root of why this is all so necessary, we know we can bond with teachers of different races and different religions.

We know that, but there is a learning gap for our students that is happening right now. I have worked with many teachers who have said things like, "You know, I wish I could talk to them and teach them about slavery, but they won't take it from me; they won't hear or accept it from me; I wish I could talk to them about the civil rights, but they are not going to take it from me." I tell them that I teach about internment camps and about the Holocaust. It does not matter. Why would you think the students are not going to learn from you? It is a barrier that the teachers themselves have because they are uncomfortable with the topic or issue of the situation.

This is the type of thing, and it is not that the teachers do not want to do the best they can by their students, that goes back to getting the tools. I know there are many teachers that are just interested and fascinated in learning all of the different cultures and the differences in each culture. This is something that will really help.



My question goes back to the sentiments about who is going to offer the program, where is it coming from, will it be ready, and which college. We also have to recognize that, in the nine years I have been here in Nevada, there have been programs from UNLV and other colleges that have come and gone.

I also know there are other entities that dictate when you can accept a program for this college or that college. If Maryland and Alaska are offering these programs and they are online, can we ensure that teachers can take those programs and apply them to their endorsement? Especially in education, we have a lot of programs in the colleges that come and go.

**Assemblywoman Diaz:**

You are right on. I believe that oversight is necessary on the quality and the description of the courses to be offered and the number of credits to obtain the endorsement. We need to continue the conversation with Ms. Durish and others.

It would ultimately come from the Department of Education. They are the authority on licensure. They are the ones that help us put together the description, and tell us what we need to teach for each course in order to get the credit. Then, they will tell us that once they get our transcripts, they will validate that we did, in fact, satisfy the requirements. I am looking forward to having more robust conversations with Ms. Durish and the chairwoman of COPS.

**Assemblyman McCurdy:**

I am going to go along with Assemblywoman Diaz and talk to Dena Durish. We are going to identify how we can continue to move this forward and make it palatable for everyone. Thank you for hearing A.B. 196, and I hope to have your continued support.

**Chairman Thompson:**

We will close out the hearing on A.B. 196 and go to public comment. Is there anyone in Las Vegas for public comment? [There was no one.] Is there anyone in Carson City for public comment? [There was no one.] We will close our meeting today. The meeting is adjourned [at 7:11 p.m.].

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

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Sharon McCallen  
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

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Assemblyman Tyrone Thompson, Chairman

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

## EXHIBITS

[Exhibit A](#) is the Agenda.

[Exhibit B](#) is the Attendance Roster.

[Exhibit C](#) is a proposed amendment to [Assembly Bill 117](#) from Craig M. Stevens, Director of Intergovernmental Relations, Government Affairs, Community and Government Relations, Clark County School District, presented by Assemblyman Edgar Flores, Assembly District No. 28.

[Exhibit D](#) is written testimony regarding [Assembly Bill 117](#) from the Kenny Guinn Center for Policy Priorities, dated March 6, 2017, presented by Megan K. Rauch, Director of Education Policy and Director of Policy Outreach, Kenny Guinn Center for Policy Priorities.

[Exhibit E](#) is a letter dated March 6, 2017, in support of [Assembly Bill 117](#) from Nevada State Education Association, submitted by Ruben R. Murillo, Jr., President, Nevada State Education Association.

[Exhibit F](#) is a copy of a video titled "Mentor: The National Mentoring Partnership," presented by Assemblyman Tyrone Thompson, Assembly District No. 17.

[Exhibit G](#) is a proposed amendment to [Assembly Bill 144](#) from Clark County, presented by Assemblyman Tyrone Thompson, Assembly District No. 17.

[Exhibit H](#) is a letter dated March 6, 2017, in support of [Assembly Bill 144](#) to Assemblyman Tyrone Thompson, authored and submitted by Beverly Mason, Director, School-Community Partnership Program, Clark County School District.

[Exhibit I](#) are letters in support of [Assembly Bill 144](#) from members of The Links Incorporated, submitted by Dr. Tiffany G. Tyler, Chief Executive Officer, Communities In Schools of Nevada, Las Vegas, Nevada.

[Exhibit J](#) is a letter dated March 5, 2017, in support of [Assembly Bill 144](#) from the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, authored by LaChasity Carroll and submitted by Dr. Tiffany G. Tyler, Chief Executive Officer, Communities In Schools of Nevada, Las Vegas, Nevada.

[Exhibit K](#) is a letter dated March 6, 2017, regarding [Assembly Bill 144](#) to Assemblyman Tyrone Thompson, authored by Molly Latham, Chief Executive Officer, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southern Nevada.

[Exhibit L](#) is a letter dated March 3, 2017, in support of [Assembly Bill 144](#) to Assemblyman Tyrone Thompson, authored by Monica Ford, President and CEO of Nevada Partners and submitted by Lisa Morris Hibbler, Director, Department of Youth Development and Social Innovation, City of Las Vegas.

[Exhibit M](#) is a letter dated March 5, 2017, in support of [Assembly Bill 144](#) to Assemblyman Tyrone Thompson and members of the Assembly Committee on Education, authored by Brian L. Pauling, President and CEO, 100 Black Men of America, Inc., presented by Shawn Smith, President, 100 Black Men of Las Vegas, Inc., Las Vegas, Nevada.

[Exhibit N](#) is a letter dated March 6, 2017, in support of [Assembly Bill 144](#), authored by the Nevada State Education Association, submitted by Natha Anderson, President, Washoe Education Association.

[Exhibit O](#) is a letter dated March 3, 2017, in support of [Assembly Bill 144](#) to Assemblyman Tyrone Thompson, authored and submitted by Judy Stokey, Vice President, Government and Community Strategy, NVEnergy.

[Exhibit P](#) is a letter dated March 5, 2017, in support of [Assembly Bill 144](#), authored and submitted by Robert L. Green, Ph.D., Chairman, My Brother's Keeper Initiative, Clark County, Nevada.

[Exhibit Q](#) is a copy of a PowerPoint presentation titled "[Assembly Bill 196](#): Culturally Responsive Educational Leadership Endorsement," dated March 6, 2017, presented by Christine Clark, Ed.D., Professor and Senior Scholar in Multicultural Education, Founding Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

[Exhibit R](#) is a document titled "Presentation in Support of [Assembly Bill 196](#)," presented by Brenda Pearson, Director, Professional Learning Program, Clark County Education Association.

[Exhibit S](#) is a letter dated March 6, 2017, in support of [Assembly Bill 196](#), submitted by Ruben R. Murillo, Jr., President, Nevada State Education Association.