

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS**

**Seventy-Ninth Session
March 14, 2017**

The Committee on Government Affairs was called to order by Chairman Edgar Flores at 8:32 a.m. on Tuesday, March 14, 2017, in Room 4100 of the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada. Copies of the minutes, including the Agenda ([Exhibit A](#)), the Attendance Roster ([Exhibit B](#)), and other substantive exhibits, are available and on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau and on the Nevada Legislature's website at www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/79th2017.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Assemblyman Edgar Flores, Chairman
Assemblywoman Dina Neal, Vice Chairwoman
Assemblyman Chris Brooks
Assemblyman Richard Carrillo
Assemblyman Skip Daly
Assemblyman John Ellison
Assemblywoman Amber Joiner
Assemblyman Al Kramer
Assemblyman Jim Marchant
Assemblyman Richard McArthur
Assemblywoman Daniele Monroe-Moreno
Assemblywoman Melissa Woodbury

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Assemblywoman Shannon Bilbray-Axelrod (excused)
Assemblyman William McCurdy II (excused)

GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:

None

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jered McDonald, Committee Policy Analyst
Isabel Youngs, Committee Secretary
Cheryl Williams, Committee Assistant



OTHERS PRESENT:

Romaine Gilliland, Private Citizen, Carson City, Nevada
Debbie Sheltra, Private Citizen, Carson City, Nevada
Charles Moore, Fire Chief, Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District
Jamie Rodriguez, Management Analyst, Government Affairs, Office of the County Manager, Washoe County
Dean Dow, President, Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority Care Flight
Nick Marano, City Manager, Carson City
Corey Solferino, Sergeant, Legislative Liaison, Washoe County Sheriff's Office
Eric Spratley, Lieutenant, Intergovernmental Services, Washoe County Sheriff's Office
Mike Brown, representing North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District
David L. Metts, Private Citizen, Carson City, Nevada
Sam Herceg, Private Citizen, Carson City, Nevada
Carol Christensen, Private Citizen, Washoe Valley, Nevada
William Naylor, Private Citizen, Washoe Valley, Nevada
Mary C. Walker, representing Clark County, Douglas County, Lyon County, and Storey County
Dagny Stapleton, Deputy Director, Nevada Association of Counties
Cheryl Blomstrom, Interim President, Nevada Taxpayers Association

Chairman Flores:

[Roll was called. Rules and protocol were explained.] The first bill we will hear today is Assembly Bill 140.

Assembly Bill 140: Revises the boundary line between Carson City and Washoe County. (BDR S-696)

Assemblyman Al Kramer, Assembly District No. 40:

This bill came as a request from the residents of the Duck Hill area ([Exhibit C](#)). The bulk of the property affected by this bill actually overlooks Carson City. The residents there already participate in Carson City's civic and social activities. The bill concerns 11 residences on 22 parcels in southern Washoe County on the Carson City border, all of which are accessed by Duck Hill Road. The residents requested this bill because they are unhappy with the services provided by Washoe County and believe they can be better served by Carson City. The inadequate response of emergency medical services (EMS) has been a problem for some time. I would like to note that it is not because of anything that Washoe County is doing wrong, but it is because of the distance between residents and those services.

For example, the distance between the Carson Tahoe Regional Medical Center from the Duck Hill area is 3.5 miles, while it is 25.5 miles to the Renown Regional Medical Center in Reno. Similarly, the distance between Carson City public schools from the Duck Hill area is an average of 5.6 miles, while the average distance to Washoe public schools is about 16.6 miles. Because of the stop-and-go nature of the ride in a school bus, this ride to school

takes almost two hours. A bus ride to the high school is even longer. Assembly Bill 140 seeks to solve these issues by moving the county line to put the residents of Duck Hill in Carson City, which is where they socialize, shop, and support Carson City community services.

I know that water is a big issue in this state. This bill does not change any requirements a person, including a person in Carson City, would have to take in order to take water out of the aquifer in Washoe Valley. Carson City already has water rights in the valley and pumps from a well. The process to take more water out would be the same if this property were in Carson City.

If you look at the bill, there are a lot of metes and bounds measurements. On page 2, line 41, you can see where the old county line is stricken. On page 3, starting on line 2, you can see where it puts in the new language. If you have a sextant and something to measure, you can verify this. I will trust that the Division of State Lands, State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources gave us the right numbers. This just changes the line. If you look at the map on the wall, you can see the old line in yellow and the new line in red ([Exhibit D](#)).

If you were driving, got off the highway for Eastlake Boulevard, and went to the bottom of the hill, there is a pasture of black and white cows there. If you were to turn on to Eastlake Boulevard, your first right-hand turn would be Duck Hill Road. Eventually you would reach all the 11 houses referenced in this bill. Initially the land is on the right side, but when you reach the crest of the hill it encompasses land on both sides of the road until the road ends. There will be an amendment to this bill that would allow any abatements that Washoe County has for tax purposes to be transferred to Carson City.

Romaine Gilliland, Private Citizen, Carson City, Nevada:

I am a resident of Duck Hill, and I am also the president of the Duck Hill property owners association. It is a small group representing ten parcels on Duck Hill. We had a unanimous agreement among property owners to request the change to be annexed into Carson City for what we believe to be: currently inadequate emergency services, closer proximity to Carson City community services and shopping, and our daily participation in Carson City civic and social activities.

I think the most important item here is the inadequacy of emergency services. I have been a resident on the hill for three years, but most of the residents have been there for decades. Over the last several years, there have been multiple occurrences of inadequate responses to 911 emergencies, and there have been three recent requests for emergency medical transportation with no response from the Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority (REMSA). In one case, a volunteer paramedic from Washoe Valley responded. When there was no response from REMSA, they asked the stroke victim if they or a member of their family could transport them to the local hospital. They did do that, but is it appropriate to have a stroke victim transported in a private vehicle when there has been a request for emergency transportation?

In addition to that, we have been subject to burglary on Duck Hill. There was a lengthy response from the Washoe County Sheriff's office. They did come to the residence; however, the case was solved by the Carson City Sheriff's office. It was a series of burglaries that had occurred in Carson City, and through their efforts they were able to find the perpetrators and take appropriate action. You have already heard the distances we have to face from a community-service perspective in terms of Carson City versus Washoe. We live on the side of the hill that approximates Carson City. We can view Carson City from our front door. We have the full support of this move by the residents. The only other parcel owner is NV Energy. They have chosen not to take a position on this. As you have guessed, there is no residency there, and I can understand why they want to be neutral.

The people who live on the hill recognize the need for emergency services. We have not received adequate services. This is not a tax-saving move. The mill rate in Washoe County is 3.24, and the rate in Carson City is 3.52. There will be increases in taxation for members on the hill. We recognize and accept that. We presented our case to the Board of Supervisors of Carson City. It was favorably received. They did not seek this change; we sought them out. They are willing to provide time-sensitive services to the people on Duck Hill, and we believe they will do a better job.

Debbie Sheltra, Private Citizen, Carson City, Nevada:

My husband has owned property on Duck Hill since the early 1970s. I have only been involved in the property since 2012. When we had children coming out of that house, it was almost a two-hour drive to school. Even though we have a high school that is closer, Washoe County does not have the wherewithal. The bus that picks up our children has to go on both sides of the lake. That almost meets the state maximum requirement for a school district to find an alternate source. I was a teacher in Carson City, so I know this to be a fact.

We used to be covered by the Division of Forestry, State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. We taxed ourselves so that we could have paramedics at the Division of Forestry station. We are also having a problem with our garbage. One person in the audience today has had to wait about 16 weeks for garbage to be picked up because Washoe County decided to change to Waste Management, Inc., and they will not come up that road from Reno. They do come up that road from Carson City. If we are moved to Carson City, the garbage trucks are glad to have us back. One Thursday I called the Department of Health and Human Services because our trash had not been picked up on Monday. It was out there, ripe, waiting for bears or mountain lions. I asked the Health Department what the law was, and I had to get them to call Waste Management and the county commissioners. Then my trash was picked up. Waste Management called my neighbors and asked if we could move our trash a quarter of a mile down the hill. That is not acceptable service. That has been going on since January 1, 2017. It is still not resolved.

I have been a crusader for fire coverage and paramedic coverage in Washoe Valley since I first moved there in 1979. On October 22, 2016, I had the unfortunate need to call for emergency services. The run cards had not been straightened out. We were promised in 2012 that they would be straightened out. Bowers Mansion has a fire station and

Eastlake Boulevard, near the northern end, has a fire station. We had been put into the run card for the station at Eastlake Boulevard for many years. They can only go 35 miles around a windy road at the south end of the lake. We had been told that the run cards would be altered, and they would be able to come from Bowers Mansion, which is a straight 5.5 miles. They are about 3 or 4 miles closer, and they can go 80 miles per hour on the freeway. We thought that had been taken care of, but I thought I would check.

When my husband had an episode on the evening of October 22, 2016, I called the Bowers fire station personally. We have always been able to do that. Now we are told we cannot do that. We are even told that they will change the phone number so that we cannot do that. I called because I knew there would be a screw-up and that my husband's life might be in danger.

I said it was not his diabetes. He is old, he has congestive heart failure, he could not stand up, his arm was becoming numb, and he could not talk well. I was told by the answering party that I would be transferred to the Eastlake station. I said, "Please do not do that. It takes them longer. Please get on the road and respond and decide whose jurisdiction it is later." Ninety-six percent of the calls out of these fire stations are paramedic. We have paramedics at both stations. I wanted help right away, and I knew if it was a heart attack he had a chance of dying. Two of my other neighbors have died because of the long response time. Don Weir's and Jane Countryman's mothers both died because the response time was over 40 minutes.

I was trying to prevent that delay. I knew it was possible. A lot of arguing was done, I guess. I called at two minutes to the hour. I think they left the station approximately 13 minutes after the hour. There was a 15-minute delay deciding who is going to take the jurisdiction for the call. When they finally got there, I said, "Not bad, guys. It only took you 27 minutes to get here." They said, "If you had called 911 first, it would have been faster." I am telling you today, no matter what you hear from the chief, it would not have been faster because they would have left Eastlake Boulevard. There would have been a time delay for the speed and mileage. They worked on my husband for 20 to 30 minutes, and then came to me and said, "He needs to go to the hospital, something is going on here. Can you drive him?" And I said, "Where is REMSA? How far out are they?" And his answer to me was, "I do not know." I said, "Yes, if you will load my husband in the car, I will drive him over the hill to the hospital." I got his coat and his pills, and they loaded him. When we got to Carson Tahoe Regional Medical Center, I pulled up to emergency, and he opened up the door and fell out onto the ground. They picked him up.

I have since talked to Kevin Romero, the vice president of operations for REMSA. There was never a request for REMSA by Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District for Merl Stewart, my husband. They said there would be a run card, but there was never a request or cancellation. When I talked to the firemen about REMSA, I was told that Merl did not want to ride in REMSA, so they turned them back. I did not believe that statement, so I went back to REMSA. They said they would stand on the statement that they were never requested or turned back.

While I had this conversation with Kevin Romero, he said that REMSA would not oppose our going into Carson City because Carson City Fire Department could always respond faster than they could. Washoe County has signed an agreement with Carson City; REMSA has 20 minutes and 59 seconds to respond before they call in another service. Kevin Romero stands by that and said it is under the contract with Washoe County. He said anyone is welcome to call him to substantiate that.

I went to Washoe County Manager, John Slaughter, and Washoe County Commissioner, Bob Lucey. They said they wanted to do multiple interlocal agreements to give us service for schools, ambulance, fire, garbage, et cetera. Interlocal agreements are only as good as the current board of county commissioners and Carson City's Board of Supervisors. We are a sliver of people. We will not hurt anything.

You will hear a few people that think we will destroy the South Valleys Regional Park Master Plan. I worked very hard for the adoption of that. I have talked to the planning and county manager for Carson City. There is no plan to develop that land. It is filled with springs. There is no way to develop that for high-density or multiple housing. It is rural.

I cannot tell you how scary a situation it was transporting my husband, who I knew had either had a heart attack or a stroke, and finding out later that REMSA had never been called. I was told by the firemen at Bowers that they filled out their reports. It was my word against theirs, and there were two of them. I am quoting this to you because I will be contradicted in a few minutes. I will stand on my word. I have always stood on my word. I have always fought for those fire stations and paramedics to be in that location. If they are going to argue about whose jurisdiction it is before they even roll to save someone's life, we have trouble in River City, and we just want Carson City to be our responder. Carson Fire is on East College Parkway; they come right up the freeway. My house is right off the freeway. It is the old white ranch house with the solar panels on top. You see it when you drive to Reno if you look to your right. They come down the freeway and answer everything anyway.

There was an interlocal agreement that Carson City was supposed to be called for everything south of the Bellevue Road bridge. However, that is predicated upon REMSA calling them, and REMSA does not call them. It does not get transferred. If I had called 911, I would have gotten the wrong station and there would have been more of a delay. Maybe there would not have been a delay because they would not have argued with me and argued with dispatch to see who was going to answer the call. But if he had had a heart attack instead of a stroke, he would have been dead by the time they finally got there. There would not have been any saving him. It is a life safety issue. Please, let us annex into Carson City.

Washoe County commissioners are not going to oppose this, but they are not supporting us. They gave me their word. Carson City fire and Carson City management are not opposing us. We need your help.

Chairman Flores:

Thank you, Assemblyman Kramer, for bringing forth this bill on behalf of your constituents. Thank you for sharing that testimony, Ms. Sheltra; I know it was not easy. We appreciate your being vulnerable and letting us into your life. We hope we can help in some way, no matter what happens with this bill. A solution for you will come by the end of the session.

Assemblyman Ellison:

I had a question about fire protection. Sometimes boundaries do not match. Emergency services may be closer on one side of the boundary than on the other. I drove past to see where you were talking about. I totally agree who is the closest for emergency services, fire protection, ambulance service, et cetera. I do not think this is about a tax base, I think this is about a community. What is the average age of people up there? Are there more seniors, young adults, or children?

Romaine Gilliland:

I do not want to say "senior citizens" because I am not sure what the cutoff is for that. They tend to be families that no longer have school-aged children. There are still some school-aged children on Duck Hill. I believe the last one might have graduated from high school within the last year. That does not necessarily mean that there will not be in the future. That is what the demographics look like today.

Assemblywoman Joiner:

Do we know what the average response times are for each county? If we are proposing to change jurisdiction, I want to know the response time for the new one you are proposing.

Assemblyman Kramer:

Let us wait for the departments to answer that, and if it is not answered by them, I will answer it in the recap.

Assemblywoman Neal:

I understand the boundary line movement. I recognize the map. The red line is the extension. What does that represent in regards to property tax amount? To me, you are annexing. What other services other than fire are being moved? I want to know the property tax impact there.

Assemblyman Kramer:

Last year's property taxes for these parcels was slightly under \$50,000 combined. There are three issues of services. One is ambulance service, which is tied to fire service. I think, though, that the cooperation between Carson City and Washoe County is such that if there were a fire, both counties would roll on it and try to beat it down as fast as possible. It is essentially the ambulance service we are talking about. Second is the trash service. Up until January 1, 2017, it was serviced by Waste Management from the Carson City contract. On January 1, 2017 it started being serviced from the Washoe County contract. Third is schools for kids. Those are the three services mainly being addressed.

Assemblywoman Neal:

How many children live in the area? You said it was 11 houses?

Assemblyman Kramer:

It was 11 residences, no children. The residents frequent the Carson City parks and recreation services, not the Washoe County ones.

Assemblywoman Neal:

I understand the issues. However, when have we ever moved a boundary line? This is precedent-setting. I am not being insensitive, but we are moving a line for 11 houses. You want it to be a statutory action, but when have we ever done that? Was it a similar circumstance? Was it a larger or smaller impact? Why is it that an interlocal cannot help this situation?

Debbie Sheltra:

There was a similar situation across the highway in Lakeview. Several years ago the Legislature straightened the boundary line because part of Lakeview was in Washoe County and that community wanted to all go to the same school. There were two sets of buses going up. It was already done directly west of us. That was done without opposition by Washoe County or Carson City. It was done to accommodate a few homes.

Assemblywoman Monroe-Moreno:

There are only a few homes that this would be impacting. Do you know over the last five to ten years how many calls for emergency services and transports out of that area there have been?

Assemblyman Kramer:

I have asked for that information. I believe it will be forthcoming when the representatives of the counties speak.

Romaine Gilliland:

We also have other people in the audience who have had similar occurrences. You are right, there are only 11 homes, but we have had at least three medical emergencies over the last several years. In those emergencies, we have had family members several miles away, as far as Woodfords, arrive at the home prior to any emergency services and handle the emergency transportation. This is not a one-off event. We have had occurrences. I have only been on the hill for three years. There are people who have been there for 30 years and can speak about the past history better than I can. For the small number of homes that we have, there have been multiple occurrences.

Assemblywoman Monroe-Moreno:

I met with Debbie Sheltra yesterday. She did not call 911; she called the fire department because she thought they would be there faster. The other three occurrences, did they use the established 911 system, or did they go outside that established system?

Romaine Gilliland:

I can speak on behalf of the one burglary. They did call the sheriff's department, and it was about an hour delay for a response.

Chairman Flores:

Assemblyman Kramer, have you had a chance to talk to service providers in Carson City to confirm that the changing of the boundary line would ensure that the services be provided faster? The reason I ask is because I am concerned that even with the shifting of the lines, you could still find yourself in a scenario where they are not responding fast enough. Alternatively, because there are still interlocal agreements, they will still punt the responsibility from one jurisdiction to the other. I want to make sure that you know for sure that this change would address your concerns.

Assemblyman Kramer:

I have asked for the information as to the response times for Lakeview, which is immediately west of Duck Hill, and to any calls that Carson City fire or ambulances have had in southern Washoe Valley. I am hoping those results will be here today. If not, I will get them in writing and get them to you. My understanding is that if there were an interlocal agreement and Carson City took responsibility for that area, the time frame would be no faster or slower under that arrangement than if it was Carson City and they took responsibility for that area. I think what the residents want is that 10-minute response versus a 30-minute response. I agree that the Carson City ambulance would be able to give them that.

Chairman Flores:

My greatest concern is that you would go through this entire process and find yourself here again in two years because their needs have not been met. I agree that we need to take immediate action and help somehow. Can some of the agencies come up?

Assemblywoman Joiner:

If we are talking about different response times and residents believing they can get different services, we should have a realistic picture of what those response times look like in the different jurisdictions and whether their services would be substantially different.

Charles Moore, Fire Chief, Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District:

We have an excellent relationship with Carson City. We have robust autonomic aid and mutual aid systems in place. For emergency response, the boundary does not exist. When an emergency happens and we need help from another agency, it is simply called in. My agency currently provides services to Duck Hill. We have two stations that are fairly close to the area. However, Carson City's station is a bit closer in terms of road miles. The issue is, I believe, that this might be better solved through interlocal agreements. It is my belief that those interlocal agreements currently exist. What we have recently agreed to with REMSA is that the ambulance that is based at Station 30 at Bowers Mansion may respond south of Bellevue when the need arises. We also have Station 16 on Eastlake Boulevard that can respond, as well as two volunteer stations.

Carson City is a very fine organization, but they are a busy organization. My understanding is that they run somewhere around 10,000 calls per year out of three stations. Would the nearest Carson City station always be available for an emergency in Duck Hill? There is a risk that they may be on another call. Station 30 by Bowers Mansion is about 6.3 miles away, and Carson City's is about 4.5 miles away. There is a small increment where Carson City is faster. We are able to send an ambulance from there. Station 30 gets about 12 calls per month. It is very slow and more readily available than Carson City may be. If Carson City were busy at that particular station, I would assume they would call us for mutual aid, rather than a station farther away.

It is important to let the emergency 911 system work. We always advocate to our citizens that when you have a medical emergency or a fire, your first phone call must be to 911. I am very, very sensitive to Ms. Sheltra's medical emergency with her husband. However, I believe if the system is allowed to work, then the closest unit and the fastest care will be delivered. When the dispatcher is asking questions, they are sending the most appropriate emergency response, jurisdiction, and vehicle to the emergency while gathering information. I cannot stress this enough: we want our citizens to call 911. Let the interlocal agreements, dialogue, and dispatching occur as it should between Carson City, Truckee Meadows, the City of Sparks, the City of Reno, the City of North Lake Tahoe, and all of our mutual aid partners. The mutual aid system is working, in my belief. It should be allowed to work through interlocal agreements.

Assemblyman Ellison:

What is the difference between Washoe County and Carson City on calls?

Charles Moore:

My agency runs about the same amount, but the station closest to Duck Hill runs only around 12 calls per month, so around 120 per year.

Assemblywoman Neal:

I want to be direct. Washoe County, how do you feel about the bill? Do you want the boundary line to change?

Jamie Rodriguez, Management Analyst, Government Affairs, Office of the County Manager, Washoe County:

We do not support the boundary line move. We have two levels of concern. There may be a service issue, and we would like to address that for our residents. We are speaking with Waste Management. Our first responders are looking at the processes we have. As Chief Moore stated, if the system is used properly, it appears to be working.

We do also have a concern about the precedent that moving developed land sets. We do not show that we have ever had a situation where a boundary line has been moved with developed land. The most recent boundary line change with Washoe County was with Storey County, and the land was undeveloped.

Assemblywoman Neal:

We heard a story at the dais. I understand the mutual aid agreements, but you are saying if the system is used properly. She did not dial 911; she dialed fire. What is our solution for that? That could be a common mistake. I do not know if I have ever dialed 911 or fire, thank goodness. If she dialed the wrong number, is that truly an improper usage? I guess you are saying it is, but what is the solution for that? At the end of the day, people are coming to the table with a bill to fix what you are saying is an improper use of the system.

Jamie Rodriguez:

Ms. Sheltra's story is heartbreaking. We feel that there are two parts. Perhaps part of that is working with the residents and confirming who they need to reach out to and how. We are also working with fire, REMSA, and the sheriff's office to see what processes we can change on our end. If they are calling the fire station instead of 911, how are we going to change that process to better meet their needs? We are looking at it twofold. What can we do to route them better? And working with the residents to confirm where they have had issues, how they have been addressing them, and how we can help address them better.

Assemblywoman Neal:

The issue is not new. It has been happening, and they feel a certain way about it because of the length of time this has been occurring. Why have we not had this conversation with the residents before this mystical day of A.B. 140? I know when they met with me, they insisted that they have been saying something and they do not have the proper solution. What is the breakdown in communication?

Jamie Rodriguez:

We do have a newer agreement. No phone calls have been made since that new interlocal agreement has been put in place. Some of these are newer issues, within the last three or so years. Some of them are much newer. The Waste Management change occurred in January. We have been communicating and seeing what we can do to address some of these issues.

Assemblywoman Neal:

What is the difference between the new interlocal agreement and the old one?

Dean Dow, President, Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority Care Flight:

Let me start off by saying I think there is a system in place for the situation we are looking at from a public safety and public health perspective. As Chief Moore indicated, that system is ongoing and ever changing. One year ago we looked at the system and the map relative to the franchise in Washoe for REMSA and all the partners that participate in emergency medical and fire services. We have made map changes that impact response times. We have updated mutual aid agreements with all of our partners. I have been here for 14 months, so I cannot speak for what happened 2 to 3 years ago. It is the belief and the willingness on the part of all the entities involved to ensure services throughout the entire regional area are delivered in the most efficient way possible.

Assemblywoman Neal:

Mutual aid agreements have been updated in the past year, is that correct?

Dean Dow:

Yes. They were crafted in the summer of 2016 and put into effect in September or October.

Assemblywoman Neal:

Did the residents have notice of that? What were the changes that occurred in the updated mutual aid agreement? Do those changes benefit those 11 homes or not?

Dean Dow:

I do not know if the residents were directly notified. I would indicate that the changes are beneficial to the residents in that area. Under the current mutual aid agreements, the closest available units are sent, period. Whether that is Truckee Meadows, Carson City, or REMSA, the system knows where the units are. They know the status of those units regardless of the agency. When a 911 call comes in, the dispatchers know where those resources are and the closest resources are sent.

Assemblywoman Neal:

What is the response time under the new mutual aid agreement?

Dean Dow:

Our agency has an average response time to that area of 18 minutes.

Nick Marano, City Manager, Carson City:

Overall, Carson City EMS has about a 4.5 minute response time. We do not have a data point for Duck Hill, but we estimate that it would be an eight-minute response. What Chief Moore testified about our call volume is correct. We do have just over 10,000 calls per year. We run those out of three stations. About 85 percent of those 10,000 calls are medical. The chief's testimony that the nearest station could be unavailable is correct, although we estimate that if you go across the freeway where we have a good data point in Lakeview, that is about a six-minute response time. I think the eight-minute estimate is a good number.

Assemblywoman Monroe-Moreno:

With the new interlocal agreement, if there is a call made to 911, would you get the call since you are eight minutes away?

Nick Marano:

That mutual aid system is largely in place currently. That is a decision for the dispatch centers to make. This is not my area of expertise, but I am sure they make those types of decisions on a daily basis. I will point out that two weeks ago I did present this issue to the Carson City Board of Supervisors at the residents' request. The board heard extensive public comment on it. They considered the bill and voted 5-0 in favor of supporting the bill. However, the mayor added a caveat and wanted me to communicate with the Committee that we have pursued a cooperative strategy in terms of relationships with counties.

We are not looking to pick a fight with Washoe County over this. We do understand the precedent-setting nature of this. We are also committed to helping the residents of Duck Hill. If it is A.B. 140, we are for that. If it is another area, we will be happy to go there as well. I have spoken with the Washoe County manager. We have committed to work together with our first responders—law enforcement, fire, and EMS. Due to the unavailability of some staff members on his team, we were not able to get together before this Committee hearing. However, we are happy to go down the interlocal route. We are all for helping out the residents, whether it is A.B. 140 or another way.

Assemblywoman Monroe-Moreno:

Over the last five to ten years, how many calls for service have you had for the Duck Hill area? How many transports were there, and were there any calls you were unable to respond to so you sent Carson City instead?

Corey Solferino, Sergeant, Legislative Liaison, Washoe County Sheriff's Office:

We pulled data going back five years. We have had three priority 1 calls and six priority 2 calls. Our average response time to priority 1 calls was 19 minutes. Our average response time to priority 2 calls was 30 minutes. To give some context—priority 1 calls are imminent threat emergencies, an active domestic violence, a suicidal subject, a vehicle unknown injury accident, et cetera. Those require immediate Code 3 responses: lights and sirens. Priority 2 calls are down the rung a bit. There is not an immediate threat or imminent danger to that person. It is a slower response. To my knowledge, there were no transports in those instances on the law enforcement side. There were a few arrests made, but that was it.

Eric Spratley, Lieutenant, Intergovernmental Services, Washoe County Sheriff's Office:

I want to address the burglary call that was brought up and the hour response time to that. I am glad that was brought up. If you were to ask Sheriff Furlong of Carson City what one of the greatest examples of multicounty collaboration was in the last several years, he would point to this burglary call. It came in as a priority 2 alarm call. We did not have any imminent threat of danger.

The response time to that call was 17.5 minutes. Two Washoe County deputy sheriffs and a Carson City deputy sheriff responded to that call. It was just an alarm call, but when our deputies got there, there was evidence of forced entry. We then found out there were several burglaries in Washoe County on Franktown Road.

We also found similar modus operandi—the way criminals do their act—in Carson City and Douglas County. The three counties came together, got their investigators together, formed a task force, and ultimately made arrests in Carson City. They solved a number of burglaries in all three jurisdictions. It was an amazing opportunity for the counties to work together and succeed in apprehending a burglary ring.

Mike Brown, representing North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District:

I came forward to give some history. I have worked on EMS and fire in Washoe County for 37 years. Ms. Sheltra mentioned her history in the Washoe Valley, and I have to validate a lot of what she said when it comes to her support for getting a higher level of service in Washoe Valley. I worked for the Division of Forestry as a chief officer when they had jurisdiction in those areas. She assisted greatly, along with other citizens, to get paramedic support off the engine companies back then. The jurisdiction moved from the Division of Forestry to the Sierra Fire Protection District. She was a supporter of maintaining those services throughout the valley. Eventually the jurisdiction went to the city, and now it is with the county—Truckee Meadows Fire Protection District.

We have had a lot of system changes over the years. I was with the Division of Forestry from 1998 to 2004 before I went back to North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District. Those system changes are still occurring today. I believe we need to reevaluate the system here. The chiefs and ambulance services spoke about what they have done with interlocal agreements. The sheriff's department has the same interlocal agreements in place as well. The receipt of the 911 call is where it all starts to ensure the system will work from the beginning to the end. Changes have taken place in our 911 system. Ms. Sheltra and I worked many years ago on ensuring that when you dial 911, it goes to the appropriate dispatch center. Years ago, those calls used to go to Carson City. We changed it so those calls went to Washoe County, where the 911 system would be put into effect. That was successful. Now, we see other flaws in the system.

The system needs to be allowed to work. The system needs to be, in my personal opinion, expressed to the citizens we work with. It has to start with ensuring the geographic information system (GIS) coordinates for every property are entered into the computer data program successfully. It has to be tested from time to time to ensure that it works. We need everyone's cooperative effort to make sure we get the closest responses and resources whether they are in Carson City, Washoe County, or Truckee Meadows.

I worked very closely with our dispatch center as the fire chief to ensure contracts and agreements were in place that show the overlap of areas where we had mutual aid agreements with Truckee Meadows, Carson City, et cetera, from the Lake Tahoe standpoint in Washoe County. It takes constant consideration and evaluation. Problems have been identified. I have to applaud Assemblyman Kramer for bringing this forward. I hope we can work through the system to fix this before we start looking at moving the county lines.

Assemblyman Ellison:

You said you were with the Division of Forestry for many years, and you had a better interlocal agreement. Is that what you said?

Mike Brown:

No, we had a great working relationship with our citizens in terms of the support for the services we were able to improve.

Assemblyman Ellison:

Last session we had to make some adjustments to get everyone back together. We wanted the people who lived near each other to have common resources, no matter where the boundary lines were. We finally got that fixed. It seems like we still have a problem in this area to ensure that the quickest response to 911 does work better. Do you have other ideas that can speed the situation up or make this a better situation?

Mike Brown:

I remember our discussions last session about the mutual aid issue. There were improvements made to that to get the closest resources. I believe in working with the agencies here today. There are discussions taking place on how to make improvements for this situation. Overall, constant evaluation needs to be taking place to ensure that what we have loaded into our dispatch center is meeting people's needs. We have to ensure that when someone dials 911 up at Duck Hill, the data entered into the program is meeting the closest response needs. Whether that is through a mutual aid agreement, automatic agreement, or something else, I know those discussions are taking place right now.

Assemblywoman Neal:

What is your knowledge in regards to the reevaluation of the system in the past few years? Do you know whether the GIS coordinates were improperly entered for Duck Hill?

Mike Brown:

I know the 911 board for Washoe County has recently started reevaluating all the GIS coordinates in the system. I cannot speak to when Duck Hill was reviewed last. It does happen on a regular basis through the 911 GIS system to ensure they are correct.

Eric Spratley:

Washoe County's GIS department is recognized nationally as one of the best in the nation. They are always updating their maps. I cannot answer if that one has been updated. I know Washoe County is amazing and on top of all their mapping.

Assemblywoman Neal:

You cited the 17-minute response time and the testimony that we heard cited an hour. Why would that discrepancy be so huge?

Eric Spratley:

I have to speculate. When you are a victim of a crime, things go by very slowly. We have all been there. If something happens to our child and we are waiting for an ambulance, it takes forever. But actually it is not taking that long. The data we collected was from the last five years. We had three priority 1 calls, just a handful of priority 2 calls, and a single priority 3 call. We had 111 officer-initiated calls for service for that area of Washoe County.

We are working it. If something happens in the other part of the county, we are sending our units there. You could be in the City of Reno with a major event happening. You could easily expect an hour response time to a priority 2 call. We have compassion for the victims of crimes. It is our duty and mission to not have victims of crime in Washoe County. But when you are a victim, I know the time ticks by slowly.

Assemblywoman Neal:

So you already have mutual aid and interlocal agreements. Truly, this is a matter of sitting down to discuss what needs to be adjusted. We do not need a boundary line change.

Eric Spratley:

That is exactly right. If we do not know, we cannot help. To the extent we know—we do now—we would like to have meaningful dialogue with the residents to assure them that we are there and get their input on how to do better.

Chairman Flores:

Are there any other questions from the Committee? [There were none.] Is there anyone wishing to testify in favor of the bill?

David L. Metts, Private Citizen, Carson City, Nevada:

I own many acres on Duck Hill: 160 in Washoe County and 160 in Carson City. I guess you could call me significant. I am not partial to counties. I have been there for 22 years.

I recently got health insurance. When I called my doctor in Washoe County, the first patient he was seeing was in September. I said, "I cannot wait that long." He said, "You better go to Carson City then." I said, "That is an interesting comment." I go to church in Carson City, I shop in Carson City, and I go to the grocery store in Carson City. I also go to the doctor in Carson City now. All the residents on that road go to Carson City. I am not saying I have had a bad experience with Washoe County. Washoe County has had several patrol cars in the area through the years.

Lately, when there is need for dispatch, most of the vehicles have to roll out of the Galena area because we share those services. We are a stepchild in that respect. I personally would favor getting most of our services through Carson City. I feel that it is a logical move. It will cost me more money in taxes, so supporting this is certainly not a financial move on my behalf. Today is the first day I met Assemblyman Kramer. I have never talked to him. I have talked to the residents on my street. I know all the residents are all in favor of it.

I have been working on building a new 11,000-square-foot house on my parcel for quite some time. I have had building permits issued for decorative rock walls, an amateur radio tower, et cetera. It is one of the few locations in Washoe County and Carson City where I could build a radio tower for my hobby. I appreciate the opportunity to do that. I met with the Community Development Director for Carson City, Mr. Lee Plemel. He supported any developments I will be doing with respect to my home.

He suggested that in this bill we include some wording that protects my ongoing permit to build my house, as there are some hillside ordinances within the boundaries of Carson City that would prohibit some of the placements of my house within view of the downtown area of Carson City. He suggested we be given a one-year grace period to pull a building permit. I could continue with the construction of my house based on the Washoe County building ordinances ([Exhibit E](#)).

Other than that, I do not have any negative comments about law enforcement. I do not have negative comments about other services we receive from Washoe County. I do think the pure proximity of Carson City to our area is beneficial to response time. Nothing can be more important than response time. I know you heard a comparison of 8 minutes versus 18 minutes. When you are having a heart attack or a stroke, that ten minutes is life and death. Please remember that.

Chairman Flores:

You have property within both Washoe County and Carson City, is that correct?

David Metts:

I have 160 acres in Carson City, which is undeveloped, conservation reserve-zoned property, which I intend to keep. I have no intentions of developing it. I have a 40-acre parcel to the north in Washoe County, which is not included in the boundary line adjustment. I am working with an equestrian group to build a trailhead for horse trailer parking, restrooms, and a location so the horses can go up the gas line maintenance road onto Bureau of Land Management (BLM) of the U.S. Department of the Interior property. I have 7,000 feet of BLM property line. That property will probably be gifted to the equestrian group. I have the 40 acres below it. The arrow-shaped area is my residential property. All three of those are 120 acres. Currently in escrow is the property to the left, which is called the "Gregg and Carrie McAninch" property ([Exhibit D](#)). Carrie is here today. That property is in escrow for my purchase. That should take place on March 31, 2017.

Assemblyman Carrillo:

Would you be amenable to an interlocal agreement that would increase response times and ensure the well-being of the people in that area?

David Metts:

I am not trying to be disrespectful to Washoe County or any efforts to put forth a regional interlocal agreement for response. But the fact is, Carson City is physically closer. You can reduce this to paper all you want. You can make promises about response times all you want. If the property boundary were inclusive to Carson City and they understood that was their primary dispatch area, there would be no need for an agreement. There would be no need to worry about who would respond. There would be no issue with all the agency gentlemen sitting here trying to agree to make things better. It is just a proximity issue. We are in a pocket at the south end of the lake. Everything to the north and west of us is Washoe Lake State Park. Everything to the east is BLM. We are an island. There is no other residential property that connects us to the rest of the lake.

We do not define ourselves with the South Truckee Meadows/Washoe Valley Citizen Advisory Board. That is where we are included, but that is not us. We do not connect with Franktown because that is not us. If anyone were to ask what community we associate with, I would say Carson City and Lakeview Estates. That is all in the county of Carson City. Through the years, it has evolved that the boundary is Washoe County, but common sense says we belong with Carson City.

Sam Herceg, Private Citizen, Carson City, Nevada:

I am a resident of Duck Hill. I have built all the houses on that hill. I was the first one to live there. I have been there almost 35 years. We have had two or three emergencies at my property, so I do not agree about the response time reflected by the local authorities. We have an older woman who lives with us. Several years ago she fell on the front porch and tried to reach my wife and myself, but she could not. She contacted her son, who lives in Woodfords, California. He called 911 and immediately left his home. He beat the ambulance to the house. Woodfords has to be around 60 miles away. The same woman had another incident. She fell and my wife got home shortly after. She called 911 and it was 45 minutes before 911 got there.

There is another issue that I do not believe has been clear on the map. If you look at the map, there is a piece of property that borders Duck Hill Road. It is about a 2.5-acre piece between Duck Hill Road and the freeway. That is a Carson City property. That is not in Washoe County.

Chairman Flores:

Are there any other questions from the Committee? [There were none.] Is there anyone wishing to testify in opposition to the bill?

If your argument has already been provided, let us know. The arguments in opposition that have already been presented include the following: we already have a cooperative agreement that addresses this problem; there is an education component in teaching those individuals to use 911; there is a disagreement on response times; and that this sets a bad precedent. If you wish to add anything in addition to that, please do so. Otherwise, a "ditto" will suffice.

Charles Moore:

I want to provide an example of two calls that would be the most intensive with respect to the numbers of responders that would be needed to control an incident. One would be a structure fire, and the second might be a cardiac arrest. Whether the boundary moves or not, let me paint a situation and explain how Carson City or we would deal with that emergency at Duck Hill. With respect to a structure fire, it is not a single resource, and response time is critical. Both agencies will respond. I do not believe Carson City would empty its entire town with three fire trucks to deal with it. We would obviously have a mutual aid agreement. My point is that both agencies would cooperate. We have agreements in place to deal with that emergency, no matter how many responders would be needed and whose jurisdiction it would be.

With respect to a cardiac arrest, that is not a matter of an ambulance showing up and starting cardiopulmonary resuscitation, defibrillating, and providing drugs. It is that plus additional paramedics in the back of the ambulance while the patient is transported to do life-saving therapies on the scene. Typically you have an ambulance and a fire truck. It is possible that you could have two ambulances depending on how many paramedics we need.

It is likely in that scenario that we will have Carson City, Truckee Meadows, and possibly even REMSA coming, depending on who is called and who is nearest. The system should work exactly that way no matter where the boundary is. My argument is that moving the boundary does not solve this problem. Again, the most effective thing for us to do is let the agencies coordinate and improve the response system.

Jamie Rodriguez:

We have already pointed out our two positions. Both Washoe County Commissioner Bob Lucey and Washoe County Manager John Slaughter apologize for not being able to be here. Unfortunately, we have a board of county commissioners confirming the emergency declaration and approving the flood mitigation plan for Lemmon Valley.

I want to reiterate that Washoe County is committed to working with all relevant agencies as well as Carson City to address these issues. We will work with the residents and all first responders, Waste Management, et cetera, to ensure the concerns of our residents are addressed. We would rather address their concerns than lose them as residents.

Carol Christensen, Private Citizen, Washoe Valley, Nevada:

I am a resident of Washoe Valley. I have lived there for 45 years. I am also a friend of Debbie Sheltra, and I sympathize greatly with her situation. You have my statement in front of you ([Exhibit F](#)). I wanted to share a situation that we have run into with our neighbor. About five years ago, we lived near a 92-year-old woman who lived with her son. He was a long-haul trucker and often not home. She relied on her neighbors to help her. Her name was Marylee Bone. She called us one day because she was having a physical problem. She was dizzy, hallucinating, et cetera. When we got there, she was having other problems. We loaded her in the car and took her immediately to Carson Tahoe Regional Medical Center because it was the closest.

We sat in the emergency room for four hours. We kept asking for help. A doctor eventually showed up and immediately admitted her to the hospital. If I had a choice, and I was not unconscious, I would not go to Carson Tahoe Regional Medical Center. I would choose Renown Regional Medical Center.

I oppose A.B. 140. This bill is an extreme solution to a simple problem. A boundary change makes no sense at all. There will always be people living at the county line at the farther ends of any county. Will we be doing this for each person who asks for a change in the boundary? I think that would be quite expensive. I do not see the Legislature getting anything else done if you are going to do that.

The current boundary does make sense. Washoe Valley is in the Truckee River Basin, whereas Carson City is in the Carson River Basin. Rather than allowing a bill that is both unnecessary and unfair to the majority of people in the valley or at any county line, I think changing this bill to a state requirement that will deal with cooperation and improving services for everyone makes more sense.

Assemblyman Ellison:

When I got the letter you presented, I went back to Assemblyman Kramer and asked if you spent time with him at all. Have you talked to Assemblyman Kramer?

Carol Christensen:

No. We learned about this bill last Thursday. There was no map available. I emailed him and asked for a map, and that was sent to me promptly by his office. My map shows the section numbers, and I noticed the map on the website does not. That is not as helpful.

Assemblyman Ellison:

With the interlocal agreement, it would not matter where your boundaries were if they were closer to Washoe County or Carson City. You would still be protected under one or the other. Is that correct?

Carol Christensen:

Yes. That is true. The neighbor I mentioned needed an ambulance occasionally. It came from Carson City, and she was admitted to Carson Tahoe Regional Medical Center on those occasions. I do not think where the services come from is the problem. If the boundary changes to the north end of Duck Hill Road, what about the neighbor across the street? The Smiths have a ranch there. Then they will be at the boundary. There is always going to be someone at the boundary.

All these homes are in the Washoe Valley Basin. The Washoe Valley Basin feeds out from the Truckee River. They are also in the South Valleys Area Plan. There is no east valley citizen advisory board. It is the Washoe Valley Section of the South Valleys Area Plan. There is a citizen advisory board for the South Valleys. It is inappropriate and inconsistent to have another entity in our valley that will have different development codes.

Section 30 is BLM land. For some reason, this boundary change takes our public lands too. The BLM land is now designated for recreation, but with the boundary change, that puts it against the Carson City BLM land approved for fluid mineral leasing. That is not allowed in Washoe Valley. The fluid mineral leasing is important because according to BLM, they drill on a slant or horizontal. Giving Carson City a half-mile of section 30, which is now designated as open to that mining, would put a mining company right at our boundary. They could drill directly into Washoe Valley to use our water in any way they prefer. I ask you not to put our entire valley at risk for this boundary change for a few people when there are better ways to solve the problem. Thank you.

William Naylor, Private Citizen, Washoe Valley, Nevada:

I am a 38-year resident of Washoe Valley. I also worked for Carson City for 13 years. I have some experience with them. There are a few things I would like to point out. Like Carol pointed out, we just found out about this late last week. Washoe Valley and Washoe County, to the best of our knowledge, have been kept in the dark on this bill. Assemblyman Kramer indicated they had gone to a public meeting in Carson City, but no such courtesy was expressed to Washoe County, where the citizens could have made public input. That was bothersome.

Basically, we have a few people who created a petition. It was typed in advance, only signed by the names typed into it, and not available for the other 3,000 residents in Washoe Valley to express their opinion. Most of the items on the petition are not boundary-sensitive. You can shop, socialize, and use the community centers in Carson City, but none of that means you have to be a resident of Carson City. You can use Carson Tahoe Regional Medical Center. It is a public hospital.

I have not heard anyone talk about REMSA Care Flight. That is a service available if you go through dispatch to get quick transport to a medical facility. I have used it myself, and I have seen other people use it. It is a good tool. The bill obviously was written in a manner that only a surveyor could understand. The attached map was incomplete. It did not show where the proposed boundaries attached to the existing Carson City boundaries. It did not show the hydrologic basin boundaries where Carson City would be coming into the Washoe Valley hydrologic basin. Water is an issue. I will not get into it, but it is a serious issue.

I found the financial analysis in this bill to be absolutely incomplete. The only thing it covered was the tax revenue that Washoe County would lose and Carson City would gain. In 2016 it was about \$44,763, which is probably about half of a city employee's salary and benefits. Does Carson City really believe that will support the services they have to supply to this area?

To give you an idea, there are a whole lot of areas impacted fiscally that did not show up. Some are one time. Some are ongoing. We mentioned the fire and ambulance service. Has Carson City Fire Department evaluated Duck Hill for their capability to support that thin, twisty road in bad weather conditions? I think they should do that before Carson City commits to taking over responsibility for that area. Police, animal control, education, et cetera, will cost money. Right now there are no kids, but you plan on a formula based on the number of children per household, operations cost, and cost of transporting those children to Carson City.

There will be GIS changes to the state and both counties. Assessor parcel maps, zoning, master plans, environmental health, et cetera, would have to be changed. One area in there is a wet meadow with standing ponds. I do not know if Carson City wants to pay for upkeep in that area.

Chairman Flores:

Can you wrap up your remarks in the interest of time?

Bill Naylor:

I will, but I am disappointed that the last two of us citizens have to do that.

There are a lot of expenses that were not covered in the plan. I do not think the proposed legislation has been properly thought out. I think the comments made by the agencies have been excellent. I believe that stronger interlocal agreements could be a better and more cost-effective solution to this issue. I strongly support that approach rather than changing the county lines. I think that is a nuclear option.

Chairman Flores:

Thank you for your remarks. I think we have said a lot of the same things in a lot of different ways. We ask everyone to keep their remarks short in the interest of time. Otherwise, we are repeating ourselves. If the argument has been proposed, a simple "ditto" will suffice.

Corey Solferino:

Ditto. We are not in support of this bill. We were just made aware of the service and equity issue as we came to understand A.B. 140. We want to work with the citizens to correct this issue at a local level.

Chairman Flores:

Are there any other questions from the Committee? Is there anyone else wishing to testify in opposition to the bill? [There was no one.] Is there anyone wishing to testify as neutral to the bill? [There was no one.] Will the bill sponsors please come back up.

Debbie Sheltra:

I think this eleventh-hour attempt to offer interlocal agreements is interesting. I have been a resident of Washoe Valley since 1969. I have worked my derriere off trying to get better services. We have a citizen advisory board that we have gone to every month for years. We are promised these services every year. We are told by the sheriff's department there is one unit south of the Truckee River, and if he is engaged, it will be a lengthy time. I have had to call the sheriff at that address, and I am not one of those three that he mentioned.

On the medical side, we have been told by the fire department that they will run from Bowers with the truck, assess the situation, decide if they need their ambulance, and then wait for another unit to bring it. They do not run in tandem like Carson City does.

We have interlocal agreements. They have not been used. We had one with Carson City for fire and medical south of the Bellevue bridge. It was predicated on Washoe County initiating the call to Carson City. I was active in that, and it has not been done. It may be done sometimes, but it was not done for me or the other calls on Duck Hill.

I think it is almost an insult to slap us in the face and say, We will work on these interlocal agreements. They have had all the years that we have lived there, and they have failed us. Those interlocal agreements are only as good as this board of commissioners and this Board of Supervisors. They can be undone or neglected.

The comment was not made about the REMSA from Mr. Dow, but REMSA only runs if they are called. They only guarantee, by county ordinance, 20 minutes and 59 seconds. That is not adequate. They say their average time is 18 minutes. It is not 18 minutes to us. It might be 18 to our district, but not to us.

We have tried working interlocal agreements. We are at desperation levels because they will not keep their promises. Only a week ago I met with the Washoe County Manager and Bob Lucey, and they said they would not oppose us. They changed it in one week. Interlocal agreements are a Band-Aid measure for a major, major problem. Our lives are at stake. I called the station because I knew the GIS system had failed. They had not changed the run card like they promised us they would two years earlier at a citizen advisory board. I knew the wrong unit would respond.

They make promises to you, but they do not do anything until they are threatened by this bill. I do not see the integrity of Washoe County in here at all.

Romaine Gilliland:

I want to go back to the comment I made earlier about the approximate one-hour service time for the sheriff's department and the discrepancy. Both Assemblyman Kramer and myself set a meeting with the Washoe County Manager and Commissioner Lucey to talk in advance about A.B. 140. We wanted to give them our thoughts and hear any feedback from them. Mr. Lucey did not attend that meeting. He did not say he was not going to attend. He was a no-show. We met with the Washoe County Manager. During that meeting, I relayed the essence of the testimony I gave today, including the one-hour response time. I asked him, if he found information contrary to what I provided him, I would appreciate it if he could get in touch with me and let me know. There was no response.

In there is the essence of why we are making this request. It is a safety and security issue. We do find ourselves with a closer affinity with Carson City. We look at Carson City from our front door when we leave in the morning. It is all about time-sensitive services and the availability of the people who serve the public. We were able to have a meeting with the Carson City Board of Supervisors. They listened to our concerns and agreed to provide the services. The fire department has been up on our hill to determine accessibility.

The solution brought to you today by Washoe County is to dust off interlocal agreements that have been in place, refresh them, and use those as a solution to the services. If I understand that correctly, Washoe County is suggesting to turn the responsibility for the services to the community over to Carson City in their entirety through interlocal agreements, but retain the value of the property taxes in Washoe County. This does not make any sense to me.

It looks like a movement to Carson City's services is being veiled by interlocal agreements. We are concerned about time-sensitive services, being part of the community, et cetera. If it looks like a movement to Carson City, let us make it a movement to Carson City. Let them be responsible and give them the benefit of the tax revenue. They will be responsive to us as community citizens. They demonstrated that in the past, where Washoe County has not.

Chairman Flores:

Thank you for bringing this forth. At a bare minimum, this was a conversation we needed to have. We look forward to working with you and finding a solution.

Assemblyman Kramer:

Bonnie Parnell was a prior holder of this Assembly seat and represented this area from 1999 to 2002 and 2005 to 2010. She was asked to bring a bill to the Legislature to change the county line. Instead she worked with Washoe County to build the interlocal agreements you have heard about. I am not saying it will not work this time, but it was tried in the past, and it has come up short.

Chairman Flores:

Thank you, Assemblyman Kramer. I would like to close the hearing on A.B. 140. Next on the agenda is Assembly Bill 246.

Assembly Bill 246: Revises provisions relating to the creation of a local improvement district and tax increment area. (BDR 22-705)

Assemblyman Al Kramer, Assembly District No. 40:

Assembly Bill 246 authorizes adjoining counties, by agreement, to create a local improvement district to undertake certain projects jointly, including a street project. The bill would also authorize adjoining counties and cities, by agreement, to create a tax increment area to undertake projects located within their respective boundaries.

My home is located on Old Clear Creek Road, which traverses the boundary between Carson City and Douglas County. If a local improvement district or tax increment area were created by agreement between Carson City and Douglas County pursuant to A.B. 246, they could undertake a project to improve Old Clear Creek Road or other streets near my home, which could increase the value of my property and affect my private economic interest and that of my family.

However, A.B. 246 is simply enabling legislation. Moreover, it would apply to any area in Nevada where adjoining municipalities desired to create a local improvement district or tax increment area jointly. Because the potential benefit accruing to me is no greater than the potential benefit accruing to any other person who is potentially affected by A.B. 246 anywhere in Nevada, I believe that the independence of judgment of a reasonable person in my position would not be materially affected by my private economic interest or my commitment to the members of my family.

I am not required by Assembly Standing Rule No. 23 to make this disclosure, but I want to put this information on the record. I will be participating in the discussion of A.B. 246 and will be voting on the bill. Under existing law, the state does not allow a tax increment district or improvement district to cross county lines. This has a negative impact as it puts the full financial responsibility on a single county that, for example, shares a road with an adjacent county. Assembly Bill 246 solves that problem by allowing two or more counties or municipalities whose boundaries border each other to enter into an interlocal or cooperative agreement to undertake projects in all or part of each county or municipality, thus allowing two different counties or municipalities to be enhanced by means of a single tax increment district.

Allowing a bicounty tax district would be of particular importance where most of the infrastructure to be built will be in one county and the bulk of the increase in assessed value is in the adjoining county.

Please refer to the mock-up with the proposed amendment ([Exhibit G](#)). Section 1, subsection 5, adds "another county" to the statute. Section 2, subsection 1, is the enabling language that allows two governing bodies to create a tax increment district. Subsection 2 allows such a joint county district to do anything allowed by a one-county district. Note that the language restricting such a district to only "street projects" in section 2, subsection 1, has been removed. It should be emphasized that this bill is enabling language only. Such a district would not be created unless all entities are willing to enter into agreements to do so.

Assemblywoman Neal:

You said that, historically, tax increment areas have not been able to cross county boundaries. Why not?

Assemblyman Kramer:

I do not know why. I do know that typically tax increment districts in a development district have been on county lines. There are places in the state where you might see something like this. Typically the development areas in Nevada have been deep within a county, not on the fringe of the county line.

Most of the work in the counties is in higher-density areas. That is where tax increment districts are most common. There are places in the state where it would be beneficial. Two counties could come together where there is infrastructure need and that infrastructure would increase the value of both sides.

Assemblywoman Neal:

Is there not a time issue? If you create a tax increment district, you cannot put any new property in until 50 years after the effective date of the creation of the first tax increment area. There is a time period that eliminates overlap. Are you familiar with that?

Assemblyman Kramer:

I am familiar with that as it applies to redevelopment districts. I know there have been enlargements of redevelopment districts where more property has been included in it, and there have been creations of additional redevelopment districts and areas, but I have not seen any attempt by counties to do that in Nevada. That is what this bill is addressing. Most redevelopment districts are for blight issues—trying to improve a neighborhood. That is certainly within the realm of this. Our idea was more for infrastructure—whether water, sewer, or roads—that wanders between counties. Right now, there is not a way to address those without cooperation between counties where one county spends the money and the other county may be the beneficiary of that work. This would make it fairer to both counties.

Assemblywoman Neal:

Why is this needed? What will we gain by having the ability to do the interlocal agreements in overlapping areas? There must have been a reason to separate them. Number one, property tax. Each county has a separate property tax that builds revenue, and then they recycle. Give me an example or vision of how this works.

Assemblyman Kramer:

I will give the example of Old Clear Creek Road, where I live. If you go west up the road next to Costco, the road supplies about 30 to 35 residences, a golf course, and proposed housing around the golf course. There are parcels in Carson City where the owners want to subdivide their parcels. There is a question of who has the easements or property ownership of it because it is on the old U.S. Route 50 to Lake Tahoe. It is unmaintained. Carson City does not want to maintain the part that is in Carson City, and Douglas County does not want to maintain the part that is in Douglas County. The road winds between the counties. It is thought that if the roads were rebuilt and a tax increment district was created to do this, property values along the road would be increased. That excess valuation would go toward the increment.

For example, right now, if you have a house on that road, you cannot sell your house because the person you sell it to needs a loan. Because the road is not maintained, you cannot get a federally-guaranteed loan. So that means you are limited in who you can sell it to. That means the price of your home is less. Just by maintaining the road, property values will boost significantly. People could sell their homes, and they could price it for what it is worth. The increase in value would go toward the road. Once that happened, we believe Carson City would pave the parcels that have been on hold for development. Then parceling would be released, and they could be divided into five acre parcels. The increment would go up as new homes are built in the area.

One of the parcels is 108 acres owned by the State of Nevada where the Job Corps camp was. It was directed that the Division of State Lands within the State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources sell the property and give the proceeds to the Stewart Indian School for the redevelopment of some buildings. When they came to Carson City and asked for the zones to be changed so they could subdivide into five-acre parcels, Carson City said not until the road has been improved.

There is a holdback on property values that would go up significantly when the road is improved. That increase in property values would be used to pay back the loan to fix the road. A water and sewer system between Carson City and Mound House would increase the values all around there. Yet Carson City would be responsible for most of the expense to put in the sewer system, and Lyon County would benefit more. Maybe there is an application of this between Eureka County and Elko County regarding the people who work in the mines. I know there is a road between Nye County and Esmeralda County right outside Tonopah. I think there are a lot of examples where something like this would be beneficial.

Assemblyman Carrillo:

Is it a mutual agreement between the counties? Would it be a mutual benefit every time, or will there be times where it benefits one county more than the other? Sometimes roads might go through, and it will benefit the people who live in that area. Do the counties always have to agree with this?

Assemblyman Kramer:

This was written only to be enabling language. Both counties, municipalities, et cetera, would both have to want this to happen for the benefit of the people in their area. The nice thing about a tax increment district, even if most of the money came from one county, is that it is paid for with the increment. The counties do not have to pay money out of their general fund. The money would not be there except for the improvement being done that causes the increase in value. Therefore, it is planned and paid off over the period of the loan. Then it goes away once that is done. It is for a specific project.

Assemblyman Carrillo:

Who was this requested by?

Assemblyman Kramer:

It was requested by some of the homeowners on Old Clear Creek Road.

Assemblyman Ellison:

The tax increment district will freeze anything in future taxes above existing ad valorem. Is that correct?

Assemblyman Kramer:

That is correct. We are talking about a tax increment. It takes the base assessed value when you start. Every year the increase in assessed value goes against the tax rate adjusted for abatements. That would go toward the loan created to pay for the improvement that caused the assessed value to go up. It is presumed that the assessed value goes up because of the improvement. We do recognize there is a bit of inflation when property values and assessed values go up. It is attributed to the improvement, and therefore it goes to the tax increment district and paying off the loan.

Assemblyman Ellison:

If this turns into a long-term improvement district based on the amount of money that comes in, I have seen big problems regarding public safety in the past. I have worked on a lot of these improvement districts, and when we get to a certain point the need for more public safety comes in. That is choked in from another part of the city. Is that correct?

Assemblyman Kramer:

You are absolutely right. If you have a tax increment district or a redevelopment district, you are taking funds that would normally go to the general fund and routing them for those specific purposes. It has to be looked at very carefully when you do it. Hopefully the time frame is not in decades, but is in five to ten years at most. You are right, it does take away money. That is another reason willing partners have to go into this. If you had willing partners involved, some big projects could be done.

Even inflation would bring more money to the general fund, but if you are talking about a district where you are increasing values, that means more homes could be built. That could result in more services required in those areas, and those have to be paid for with the same amount of taxes from that neighborhood as you had before it was created. They do not participate in the growth. Schools do a bit, but the general fund does not necessarily participate in the growth and taxes from that area. That is why it is really important that this be a voluntary procedure.

Assemblyman Carrillo:

Your amendment strikes out "that is a street project" in section 2 ([Exhibit G](#)). Is that just for flexibility?

Assemblyman Kramer:

When I asked for the bill draft, I not only said what I wanted, but I gave the example of Old Clear Creek Road. Unfortunately, my example was put in the bill. That was not the intent. I thought this could be used for more than just roads. I thought it could be used for water and sewer systems, et cetera. You have places where one county is potentially the primary service provider for a part of another county. There ought to be a way to handle that. Both counties can contribute and benefit. People from both counties can pay for it.

Assemblyman Carrillo:

Was there any mention of population caps?

Assemblyman Kramer:

The population caps are for when you believe this is good for the rural counties and not for the urban counties. However, I think an important part of this is that this allows for a district between the incorporated city and part of the county around it. It is not just two counties that could do this. It could be between a municipality and the county around it. I can see where the city does not want to annex part of the county, but there is still something that needs to be done. I think this would also have application in urban parts of the state.

Assemblyman Daly:

All of the enabling language in this bill already exists in law for cities within a county. They have to have an interlocal agreement, and they have to adopt ordinances. Even under this, both sides would have to take all the steps under the *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS) Chapter 278C for tax increment financing if one did not exist. This already exists in law for local governments, it is just expanding it so counties could take advantage of the same situation if it was presented to them.

Assemblyman Kramer:

If you had the two counties and you bonded for \$1 million, under the current law each county could have their own tax increment district for that. But if one county rose in assessed valuation faster than the other did, their part of the \$1 million would be paid off, and the other county might sit there for a long time trying to pay off theirs. It is really difficult to tell where the assessed value will grow faster or if one side will grow at all. This would allow counties to pool that loan and repayment, so the pool of funds from both counties would pay down the loan. Everyone would be out from under the debt at the same time, after which case the tax increment district could go away.

Assemblyman Daly:

Exactly. I think I understand that. That is similar to what cities can do with cities. This is just giving an advantage from county to county, so they can act the same way as other government agencies within the state.

Assemblyman Kramer:

You are exactly right. It just extends to counties all the rights and abilities available to cities within a county. Right now, even the city and the unincorporated part of the county cannot work together. It extends these rights to other jurisdictions.

Assemblywoman Neal:

I was not really following along. Did you discuss the issue with the bonds and how the security would work for the bonds in section 2, subsection 2, paragraph (c) of your proposed amendment ([Exhibit G](#))? The amendment says, "Issue bonds or otherwise finance the cost of the undertaking." Typically a city or county would create a security to finance the bonds.

Assemblyman Kramer:

Counties do this when they have a tax increment district within their own county. I would see this as probably the thorniest part because each county has their own limit for how much they can tax. We are fortunate that in Nevada none of the counties are up against their limit. They are quite far from their limit. I would see this as something where both counties would count it on their books. I do not see a significant number of dollars or years that it could not be lived with until it went away. There probably is a way in the interlocal agreement to dictate how much each county is responsible for. The problem is when the tax increment money comes in and pays both of them off together. The collateral would probably be that both counties would have the debt on their books. It would overstate or duplicate the amount. I figured it would not be that significant.

Assemblywoman Neal:

I was wondering how that works. How do you come to an agreement? What is the security? If you have a bonding capacity, how do you deal with that? Does it create an overlapping rate? What are the issues, and how are they resolved? I wonder if people should even be engaging in that type of discussion.

Let us say Clark County and a county with less bonding capacity want to do this—how do you deal with that? It seems to be getting into areas that are a bit sticky. In terms of oversight, I am wondering if we are stretching the boundaries of power.

Assemblyman Kramer:

This is enabling. Those would have to be worked out in advance. Some of what we are talking about is not necessarily two counties, but it could be a municipality and the unincorporated part of the county that would work together on this. The collateral is within one county. Even if it is two different counties and they are doing this, they have to recognize the debt is on the books of both counties. You are still looking at willing parties going into this. By saying they cannot do this, we are not letting them take advantage of the opportunity to develop. We are ensuring that the area remains undeveloped in spite of the fact that property owners want to develop. We tell them they cannot because there is no vehicle to get there.

I think the thing we need to look at is that A.B. 246 allows willing partners to go into this. This is one little issue. I do not think the different rates are bad because you are talking about an increment. The increment takes whatever assessed value increment there is and applies it to the rate. That would apply to the payoff of the loan. I think the debt would have to be on the books of both entities. I do not see this as being significant. None of the counties in Nevada are up against the tax limit. For the most part, they are fiscally responsible.

Chairman Flores:

Are there any other questions from the Committee? [There were none.] Is there anyone wishing to testify in favor of the bill?

Mary C. Walker, representing Clark County, Douglas County, Lyon County, and Storey County:

Ditto.

Nick Marano, City Manager, Carson City:

Ditto.

Dagny Stapleton, Deputy Director, Nevada Association of Counties:

We do support the bill and the ability for all the counties to enter into this type of interlocal agreement across county lines if they chose to do so.

Chairman Flores:

Is there anyone wishing to testify in opposition to the bill? [There was no one.] Is there anyone wishing to testify as neutral to the bill?

Cheryl Blomstrom, Interim President, Nevada Taxpayers Association:

Assemblyman Kramer said very clearly that this involves willing partners. That was our concern with the bill. We wanted to ensure there was no disparate power between the counties and that it had to be agreed to by all parties.

Chairman Flores:

We will close the hearing on A.B. 246. Is there any public comment? [There was none.] This meeting is adjourned [at 10:54 a.m.].

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Isabel Youngs
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Assemblyman Edgar Flores, Chairman

DATE: _____

EXHIBITS

[Exhibit A](#) is the Agenda.

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

[Exhibit C](#) is a document titled "Petition to Nevada State Legislature Assembly Committee on Government Regarding AB140 Requested by Assemblyman Kramer Revises the Boundary Line Between Carson City and Washoe County," submitted by Assemblyman Al Kramer, Assembly District No. 40, regarding Assembly Bill 140.

[Exhibit D](#) is a map of the Carson City and Washoe County proposed boundary line adjustment, submitted by Assemblyman Al Kramer, Assembly District No. 40, regarding Assembly Bill 140.

[Exhibit E](#) is a letter dated March 12, 2017 opposing Assembly Bill 140 to members of the Assembly Committee on Government Affairs, authored and presented by David L. Metts, Private Citizen, Carson City, Nevada.

[Exhibit F](#) is a letter dated March 13, 2017 opposing Assembly Bill 140 to members of the Assembly Committee on Government Affairs, authored and presented by Carol Christensen, Private Citizen, Washoe Valley, Nevada.

[Exhibit G](#) is a proposed amendment to Assembly Bill 246 presented by Assemblyman Al Kramer, Assembly District No. 40.