

**MINUTES OF THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON REVENUE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**Seventy-ninth Session
June 2, 2017**

The Senate Committee on Revenue and Economic Development was called to order by Chair Julia Ratti at 6:07 p.m. on Friday, June 2, 2017, in Room 2135 of the Legislative Building, Carson City, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 4412 of the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada. [Exhibit A](#) is the Agenda. [Exhibit B](#) is the Attendance Roster. All exhibits are available and on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Julia Ratti, Chair
Senator David R. Parks
Senator Ben Kieckhefer
Senator Michael Roberson

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Senator Aaron D. Ford, Vice Chair (Excused)
Senator Heidi S. Gansert (Excused)
Senator Patricia Farley (Excused)

GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:

Assemblywoman Dina Neal, Assembly District No. 7

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Joe Reel, Deputy Fiscal Analyst
Lex Thompson, Committee Secretary
Tina Nguyen, Committee Manager
Colleen Lennox, Committee Secretary

OTHERS PRESENT:

Kevin Raiford, College of Southern Nevada
Michael Flores, College of Southern Nevada

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Nancy Brune, Ph.D., Chair, Institutional Advisory Council, College of Southern Nevada
Paul Moradkhan, Las Vegas Metro Chamber of Commerce

CHAIR RATTI:

I will open the hearing on Assembly Bill (A.B.) 94.

ASSEMBLY BILL 94 (2nd Reprint): Repeals the prospective expiration of the NV Grow Program. (BDR S-217)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN DINA NEAL (Assembly District No. 7):

This bill extends the NV Grow program. It was a pilot program last Session. I am seeking to get the expiration date repealed so the program can continue.

The program had some success. There were ten businesses that went through the program, and there were a total of 27 businesses helped. Quantitatively, meaning they used the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) specialist paid for through this program, 42 businesses were helped.

The threshold has been lowered from \$100,000 to \$50,000 because it became apparent that in Nevada some of the second stage businesses are smaller in relation to the revenue they capture. There were a lot of other businesses that wanted to participate, so the threshold was lowered to enable the program to assist more businesses.

Assembly Bill 94 adds \$50,000 to continue the program over the biennium. I have as a speaker Kevin Raiford in Las Vegas. He was the small business development counselor for the pilot program. This turnaround he will also be a lead counselor managing the program through the College of Southern Nevada (CSN). He was helpful along with the Chambers of Commerce in garnering the businesses and bringing them through the program. I want him to add some information regarding what we see as the potential revenue and gains resulting from the pilot program.

KEVIN RAIFORD (College of Southern Nevada):

I am a business professor as well as counselor for the entrepreneurship incubator in the Nevada Small Business Development Center.

Assemblywoman Dina Neal is correct. For every \$1 that is put into this program, we have seen at least \$16 of additional revenue and prosperity for companies. As of this date, we have helped another business. Thus, the number goes to 43 businesses that have been helped with data that allowed them to choose locations for their businesses as well as target the demographics in their areas. For example, a business may be located in zip code 89110. It is helpful for that business owner to know whether he or she should make things in Spanish as well as English. If the zip code is 89178, then the business owner knows to target people who speak Tagalog. The program has helped the businesses grow and achieve.

I have spoken with two bankers recently, one from Valley Bank of Nevada and the other from Royal Business Bank. They told me how it is easier to approve loans for the businesses that go through the program because they have the data, show the demographics, show the forecasting and show the business growth the bankers want for this program. Also one good note, I got a notification this morning that one of the businesses in the Nevada program is one of the five finalists for the Dominic Anthony Marrocco Southern Nevada Business Plan Competition. The business is turning in its final business plan, which is due on June 5. The awards gala is on June 9, so I have my fingers crossed. I am sure that every competitor is talented, but this business has made it out of 70 businesses into the final 5. This is definitely a reflection of the data provided by this program to allow the business to have a robust business plan and be competitive for this prize.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

I thought we put a GIS specialist into CSN last Session.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN NEAL:

We did. We are just trying to continue to pay for him.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

Okay, so CSN did not roll him into the base budget?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN NEAL:

No, this is more like an external program.

MICHAEL FLORES (College of Southern Nevada):

I would like to answer Senator Kieckhefer's question. We did not put the GIS specialist in as part of our base budget. It is an external project that is housed out of CSN, and we do a lot of work with small businesses on campus. Assembly Bill 94 helps to expand that program. As Mr. Raiford said, we have seen a lot of success with these businesses. We know how important that is for our economy in southern Nevada. CSN supports A.B. 94.

NANCY BRUNE, PH.D. (Chair, Institutional Advisory Council, College of Southern Nevada):

On behalf of our full Institutional Advisory Council (IAC) I am here to share that our IAC fully supports the NV Grow program and A.B. 94, which would make permanent the pilot program launched in 2015.

The CSN IAC, which reflects the voice of community and business leaders in southern Nevada, voted to support A.B. 94 at our May 19 meeting because we recognize the significant need for these types of services in southern Nevada.

The legislation allocated funding to create an economic gardening program to provide ten local business with the tools they needed to use data-driven strategies to expand. A variety of stakeholders have been involved, including CSN, the Nevada Small Business Development Center, the Urban Chamber of Commerce, the Latin Chamber, Clark County's business licensing office and the Governor's Office of Economic Development. Collaboratively, these institutions counseled ten southern Nevada small businesses ranging from cafes to virtual office assistant companies. Many were minority- and/or women-owned businesses as well. They worked with the employers to learn how to use GIS data strategically to build their business plans. The program also provided counseling on everything from planning to marketing to social media.

One of the participants in the pilot recently said that before completing this program, she felt like she had been bowling in the dark, and now she knew what she needed to do to expand her clientele and grow her business. Another woman, who owns the Funnel Cake Café, had been running her business for nine years as a food truck and was able to jump from a food truck to establish a retail store business. These are some of the examples of how this program has been successful for business owners in our community.

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PAUL MORADKHAN (Las Vegas Metro Chamber of Commerce):
This great program has been productive in the small business community in southern Nevada. The Las Vegas Metro Chamber of Commerce supports A.B. 94.

MR. FLORES:
I wanted to say one more thing. Ken Evans from the Urban Chamber and Peter Guzman from the Latin Chamber were here. They had to leave, but they wanted to make sure their support for A.B. 94 was on the record.

CHAIR RATTI:
Thank you, Mr. Flores, that is helpful. I am looking for a motion.

SENATOR ROBERSON MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 94.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

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CHAIR RATTI:
We are adjourned at 6:18 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Colleen Lennox,
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Senator Julia Ratti, Chair

DATE: _____

EXHIBIT SUMMARY				
Bill	Exhibit / # of pages		Witness / Entity	Description
	A	1		Agenda
	B	1		Attendance Roster