

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
OF THE  
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GROWTH AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Eightieth Session  
April 25, 2019**

The Committee on Growth and Infrastructure was called to order by Chair Daniele Monroe-Moreno at 1:33 p.m. on Thursday, April 25, 2019, in Room 3143 of the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 4406 of the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada. Copies of the minutes, including the Agenda ([Exhibit A](#)), the Attendance Roster ([Exhibit B](#)), and other substantive exhibits, are available and on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau and on the Nevada Legislature's website at [www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/80th2019](http://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/80th2019).

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Assemblywoman Daniele Monroe-Moreno, Chair  
Assemblyman Steve Yeager, Vice Chair  
Assemblywoman Shea Backus  
Assemblyman Richard Carrillo  
Assemblyman John Ellison  
Assemblyman Glen Leavitt  
Assemblywoman Rochelle T. Nguyen  
Assemblyman Tom Roberts  
Assemblyman Howard Watts  
Assemblyman Jim Wheeler

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Assemblywoman Shannon Bilbray-Axelrod (excused)  
Assemblyman Greg Smith (excused)

**GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:**

Assemblywoman Maggie Carlton, Assembly District No. 14  
Senator Pat Spearman, Senate District No. 1

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Michelle L. Van Geel, Committee Policy Analyst  
Jessica Dummer, Committee Counsel  
Lori McCleary, Committee Secretary  
Alejandra Medina, Committee Assistant

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**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Barbara K. Cegavske, Secretary of State  
Elisa Cafferata, representing Nevada Commission for Women  
Marlene Lockard, representing Nevada Women's Lobby  
Marty Elzy, Management Analyst, Division of Central Services and Records,  
Department of Motor Vehicles  
Emilee Elzy, Private Citizen, Carson City, Nevada  
Dwayne McClinton, Administrator, Public Affairs, Southwest Gas Corporation  
John Olenick, Director, Gas Supply, Southwest Gas Corporation  
Len Yelinek, State Commander, Military Order of the Purple Heart  
Richard Small, Chairman, Nevada Veterans Foundation  
Andrew LePeilbet, representing Military Order of the Purple Heart; and United  
Veterans Legislative Council, Nevada Department of Veterans Services

**Chair Monroe-Moreno:**

[Roll was called. Committee rules and protocol were explained.] I will open the hearing on Assembly Bill 499 and welcome Assemblywoman Carlton to the table.

**Assembly Bill 499: Provides for a special license plate of limited duration commemorating the 100th anniversary of women's suffrage. (BDR 43-1265)**

**Assemblywoman Maggie Carlton, Assembly District No. 14:**

If you would have told me three weeks ago that I would be before you with a special license plate bill, I would have had you certified. With that, Assemblywoman Pierce, if you are listening, I promise never to do this again. We made a pact, but you will understand why I am presenting this bill today.

This bill celebrates the 100th year anniversary of women's suffrage. You will notice, the only sponsors of this bill are women. It is not that we do not want the men on the bill. We know how they feel and we know they support us, but as soon as they put their name on the bill, "Assemblywomen" changes to "Assemblymen," and we would like to keep it "Assemblywomen" on this bill for this session, if you do not mind. However, we would appreciate your vote.

I would like to share a couple of anecdotes I found which are things I had not heard before as far as women's suffrage and the state of Nevada. Back in 1869, Nevada had discussed women's suffrage. Assemblyman Curtis Hillyer from Storey County introduced legislation to amend the *Nevada Constitution*. He argued that politics was corrupt and women, historically, had been a civilizing and moralizing influence on politics.

Women's suffrage was a passionate issue in Nevada. There was a group that came together and a lot of the gentlemen worked behind the scenes because they realized how important it was. There was one gentleman in the state by the name of George Wingfield who was the most powerful mining, banking, and political boss in the state. He announced that if

Nevadans approved women's suffrage, he would shut down his enterprises and leave the state. The *Manhattan Post*, a newspaper published in Nye County, printed a poem called "Where You Goin', George?" I have not found the poem yet, but I am on the hunt. As soon as Assemblywoman Swank returns to the Legislature, I am sure she will be able to find that poem.

The bill before you today is quite simple and very unique in a number of different ways. If you look at page 2, you will see a photo. This is only the third time in the history of the state that a bill has been printed with any color. The first time was the state seal; the second time was the state tartan; and this is the third time. We are making history in a number of different ways.

This bill is a license plate bill and addresses all the particular issues that a license plate bill would address. It is outside the cap because it is a special issue and for one year only. I received an email from the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) about how this would actually work because we know we are doing a one-year issue. We thought it was important to make sure we were all on the same page. It has been indicated to me that the plates, barring any unforeseen circumstances, would be available from January 1, 2020, to December 31, 2020. They would be available for a whole year. I appreciate that because in November 2020, if there are any new female legislators elected, they will be able to have that license plate. We would not want to have it expire by limitation in October and have the new freshmen group not be able to access this plate.

The bill does benefit the Nevada Commission for Women. Section 1, subsection 5, paragraphs (a) through (c) detail what the Nevada Commission for Women will be doing to help support the Commission. At the top of page 3, line 2, it states "a passenger car or light commercial vehicle." I know there are some women who serve in this Legislature and who work or lobby at this Legislature who drive motorcycles. I think those women should be able to get a motorcycle license plate also. I am not sure how that would fit, but I do know we have specialty motorcycle plates. I would hand that issue over to the people who have the expertise. It may already be encompassed in this bill, or we may need to add it.

**Chair Monroe-Moreno:**

We do have some questions.

**Assemblyman Ellison:**

What is actually going to be displayed on the plate? I am curious as to what it is going to look like.

**Assemblywoman Carlton:**

We do not have a lot of input on that, but I believe there will be some outreach from DMV to other folks. There will be some design, but I am not sure how they plan on handling it. I look forward to working with them on it. The plates have to be within certain color ranges

and need to be road tested for the Nevada Highway Patrol of the Department of Public Safety and police to make sure it actually works. We could design something really pretty, but it may not work on the road. Ultimately, a license plate has a function that is the first priority. The whole idea is that it will recognize 100 years of women being able to vote and also have the money go to a very good cause.

**Assemblyman Carrillo:**

We know the proceeds from every specialty plate go to specific organizations. Where does the money go from renewal fees on these plates?

**Assemblywoman Carlton:**

The money will still go to the Nevada Commission for Women. When I purchase those plates and renew those plates, the money will continue going to that commission. There will be an initial issuance of one year and reissues up to a certain point for replacement, if I remember correctly. These plates are outside the cap, so they are done just a little differently. However, no matter how long I have those plates, that money will continue to go to the Nevada Commission for Women unless there is a successor organization.

**Chair Monroe-Moreno:**

Are there any further questions from the Committee? [There were none.] Thank you for bringing this bill. I know it went against everything you believe in regarding special license plates, but this is an extremely special reason.

**Assemblywoman Carlton:**

I will put on the record right now that this really is the last special license plate that I will do.

**Chair Monroe-Moreno:**

Is there anyone present who would like to testify in support of the bill?

**Barbara K. Cegavske, Secretary of State:**

I want you to know I am very proud of you, Madam Chair and Assemblywoman Carlton, for bringing this bill forward. It has been something that has been worked on by so many. I am grateful and happy about what is going on. There is planning and discussion regarding this plate as we speak. There are things going on in Utah, and we will learn from them because they are about a year ahead of us. There is a Henderson parade for the women's suffrage celebration that is coming up. We are going to be a part of that, and we are excited about it. I just want to say I support this, and thank you again for what you have done.

**Chair Monroe-Moreno:**

Thank you for your support of this legislation.

**Elisa Cafferata, representing Nevada Commission for Women:**

The last time we discussed the possibility of this license plate, the Nevada Commission for Women had not had a chance to vote on the legislation. We very rarely take a position unless the full commission is unanimously in support. However, we have had the opportunity to vote, and we officially support this legislation.

To respond to a couple of the questions asked, the Nevada Commission for Women is in communication with many organizations, such as the university, the AAUW [American Association of University Women], and the League of Women Voters. There are many folks who are interested in the history of this state, so we will be looking for input on design. We will be consulted. I know the last time we had this bill, the DMV was under time deadlines to get it through the whole process of approval. We are very aware of the timelines and will be as expeditious as possible in supporting it. The final design is up to the DMV for safety reasons.

We appreciate the support. As a volunteer member of the Nevada Commission for Women, it would be nice to have some ability to have money to work the programs that we are undertaking, such as the exhibit at the Capitol that we are replicating in Las Vegas. We would like to continue that type of work around the state. This is a great way for you to help us support our work, and we hope you support the bill.

**Marlene Lockard, representing Nevada Women's Lobby:**

We, too, support this bill. We are very appreciative of a mechanism to help fund the good work that the Nevada Commission for Women has undertaken since it has been reconstituted. We appreciate this measure and ask for your support.

**Chair Monroe-Moreno:**

Is there any further testimony in support of A.B. 499? [There was none.] Is there anyone present who would like to testify in opposition to the bill? [There was no one.] Is there anyone present who would like to testify as neutral to the bill?

**Marty Elzy, Management Analyst, Division of Central Services and Records,  
Department of Motor Vehicles:**

With me today is my daughter, Emilee Elzy. We are participating in Bring Your Child to Work Day. Despite knowing I was coming to the session, she wanted to attend, so she is getting quite the education today.

**Chair Monroe-Moreno:**

It is great to have you with us. Thanks for joining us.

**Marty Elzy:**

On behalf of the DMV, we are here in the neutral position. I am happy to answer any questions. I can address the question about motorcycle plates. We probably will need to amend the language because it does specifically call out automobiles. Other bills have said "license plates." We would want to make sure we include language for motorcycles.

Additionally, as a point of clarification for the design, we do have to limit the design to the left one-third portion of the license plate as part of compliance. As soon as we are able to get a sample of a design, we can begin some preliminary work pending the approval. We do want to start taking the preregistration effective July 1. In order for us to be able to release on January 1, 2020, we would like any head start we can get.

**Chair Monroe-Moreno:**

We are working on that and will get it to you as soon as possible. To you, Miss Emilee, we are here to be the inspiration to the next generation. While you are here, meet as many of the legislators and lobbyists as you can. We want you to know that any dream you have is attainable. There is nothing you cannot achieve. Enjoy your day with us.

**Emilee Elzy, Private Citizen, Carson City, Nevada:**

Thank you.

**Chair Monroe-Moreno:**

Are there any questions from the Committee? [There were none.] Seeing no further testimony in neutral, are there any closing remarks from the sponsor? [There were none.] I will close the hearing on Assembly Bill 499. I will open the hearing for Senate Bill 154 (1st Reprint).

**Senate Bill 154 (1st Reprint): Requires the adoption of regulations authorizing certain renewable natural gas activities. (BDR 58-108)**

**Dwayne McClinton, Administrator, Public Affairs, Southwest Gas Corporation:**

To help with any questions the Committee may have, with me are Jose Esparza, Vice President of Customer Engagement; and John Olenick, Director of Gas Supply. Thank you for allowing us to present this bill. I would first like to briefly go over the bill and then talk about what renewable natural gas is and the benefits of renewable natural gas, and then identify some key sections of the bill.

Senate Bill 154 (1st Reprint) directs the Public Utilities Commission of Nevada (PUCN) to adopt regulations to create a regulatory framework that will allow natural gas utilities to invest in renewable natural gas activities that are approved by the PUCN. This bill is consistent with our biogas and renewable natural gas tariffs, which are approved in our most recent rate case filing. The bill also adds a new section to *Nevada Revised Statutes* Chapter 704. Please note, we have worked with the Bureau of Consumer Protection of the Office of the Attorney General and the PUCN on the language before you today.

Renewable natural gas is to capture in a biomethane, clean it to pipeline-quality gas, and service to our customers. Examples of how to collect biomethane is from wastewater treatment facilities, dairy farms, agriculture, and food waste.

Some of the benefits of renewable natural gas include the reduction or avoidance of emissions or air pollutants or greenhouse gases, creating jobs in the sustainable energy field, and increasing the diversity of Nevada's renewable energy supply portfolio.

The section of the bill I do want to highlight is section 8, which details the actual process. Subsection 1 speaks to the development of the regulations. Subsection 2 speaks to the environmental benefits of renewable natural gas activities. Subsection 3 provides examples of activities that may be approved. Finally, subsection 4 speaks to goals that utilities will endeavor to achieve. This bill will become effective upon passage and approval for the purpose of adopting any regulations and performing any other preparatory administrative tasks necessary, and October 1, 2019, for all other purposes.

**Chair Monroe-Moreno:**

Are there any questions from the Committee?

**Assemblyman Ellison:**

Was there any opposition to this bill in the Senate? I think this is a great bill to help lower costs for consumers.

**Dwayne McClinton:**

The Clean Energy Group and the Coalition for Renewable Natural Gas, of which we are still somewhat an affiliated member, were opposed in the Senate. Their issue was that it put Southwest Gas Corporation as a utility at an advantage over public companies that want to invest in renewable natural gas. To date, no public or any other entity has invested in any renewable energy projects here in Nevada.

**Assemblyman Carrillo:**

Section 8, subsection 4, paragraphs (a) through (c) give a timeline and percentages for different years. What happens if these timelines and percentages are not met?

**John Olenick, Director, Gas Supply, Southwest Gas Corporation:**

Those are aspirational goals. There is no penalty if we do not meet them. Given that there are no projects in Nevada now where we could get renewable natural gas into our pipeline system, we did not feel the need for a requirement because we are not sure how big the supply market is at this time. We think we can grow into those percentages. For 3 percent by 2035, we may be able to go above that, but we are not sure at this point.

**Assemblyman Carrillo:**

What is the definition of injectable gas?

**John Olenick:**

When biogas is produced from a wastewater treatment facility or a landfill, it is not what we would call pipeline-quality gas. In other words, there needs to be water, maybe carbon dioxide, or other impurities that need to be removed to get 90 to 95 percent methane. That 90 to 95 percent methane would meet pipeline specifications and can be injected into

a natural gas pipeline. If the percentage were below 90 percent, it would not be pipeline quality and could not be injected. My definition of injectable gas would be pipeline-quality natural gas or renewable natural gas.

**Assemblyman Carrillo:**

Regarding the renewable natural gas, what is the British Thermal Unit (BTU) rating? How good of a gas is the renewable gas compared to what we are used to?

**John Olenick:**

It would be equivalent to the conventional natural gas we get through our pipeline from conventional wells located throughout the United States. The BTU quality is somewhere around 1,000 BTU per standard cubic foot, and renewable natural gas would also have to meet those requirements. We have a requirement in our tariff, but I do not remember the exact BTU content. I think it is around 950 BTU. As long as it meets that 950 BTU, it would be pipeline-quality gas.

**Assemblyman Carrillo:**

It is more for my own knowledge. These are questions I probably could have asked when I spoke to you yesterday, but I had not had the opportunity to go through the bill until last night.

**Chair Monroe-Moreno:**

For clarification, you said there are no renewable natural gas facilities in Nevada now. Does this have the potential for bringing job opportunities to the state?

**Dwayne McClinton:**

Yes.

**Chair Monroe-Moreno:**

Do we have a workforce already in line to start building those facilities, or will there be a workforce component to train a workforce, or would you be bringing people in from out of state to build those plants?

**John Olenick:**

I believe there is enough construction experience in Nevada to be building these types of facilities. I am sure if Southwest Gas were to actually build, own, and operate one of these facilities, we would be subcontracting and putting the contracts out to bid. Whether it is an in-state or out-of-state contractor, my guess is it would still create jobs in Nevada to build the facility and to run the facility once it is up and running.

**Chair Monroe-Moreno:**

Jobs for Nevadans always excite me, so I would encourage you to find more of your workforce here who are Nevada residents. Are there further questions?



**Assemblyman Ellison:**

I see the wastewater treatment plants burn off the gas. This bill would help capture that and reuse it. Is that correct?

**John Olenick:**

Yes, that is exactly what this bill would do. The gas being burned has not been cleaned to pipeline-quality specifications and the treatment plants cannot just release the methane into the atmosphere, so they will flare that gas off. With this process, we would capture that gas, clean it to pipeline quality, and inject it into a pipeline. It would be capturing wasted energy.

**Assemblyman Ellison:**

I think that is a great idea. Instead of burning it off, we can reuse it. Southwest Gas cannot do their own permitting or licensing and has to go through another process. Is that correct?

**Dwayne McClinton:**

Could you explain what you mean by process?

**Assemblyman Ellison:**

In other words, you have had to go through this hearing. Where do you go from here?

**John Olenick:**

The process after this is the PUCN would open a rulemaking and actually put the rules in place. We would then be able to go to the PUCN to get approval for projects if we wanted to get into this business, and also set up the actual timeline for how we could sell this renewable natural gas to our customers. There would be a whole rulemaking process that would occur after the legislation is passed. It is not really a license, it is more approval from the PUCN on how we are going to operate in the renewable natural gas field.

**Assemblyman Wheeler:**

I read an article the other day and saw a widely dispersed YouTube video about dairy farmers losing money due to the low price of milk. Many family dairies are going out of business. Would this also be a way to get revenue into some of these farms by capturing the methane from these farms? I believe that is part of your plan.

**John Olenick:**

Yes, that is a possibility that there are dairy farms in Nevada where the manure would be taken and put into a biodigester at some central location, hopefully close to a pipeline facility, where it could be turned into more pure methane, then cleaned up and injected into the pipeline facilities. That would provide an additional revenue stream for the dairy industry.

**Assemblyman Roberts:**

What do you think the timeline would be before we see the first plant in this state? I am just curious as to how long this would take.

**John Olenick:**

The regulatory process could take some time. If this bill is passed and placed into law by July, the PUCN might be able to get some rules in place by the end of the year. Once we get the rules in place and find the right facility and the right projects, the actual construction time is somewhere between one to two years, depending upon where the project is, how far away it is from a pipeline, and many other factors. It could be anywhere from two years to two and a half years, maybe sooner.

**Chair Monroe-Moreno:**

Seeing no further questions, I will open the hearing for those who are here or in Las Vegas to testify in support of Senate Bill 154 (1st Reprint). [There was no one.] Is there anyone present who would like to testify in opposition to the bill? [There was no one.] Is there anyone present who would like to testify as neutral to the bill? [There was no one.] Are there any final remarks? [There were none.] I will close the hearing on Senate Bill 154 (1st Reprint). I will open the hearing for Senate Bill 331 and welcome Senator Spearman to the table.

**Senate Bill 331: Designates the new Interstate Highway No. 11 as the Purple Heart Highway. (BDR S-78)**

**Senator Pat Spearman, Senate District No. 1:**

I am here to present Senate Bill 331 for your consideration. This bill designates the new Interstate Highway No. 11 as the Purple Heart Highway. As background, the Purple Heart Medal is specifically a combat decoration and our nation's oldest military medal. It was first created by George Washington in 1782 as a badge of military merit to recognize meritorious service. The Purple Heart Medal is now awarded to members of the Armed Forces of the United States who have either been wounded or killed as a result of any opposing armed force, an international terrorist attack, or the result of military operations while serving as part of a peacekeeping force.

The purpose of Senate Bill 331 is to designate Interstate Highway No. 11 as the Purple Heart Highway. The interstate highway is currently under construction in Nevada and Arizona, and will link Las Vegas and Phoenix. These are two of the largest cities in the country that are not connected by an interstate. As motorists travel on the highway in Nevada, it will pay tribute to the men and women who have been awarded the Purple Heart Medal and create a visual reminder to those who use the road that others have paid a high price for their freedom to travel and live in a free society.

This is what the bill will do: It requires the director of the Department of Transportation to erect and maintain suitable markers along the route of the highway located in Nevada, and authorizes the director to accept grants, gifts, and donations to help pay the costs of such markers and their maintenance.

That is the end of my presentation, but I would like to say I had an opportunity three weeks ago to meet U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel Tammy Duckworth. Some of you may remember she was a helicopter pilot and was shot down. She lost both of her legs. As veterans, there is a connection there that cannot really be explained. Everyone else was around her and talking, and I introduced myself. It was very emotional. When we are in the military, we do not ask why. It is one of the occupations where if they want us to jump, we ask how high. If they want us to run, we ask how far. When we are sent to places where others would not want to go, we go and we gladly serve our country. Some come back, and some do not. I think this is a reasonable way to pay tribute to the men and women who are still fighting in wars that are no longer on the front page. It is a reasonable way to recognize their service and to say, Thank you.

**Chair Monroe-Moreno:**

Thank you for bringing this bill. Are there any questions from the members?

**Assemblyman Ellison:**

Thank you so much for bringing this bill. I think this is so important. I just wish it could be expanded across the state. On every highway there should be a sign or a marker designating what this bill addresses.

**Chair Monroe-Moreno:**

I will open the hearing to those wishing to testify in support of the bill in Carson City and in Las Vegas.

**Len Yelinek, State Commander, Military Order of the Purple Heart:**

I wish to thank Senator Spearman. I could not do any better than her. I thank her for her support and for bringing this bill to the Committee. I hope you will vote favorably.

**Richard Small, Chairman, Nevada Veterans Foundation:**

This is something that I have been hoping for and talking about for ten years. I am going to get all broken up, but we are supporting it.

**Andrew LePeilbet, representing Military Order of the Purple Heart; and United Veterans Legislative Council, Nevada Department of Veterans Services:**

I am representing the Military Order of the Purple Heart. As Senator Spearman pointed out, these are our combat-wounded veterans—those thousands of us in the states who left our blood on the battlefields of the world. I am also here representing The United Veterans Legislative Council of the 251,000 veterans in our state. Today, we are a Purple Heart State, as labeled by this body and the Governor two years ago. Las Vegas, North Las Vegas, Carson City, Reno, Sparks, and other cities are Purple Heart Cities. We have started to recognize our killed and wounded in action through various recognitions and proclamations.

Our state joined the national Purple Heart Trail program, so Highway 80 is the Purple Heart Trail. However, our state does not have a Nevada Purple Heart Highway. Both the Military Order of the Purple Heart and the United Veterans Legislative Council highly endorse this bill. It is long overdue.

**Chair Monroe-Moreno:**

Is there anyone else here to testify in support? [There was no one.] Is there anyone present who would like to testify in opposition to the bill? [There was no one.] Is there anyone present who would like to testify as neutral to the bill? [There was no one.] Are there any closing remarks from the sponsor?

**Senator Spearman:**

I just want to leave you with this thought: All gave some; some gave all.

**Chair Monroe-Moreno:**

To everyone who came to be in the audience or to testify in support, I think I speak for everyone on the Committee when I say we thank you for the service you put in for our country. None of us could be where we are today had it not been for the sacrifices you all made for us. I will close the hearing for Senate Bill 331. Is there anyone here for public comment? [There was no one.]

This meeting is adjourned [at 2:15 p.m.].

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

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Lori McCleary  
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

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Assemblywoman Daniele Monroe-Moreno, Chair

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

## **EXHIBITS**

[Exhibit A](#) is the Agenda.

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