

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

**Eightieth Session
April 17, 2019**

The Committee on Health and Human Services was called to order by Chairwoman Lesley E. Cohen at 1:37 p.m. on Wednesday, April 17, 2019, in Room 3138 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.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Assemblywoman Lesley E. Cohen, Chairwoman
Assemblyman Richard Carrillo, Vice Chairman
Assemblyman Alex Assefa
Assemblywoman Bea Duran
Assemblywoman Michelle Gorelow
Assemblyman Gregory T. Hafen II
Assemblywoman Lisa Krasner
Assemblywoman Connie Munk
Assemblywoman Rochelle T. Nguyen
Assemblyman Tyrone Thompson
Assemblywoman Robin L. Titus

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Assemblyman John Hambrick (excused)

GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:

Senator Julia Ratti, Senate District No. 13



STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Marsheilah Lyons, Committee Policy Analyst
Karly O'Krent, Committee Counsel
Christian Thauer, Committee Manager
Terry Horgan, Committee Secretary
Alejandra Medina, Committee Assistant

OTHERS PRESENT:

Paul Shubert, Chief, Bureau of Health Care Quality and Compliance, Division of Public and Behavioral Health, Department of Health and Human Services
Marissa Schwartz, representing the Nevada Center for Assisted Living
Nova Murray, Deputy Administrator, Division of Welfare and Supportive Services, Department of Health and Human Services
David Castagnola, Social Services Program Specialist, Division of Welfare and Supportive Services, Department of Health and Human Services
Jack Robb, Deputy Director, Department of Wildlife
John T. Jones, Jr., Chief Deputy District Attorney, Clark County District Attorney's Office; and representing Nevada District Attorneys Association
Tom Wellman, Private Citizen, North Las Vegas, Nevada
Linda Gingras, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
Harry Beall, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada

Chairwoman Cohen:

[Roll was taken. Committee rules and protocol were explained.] We are going to take the bills out of order, so I will invite Senator Ratti up to present Senate Bill 92.

Senate Bill 92: Revises provisions concerning certain group housing. (BDR 40-526)

Senator Julia Ratti, Senate District No. 13:

Senate Bill 92 addresses an issue most of us are deeply familiar with. I had the privilege of serving on the 2017-2018 Interim Legislative Committee on Health Care. During that time we reviewed the results of a legislative audit that looked at some of the devastating challenges we face in some of our congregate living situations—very specifically, group living situations where we are housing the seriously mentally ill. Some of the images and concerns that were raised in that report are seared into my memory. I know you have already heard other bills during this legislative session that address some of the concerns found in that audit. We want to make sure we do not have Nevadans living in those kinds of conditions again.

This bill is very narrowly focused on one piece of that. The problem we are trying to solve with S.B. 92 is the problem of unlicensed referral agencies. These are agencies that typically receive patients as they are discharged from a medical facility. These agencies then refer that patient to a congregate living setting and oftentimes receive a commission or a payment for doing so. The hospital or medical facility in that case may feel as though this is a qualified

discharge—that they have released this patient to a safe setting by handing the patient off to this referral agency—but we really have no way of making sure that is true. In fact, there are instances in which we know these folks are being transferred to unlicensed group homes or group homes where the conditions are inappropriate.

How this bill seeks to solve that problem is pretty straightforward. The bill seeks to remedy the situation by requiring the licensing of referral agencies and making sure they are providing referrals to the appropriate settings. The bill also gives some direction to the Department of Health and Human Services to dig a little deeper and work to make sure that if there are group homes functioning without licenses, we do a better job of finding them and making sure that, if they meet the qualifications for licensing, we get them licensed. If they do not meet those qualifications, we must make sure that they are no longer conducting business.

The first section of the bill brings in the definition of a referral agency. Currently we do have one type of group home that does require a licensed referral agency, but we have multiple other types of congregate living where that is not required. This bill sweeps those types of congregate living into that requirement, so if you are going to refer to those homes, you have to have a license to do so. It is a pretty straightforward bill and relatively short, so I will respect your ability to read and not walk you through it step by step.

Assemblyman Thompson:

We can make laws around this, but the issue is mainly about enforcement. Where is the enforcement in this bill, or do we need to spell it out more completely? The local jurisdictions are where some of the challenges are. We can have some great laws, but if they are not properly enforced locally, we are losing out.

Senator Ratti:

My understanding is oversight of the referral agencies that currently exist and are currently licensing referrals to some facilities for groups is provided by the state and not by the local entities. Without any licensing process in place, they do not have any authority to monitor these referral agencies. My understanding is that when we go through the regulatory process to create the license, at that time the enforcement would be spelled out as well.

Assemblyman Thompson:

I would like someone from the state to answer if we have the capacity to enforce this.

Paul Shubert, Chief, Bureau of Health Care Quality and Compliance, Division of Public and Behavioral Health, Department of Health and Human Services:

In response to the question regarding the enforcement piece, this bill does not change anything with regard to those tools we have to enforce requirements for unlicensed facilities. However, there already are requirements within the statutory language that allow us to fine operators who operate facilities without a license.

Assemblyman Thompson:

My question was, do we, as a state, and within the Division of Public and Behavioral Health, Department of Health and Human Services, have the capacity to address all these enforcement needs?

Paul Shubert:

If you are asking about capacity through resources, yes, we have the personnel to actually enforce these requirements. Regulations have been adopted—at least for the residential facilities for groups—and this will require us to modify those regulations. Those regulations will allow us additional capacity to enforce the statutory requirement.

Assemblyman Carrillo:

How are they going to find these group homes that are not licensed?

Senator Ratti:

Going back to the last question, I want to be sure there is clarity. The new licensing in this bill is for referral agencies. This does not change any of the licensing for existing congregate care facilities. The new oversight function—making sure that there is a licensing requirement, some regulation, and some enforcement—is to the referral agency. We are finding that there are some bad actors who are taking money for referring people to facilities that are not licensed. This is about licensing the referral agency.

We have had some great conversations with the folks at the Department of Health and Human Services. They have quite a few tools they can use to identify some of these folks who might be operating like a group home, but who are not actually licensed. As an example, one of the things they can do is partner with local government to review business licenses. Someone will pull a business license, and on the description of "business," they will describe themselves as "group home." However, when that license is compared to the registered and licensed group homes, there is no such entity. So that is one way—match up business licenses from local jurisdictions to our list of licensed facilities.

Another example is by evaluating our Medicaid rolls and doing a search to see if there are multiple Medicaid recipients all living at one address. If there are eight Medicaid recipients at one address who are not family members, yet that address does not come up as being a licensed group home facility, it at least raises the question as to whether we should go out and take a look at what is going on there. Those are some of the ideas about how they could start taking a more aggressive approach to finding the folks out there who are, for all intents and purposes, operating as a group home but have not received the appropriate licensure.

Assemblywoman Titus:

Having been part of an interim subcommittee two sessions ago that also looked at some of the issues and concerns about these homes, there certainly are changes that need to be made. Just to be clear, this is not about the group homes themselves, but about the agencies that

would refer to these homes. How many agencies do that job of referring? Do they refer to other entities? How will you find these folks and how do they get the capacity to make that referral?

Senator Ratti:

By their very nature, they are going to be somewhat difficult to locate because they are unlicensed. There is no database nor do we have any records of them; however, what we are seeing—and this was primarily in Clark County—is folks lingering outside hospitals waiting for discharge. When that dischargee comes out, these folks will have a conversation with that recently released patient. The social worker or other hospital representative or family member who brings that patient out will be led to believe the person is from a referral agency and is told the patient can be admitted to a group home. There is going to need to be some cooperation between the Department of Health and Human Services and the medical facilities.

To a certain degree, we must hold the medical facilities more accountable. They are already required in law to have a qualified discharge. The situation at this point is that they think they are having a qualified discharge, but they are not necessarily getting one. What has been discussed as part of the regulatory process is looking at it not being a qualified discharge unless the patient is released to a licensed referral agency. Medical facilities would no longer be able to release to those nonlicensed referral agencies, which would essentially put the agencies out of business.

Chairwoman Cohen:

Are there any issues with out-of-state versus in-state companies?

Senator Ratti:

Not that I am aware of, but I lack the knowledge to be able to answer that directly.

Chairwoman Cohen:

I know with some of the homes we are having issues with out-of-state providers versus in-state providers, and I can imagine there being some online referral sources from out-of-state that might be an issue.

Senator Ratti:

This is really a very short transactional period, and they get a very quick paycheck for doing that referral. They basically get a commission for doing that referral, and then they move on.

Chairwoman Cohen:

Are there any other questions?

Assemblyman Assefa:

What is the time frame? How long does the patient spend between discharge and being in the hands of the licensed or unlicensed referral agency and the destination—the group home?

Senator Ratti:

I may not be the best-qualified person to answer that question. What brought this to our attention was the very specific, targeted population of the seriously mentally ill. We know one of the challenges for our overall health care system is that there are not enough community-based resources where we have appropriate placement for the seriously mentally ill. One of the challenges often expressed by the medical facilities is that they have folks either sitting in emergency rooms or, once they are discharged, who are in the care of the medical facility long past when that medical facility has any need to provide them with medical care. They are waiting for an appropriate placement for the behavioral health care and the housing they need.

There is a pretty broad time range across the state dependent upon how many community-based services have been created. Again, there are a number of bills going through the session to address the issue of congregate care—making sure we have safe and appropriate group living situations that have an additional level of wraparound services for that targeted population. The problem we are trying to address, though not necessarily spoken to in this bill, is the length of time someone who is seriously mentally ill is staying in a facility that is no longer appropriate while waiting for appropriate housing and services.

Chairwoman Cohen:

Seeing no other questions, we will move to support in Las Vegas or in Carson City.

Marissa Schwartz, representing the Nevada Center for Assisted Living:

We appreciate the fine work from the interim Legislative Committee on Health Care and what they have done. This bill is especially important because of the recent news reports of vulnerable people being sent from hospitals to unlicensed and unregulated homes where they have suffered death and other catastrophic consequences and outcomes.

Every care facility and group home should be licensed. This is incredibly important. Also, we need to make sure that everyone who refers individuals to these homes has a license as well. Senate Bill 92 fills this hole. This is fantastic legislation and we strongly encourage your support. I would also like to thank Senator Ratti for proposing this legislation.

Chairwoman Cohen:

Is there anyone else for support? [There was no reply.] Seeing no one, we will move to opposition. Is there anyone in the south or in Carson City? [There was no reply.] Seeing no one, do we have anyone wishing to speak as neutral in Las Vegas or in Carson City? [There was no reply.] With that, we will conclude the hearing on S.B. 92.

We will open the hearing on Senate Bill 17.

Senate Bill 17: Makes various changes relating to enforcement of child support obligations. (BDR 38-200)

**Nova Murray, Deputy Administrator, Division of Welfare and Supportive Services,
Department of Health and Human Services:**

There are 89,000 cases currently in the child support program. About 50,000 of those cases have arrears greater than \$500. In state fiscal year 2018, we collected \$221 million for families in Nevada. We have five major processes we complete in the program:

1. Locating parents;
2. Establishing paternity;
3. Establishing financial and medical support;
4. Enforcement; and
5. Collecting and distributing payments.

Along with that, we compete for incentives nationally. Between the county and state programs, we bring about \$3.5 million in incentives annually. Those are pretty much based on things similar to the five processes we already do.

This bill comes forward as a collaborative effort between the state and nine participating counties. Through strategic planning, we have been working toward passage of this legislation for about three years. It will provide support for children with noncustodial parents, and it is an effort to help Nevadans achieve safe, stable, and healthy lives. The collaborative efforts of this team have taken the program from approximately 52nd in the nation ten years ago to 25th in 2016. Unofficially, we have moved to 13th in 2017, and we should get some final information on that soon. All indicators show that in 2018 we will make another marked improvement.

I would like to define the problem we are presenting in Senate Bill 17. Pursuant to federal mandates and existing state regulations, the Department of Wildlife is authorized, upon receipt of a court order, to suspend recreational licenses for noncompliance with a child support obligation. This effective enforcement remedy is not being used based on the level of effort required to execute the process. It requires staff time and state and county attorneys to obtain a court order, placing an additional burden on an already overburdened court system. Also, the state can only suspend licenses that are granted for greater than six months, minimizing the remedy. We would like to solve that by supplanting the judicial process with an administrative law to alleviate the workload on the court system and on county/state staff and to provide a more effective enforcement remedy to increase child support collections. Also, the elimination of the six-month exemption avails this remedy, when appropriate, to a greater number of cases.

This bill seeks to strengthen an existing enforcement remedy for nonpayment of court-ordered child support obligations; it removes the requirement for a district court to issue an order to provide the suspension of the recreational license for those who have child support in arrears, reducing the burden on the court. It also establishes an administrative process for suspending the license due to noncompliance. It is similar to the way we handle drivers' licenses. We currently suspend drivers' licenses through an administrative process that has been in effect for approximately 22 years. It includes provisions for due process—

considering and including notification requirements and a court hearing when it is contested. It removes the provision in existing law prohibiting the suspension of recreational licenses that expire less than six months after the license is issued. It authorizes the Nevada Department of Wildlife to suspend a recreational license upon receipt of the notice and after a 30-day contest period. It provides for the reinstatement of a recreational license upon receipt of notice from our program indicating that the individual is now compliant. It expedites the license suspension process which will result in increased collections delivered more quickly to families.

The existing law that passed over 20 years ago, prior to a centralized license database, left the Department of Wildlife with some difficult issues. Now that there is a single, streamlined system, they are able to put the information into their system and information can be passed back and forth between us. We are now in the process of creating an interface to automate this process because it is not currently in place. We send information electronically, but we do not send and receive.

The goal of this recreational license suspension is not meant to be punitive, but rather to get the attention of the nonpayer and to cultivate and encourage regular payments. Sometimes we do not take that license. Something very important to a hunter is that hunting license. If we can get them to call us because the hunter has been notified that he or she will no longer have a license, often they will set up regular recurring support payments. We will go ahead and give that individual a license for the season and build a nice relationship so we can collect those payments. And of course, it will increase collections for Nevada's families.

Assemblyman Carrillo:

You are saying that right now you can suspend an individual's driver's license. What you now want to do is also suspend their potential to go hunting. Is that correct?

Nova Murray:

Yes, that is correct.

Assemblyman Carrillo:

I did not realize that many hunters were in arrears on their child support payments. How are they going to go hunting without a driver's license unless they are trapping somewhere close to home? Are there that many people who are hunters who are also in arrears on their child support that this legislation is needed that badly?

Nova Murray:

I hope not. I hope that this is just something we have in place and that maybe we catch a hunter or fisherman who is in arrears. Even if there is only one family, that one family might need it. In the meantime, if it were an interface, it would be worth our time to do it even if we got a small population. Having grown up here in Nevada and having been raised by hunters and fishers, I am hoping those are not the people who are not paying. However, there is no way to know until we tap into the system. We have a lot of families in the Elko area

where there is a lot of hunting, and that is the primary group that suspends hunting licenses for our program, so it is happening.

David Castagnola, Social Services Program Specialist, Division of Welfare and Supportive Services, Department of Health and Human Services:

To further clarify, the ability to suspend hunting and fishing licenses currently exists as a judicial process. We are trying to simplify it to an administrative process similar to how we suspend drivers' licenses. This will also help alleviate the burden on the court system. It will also free up resources within the child support agencies that could be spent doing other casework rather than building a court case and getting on the court calendar. It is an attempt to expedite the process as well.

Assemblyman Thompson:

You say you have been working on this for three years, but you seem to be targeting one group. Did you look across the board at all possible licenses? Where does this list end? You go to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and now you are trying to go into this sector. What is next and what has been talked about during this three-year process?

Nova Murray:

This used to be done annually, but now we do it biennially to match the legislative session. The group, consisting of state and county staff, meets for a week-long strategic planning session and they look at best practices used by the federal government and other states. This is one remedy that is effective.

David Castagnola:

State child support programs receive 66 percent of their funding from the federal government, so following federal requirements is essential to ensure our continued funding. Federal law requires states to have the ability to suspend drivers' licenses and recreational licenses—which include fishing and hunting licenses—as well as occupational and professional licenses. To answer the question about what other licenses we are looking at, those laws go back to 1997 and give us the ability to suspend all professional licenses—doctors, lawyers, accountants, engineers—as well as occupational licenses for barbers, contractors, et cetera.

Assemblyman Thompson:

Why did you not just have an omnibus bill that would include all these licenses? Why are we incrementally doing it, and how did you prioritize and pick just certain sectors?

David Castagnola:

I do not believe it is being done incrementally. The laws for the past 22 years have authorized the suspension of occupational and professional licenses. What we are trying to do here is go from a judicial process to an administrative process on hunting licenses. As Nova Murray indicated, there is a significant portion of the population in this state, as well as nationally, that hunts and fishes. To illustrate that, according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, there are 163,000 licensed hunters and fishers in Nevada. Out of that population, a

significant portion have child support cases, some of which are in arrears. All of our enforcement tools are utilized on an as-needed basis. If we do not get a response, we keep trying to open up lines of communication. We will use one enforcement tool. If that does not work, then we will have to increase the pressure to try another enforcement tool. Because so many people in this state hunt and fish, simplifying the process and conserving resources for both the child support program as well as the judiciary by going from a judicial to an administrative process is a logical necessity.

Assemblywoman Titus:

You said that there are 163,000 licensed hunters and/or fishers in Nevada. Many of us, myself included, get a combined hunting/fishing license, so I assume you counted all of those. Then you said that there is a significant portion who may not pay child support. You said there is already a judicial process to suspend hunting or fishing licenses, and you are trying to avoid that by making this administrative. How many times have you gone through the judicial process to suspend a license?

David Castagnola:

In our computer system, we do not have the ability to cull that information. I would like to clarify. I said that there are 163,000 hunters and fishers in Nevada according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. We did not compile that data. That is information provided in a survey by the federal agency. Our colleague from the Department of Wildlife may be able to offer more up-to-date statistics about how many license privileges are issued in the state.

Assemblywoman Titus:

What I am more interested in is how many have gone through the judicial process and been suspended so I can wrap my mind around the numbers we are talking about here. I understand what you are trying to do. You are trying to make sure that the child support mandated by the federal government is indeed paid. Because we hold our hunting and fishing rights so dear, this is another way to get folks to pay who could and should be paying. But I want to know how big the problem is because you can already suspend their drivers' licenses and other things. I want to know how many times you have had to go to court because you are trying to avoid going to the court now. How big is this problem?

Jack Robb, Deputy Director, Department of Wildlife:

My understanding is that this tool has not been exercised very much in the past. Part of the problem is that the hunter gets a tag, they find out who has a tag, and by the time they go through the judicial process, that deer is already in the freezer and at the taxidermist. So it really has not been a tool that can be expedited fast enough to have the consequence we are trying to get to. With our new licensing system, we have combined all of our hunter education, boating, fishing, et cetera, into a one-stop shop which makes it easier to compile and more quickly research for their division once we get that interface built. It will be something that is much more user-friendly in the future. Plus, there is a federal requirement that when we sell a hunting and/or fishing license—even to a 12-year-old—we are mandated to collect a social security number for this particular purpose. We just have not been able to utilize it because of the timing issue.

Assemblywoman Titus:

The way I am looking at the bill, there is no way to tell whether these folks are professional guides or professional hunters or trappers. You mention you have an avenue to take away an occupational license, but there is no differentiation in this bill whether it is a professional hunter, trapper, or guide versus someone who just casually likes to go fishing.

Nova Murray:

We have the authority to take the trapping license, so we would do them separately. This interface may bring us both pieces of information, and we may have to take two processes to get it done. Initially through this, we would only be taking the hunting license, and we would go after the occupational license potentially through another process.

Assemblywoman Duran:

Do you have the ability to take them to court for any type of license suspension?

Nova Murray:

For their occupational/professional licenses. Would trapping be an occupational license?

Jack Robb:

Trapping is not considered occupational; it is a sport people engage in. But we do license guides, taxidermists, and other things like special use permits to collect wildlife for other uses. We do have multiple licenses, but trapping is the same as a hunting and fishing license. We have about 90,000 hunting licenses; about 120,000 fishing licenses; and 40,000 boats are registered. These are round numbers. Some of these people, such as myself, have a registered boat, a hunting license, and a fishing license. If I were someone in arrears in my child support payments, you could take three privileges away from me at one time and an associated tag.

Assemblywoman Duran:

It is my understanding that you are still going to use the other process by going to court, but you are just trying to streamline the process to get it done faster by using the recreational license through the Department of Wildlife's database. Is that correct?

Nova Murray:

This does implement an administrative process in which I would notify the individual without going to court. I am able to provide all the notification, get the response, hopefully get the payer to contact us, and then suspend the license at that point. It has a similar process—they have some hearing rights and they can contact us and ask to keep their licenses. They can start making payments. They can let us know where they have been, where they are working, and they can become a payer at that point. We do not have to suspend their licenses. We can use it as a tool to say, "You can keep your license; send us a portion of the payment, and can we expect payments on a regular basis?" We would like to get a conversation going and, hopefully, establish a good payer.

Assemblywoman Nguyen:

Right now, when you are able to suspend someone's driver's license, there is no distinction between that and a commercial driver's license, correct?

David Castagnola:

That is correct; there is no distinction. There is the ability through DMV and their processes for someone with a suspended license to request a restricted license that will allow that individual to go to work.

Chairwoman Cohen:

When someone is paying child support, it can be paid directly to the other parent, in which case you are not involved, or they pay through the state. How many open cases do you have right now with children who are receiving child support being paid through your office?

Nova Murray:

There are 89,000 cases currently coming through the state. About 50,000 of those have arrears greater than \$500.

Chairwoman Cohen:

We talked about federal compliance. Are we out of compliance if we do not pass this bill?

Nova Murray:

We are not. Currently, we can take all of the licenses through a judicial process. We can go to court, ask a judge to put it on paper, and we can send the court order to the Department of Wildlife and get it taken care of.

Chairwoman Cohen:

To clarify the difference between the judicial process versus the administrative process—if a parent is in arrears and working through your office, or the other parent is asking your office for help—what does that look like when you are dealing with both the administrative and the judicial sides? Is that parent who is in arrears going to receive notice about the licenses you are going to go after administratively?

Nova Murray:

I would do it in a tiered process. I would start at the lowest level that I could take from the individual. I would not necessarily go straight to taking the driver's license. I might tier it so I have some leverage to try to get the individual to call me, try to get that individual to work with me, and I would not take everything at one time. I might say, "Oh, I need your hunting license because you are not paying your child support." If that does not get the person's attention, maybe I would then go after the driver's license. You would tier through the process and, hopefully, get that individual's attention.

Chairwoman Cohen:

At the same time, would you also be having a judicial case to have them held in contempt?

Nova Murray:

We would try all of the lower processes. Contempt is a really big piece now and is something we cannot use unless we absolutely know that they have the means to pay and that they are absolutely not paying. If we know they have a job, if we know they work, if we know we have the appropriate order, and they absolutely refuse to pay, then we would go for a contempt order.

Chairwoman Cohen:

What is the average amount you receive for arrears payments?

David Castagnola:

That depends on what the court orders. As far as what the average arrears payment is, I would have to look at statistics and get that information to you. Let me backtrack and explain the due process that is involved in suspending a license—either judicially or administratively. The existing law requires that we provide a notice to the individual that we are about to suspend a license—whether it is a driver's license, a hunting license, or a fishing license through the judicial process, or the occupational or professional license. The person who owes child support and is in arrears then has 30 days either to bring his or her arrears current by contacting the enforcing authority—the child support office—and entering into a repayment agreement of some negotiated amount, or to continue through the process to a court hearing. If the individual has requested a hearing, there is an additional requirement that prior to the hearing taking place, the enforcing authority—the state or the district attorney's office—and the individual meet and try to negotiate a conclusion without going to court. Only then would it go to court in either an administrative process or the judicial process. The difference between the two is, after the 30-day period to contest and if a resolution was not found, in the administrative process the child support agency would issue a notice directly to the licensing agency as opposed to having to get on a docket and going to court for a hearing.

Assemblyman Carrillo:

As an example, I go to Utah to go fishing. I will stop by the local bait and tackle shop, fill out a form, and give them my driver's license. If I stay in Nevada, I will get a fishing license somewhere; will they be able to pull my information up at that point in time out of a database and tell me that I owe child support and cannot get a fishing license? How do you stop that?

Jack Robb:

The numbers I gave you for hunting and fishing licenses and boating are people who hold annual licenses. We also have people who buy one-day, two-day, and three-day licenses. We also have people who buy multiple one-, two-, and three-day licenses. If the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services determines that we have someone repeatedly buying one-day licenses, we could flag that account and tell that individual that he or she is not eligible to purchase a license. We have people who are unable to apply for big game licenses because they are in waiting periods or because they did not turn in their hunter and trapper questionnaires. We have things built into our system, so we can hold up the sale of a license to someone who is not eligible.

Assemblyman Carrillo:

In section 8 it says "This act becomes effective on July 1, 2019, and expires by limitation on the date on which the provisions of 42 U.S.C. . . ." What does "expires by limitation" mean?

David Castagnola:

That language is in virtually all of Nevada statutes regarding child support license suspension. In 1997 when all these laws were enacted, the Legislature thought it best to have that language and it remains today. It is a sunset provision. If the federal government were to repeal the law requiring states to have laws regarding suspension of licenses for nonpayment of child support, the Nevada statute would also go away at that time. I think it is very unlikely that Congress would repeal that law.

Chairwoman Cohen:

Are there any other questions? [There was no reply.] We will call up anyone in support in either Las Vegas or in Carson City.

John T. Jones, Jr., Chief Deputy District Attorney, Clark County District Attorney's Office; and representing Nevada District Attorneys Association:

I am here on behalf of the Nevada District Attorneys Association in support of S.B. 17. In many of the counties, the district attorneys are the individuals who work to collect money, especially from individuals who are in arrears. As you heard alluded to during the bill presentation, we receive federal incentives. The more money we collect, the more federal incentives we get. Every tool we have at our disposal to decrease the number of people in arrears and increase child support is important.

Earlier, you asked for numbers; individuals in Clark County are going to obtain those exact numbers. When I get them, I will provide them to the Committee. However, anecdotally, hundreds of drivers' licenses are suspended by our office annually for failure to pay child support, but significantly fewer hunting licenses are suspended—possibly a handful—in Clark County. I am sure in the northern part of the state, the numbers would be much greater.

Chairwoman Cohen:

Thank you, I would appreciate that. Could you also get information about timelines and what it takes before someone's driver's license, hunter's license, or professional license is pulled?

John Jones:

I will be more than happy to get that for you.

Chairwoman Cohen:

Thank you, I appreciate that. Is there anyone else in support? [There was no reply.] Seeing no one, we will move to opposition in either Las Vegas or in Carson City. [There was none.] Seeing no one, we will move to neutral. [There was none.] With that, we will close the hearing on S.B. 17. Is there anyone for public comment in Las Vegas or in Carson City?

Tom Wellman, Private Citizen, North Las Vegas, Nevada:

I am President of the Nevada State Education Association Retired Committee. I would like to read testimony from a member into the record regarding insurance:

After retiring from working for the Clark County School District for 34 years, I was surprised to find out that after I turned 65, I was not eligible for Medicare insurance coverage unless I was willing to pay double the rate at over \$700 per month for the basic coverage and another \$300 per month for the supplemental coverage.

I did not qualify for the Medicare insurance because I only worked an extra job for 32 quarters of the 40 needed. Instead of allowing me to pay the full price given to those who had 40 quarters, I would have to pay double that price. Getting insurance with any other company is not possible after age 65 because they all refer you to the Social Security Administration for Medicare coverage.

Clark County government employees are allowed to continue the insurance plan they had while working as long as they pay the premium at just over \$325 per month. School district employees are only offered a COBRA plan which expires 18 months after you retire.

Although I have applied at various businesses to work to obtain the 8 quarters needed, no company has even given me an interview.

For those of us who are fortunate enough to be well, paying over \$1,000 a month for insurance coverage that comes with a \$5,000 a year deductible means that you pay \$12,000 a year for something that gives you no benefit unless you become very ill.

This was submitted by Karen Sue Redlack. Karen was a secretary for the Clark County School District for 34 years, which was why she was offered a COBRA [Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985] plan.

Linda Gingras, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I come to you today to put a face on the problem of insurance for retirees. I worked for the Clark County School District (CCSD) for over 28 years and my husband and I both retired from the CCSD. I was told during that time that I would have a comfortable living through the Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS), and that I would have insurance—which did not happen.

When my husband turned 63, he was diagnosed with a very serious kind of cancer. He and I both kept working. He received hospitalization and he received insurance through the school district, and we made it through at that time. He still is very ill with cancer and has been put on a drug called Gleevec. Gleevec costs \$9,000 a month; insurance paid it for us for a long

time. However, when I was 62, my daughter gave birth to twins and I wanted to stay home and be a grandma. My husband said he would keep working until I was 65 so that my grandchildren could have me and I could have them.

He kept working even though he was very ill and we had insurance through CCSD and he had Medicare. We waited and got through those years and I became 65. He was going to retire, but then we were told there was no insurance available to us through CCSD except for COBRA. We tightened our belts and took the COBRA; there was no other option for us. We were both support staff employees. It was tough, but we kept on. We almost lost our house, but we were no fly-by-nights. We had insurance; we had PERS; we had planned for retirement. We thought we had done all the right things, but we were let down at the end.

My husband has to have Gleevec to ensure he lives—and that is pretty important to me, our grandkids, and our kids. It is a very sad thing because we are not just citizens who gave up. We worked, we went to school, we did what we were supposed to do, we were promised things, and we were told things that did not come to fruition.

So I am here to ask you to please help us to bring this problem of retirement health insurance forward. We need to put another face besides my own on insurance and we need to tell you that it is an important part of us. Even though Medicare is valuable, it will not pay for Gleevec. It does not pay \$9,000 a month for Gleevec, so it comes out of our income each and every month. I am happy to pay it because I want my husband alive, but it is really, really hard and it has taken away our retirement. It has taken away the fun things that we had planned and that we had earned. We did not expect this to happen to us, nor do most people. So I am asking and pleading with you to please help me to bring this issue forward into conversation. We, as retirees who were promised insurance, need to be able to obtain that insurance.

Harry Beall, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I live in Assembly District 3 and Senate District 3. You may have missed seeing it about a month ago, so let me summarize: On CBS's *Sunday Morning* broadcast [March 10, 2019], the critical need for rural health care was personalized with accounts of what happened to two families since the closing of Tonopah's Nye Regional Medical Center. That closing has made the nearest hospital 114 miles away in California. Reno is 200 miles north and Las Vegas is 200 miles south.

Emmy Merrow from Tonopah has two daughters. One daughter, Alyena, is two and a half years old and suffers from a catastrophic form of epilepsy called Dravet syndrome which has caused her severe brain damage. Emmy Merrow says on a bad day her daughter can seize 400 times. It was a nighttime drive on one of those bad days to that California hospital when it happened. Little Alyena stopped breathing while her mom was driving and suffered resultant brain damage. Emmy's husband is a Tonopah public servant. He came to Tonopah for a job in the sheriff's department. Emmy Merrow says her family has enough money to get by, but not to move.

The second person in the story is Elaine Minges. Her husband Curt took a job at the nearby solar plant. He has diabetes and thought he was managing it, but he woke up one time in the middle of the night gasping for air. It was a complication of his diabetes and with prompt medical attention, he probably would have lived. He died because of a lack of medical care there. Even the helicopter which might have saved him was 45 minutes out.

Besides being a couple of examples of some very tragic stories, there are still more consequences of not having hospitals in rural settings. When hospitals go, pharmacies, home health care services, emergency medical services, and hospices also leave. People are left with a medical desert in the middle of a desert.

Chairwoman Cohen:

Thank you, sir. We appreciate your coming and sharing with us. Is there anyone else for public comment in Las Vegas or in Carson City? [There was no reply.] Seeing no one, and with no comments from Committee members, we are adjourned [at 2:40 p.m.].

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Terry Horgan
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Assemblywoman Lesley E. Cohen, Chairwoman

DATE: _____

EXHIBITS

[Exhibit A](#) is the Agenda.

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