

**MINUTES OF THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS**

**Eightieth Session
May 31, 2019**

The Senate Committee on Government Affairs was called to order by Chair David R. Parks at 4:36 p.m. on Friday, May 31, 2019, in Room 2149 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 David R. Parks, Chair
Senator Melanie Scheible, Vice Chair
Senator James Ohrenschall
Senator Ben Kieckhefer
Senator Pete Goicoechea

GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:

Assemblywoman Brittney Miller, Assembly District No. 5
Assemblywoman Daniele Monroe-Moreno, Assembly District No. 1
Assemblywoman Jill Tolles, Assembly District No. 25

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jennifer Ruedy, Committee Policy Analyst
Heidi Chlarson, Committee Counsel
Suzanne Efford, Committee Secretary

OTHERS PRESENT:

Zach Conine, State Treasurer
Nicole O'Banion, Ombudsman, Office of Ombudsman for Victims of Domestic
Violence, Office of the Attorney General
Edith Duarte, SafeNest
Kimberly Mull, Exquisite
Melissa Holland, Awaken

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Sarah Adler, Nevada Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence
Gabrielle d'Ayr
Mikey Kelly, Chair, Nevada Democratic Veterans and Military Families Caucus
Jeoff Carlson
Catherine O'Mara, Nevada State Medical Association
Andy LePeilbet, Military Order of the Purple Heart; Disabled American Veterans
Mitch Roach, United Veterans Legislative Council
Dan Musgrove, Chiropractic Physicians' Board of Nevada
Helen Foley, Nevada Community Foundation
Miles Dickson, Chief of Staff, Office of the State Treasurer
Mark Fiorentino, John Ritter and The Ritter Charitable Trust
Vinson Guthreau, Nevada Association of Counties
Wes Henderson, Nevada League of Cities and Municipalities
Paul Moradkhan, Las Vegas Metro Chamber of Commerce
Kelly Crompton, City of Las Vegas
Neena Laxalt, Nevada Airports Association
JoVon Sotak, Office of Grant Procurement, Coordination and Management,
Department of Administration
Jenni Cartwright, Administrator, Administrative Services Division, Department
of Administration

CHAIR PARKS:

We will open the hearing with Assembly Bill 216.

ASSEMBLY BILL 216 (2nd Reprint): Requires the establishment of a database of information relating to funding opportunities for higher education.
(BDR 18-858)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN JILL TOLLES (Assembly District No. 25):

Over the Interim, I toured the Domestic Violence Resource Center. I was amazed at the programs it has available for individuals, mostly women, but some men and families. The Center provides counseling, physical resources, food, clothing, furniture and even housing for those who are part of their two-year program. They also have an amazing program to house the pets of those individuals.

In the course of that conversation about services, I asked if the two-year housing program also provides educational opportunities and connections to scholarships. A representative said that was something the Center had not yet

worked on. We had a conversation about how important it is that in addition to the resources available, at the end of the program, individuals should walk away with some sort of degree or certification to pursue a career to provide for themselves and their families. They would not remain financially vulnerable and fall back into the same circumstances they were in before.

In the first week of this Session, I was sharing this idea with the State Treasurer, Zach Conine. We came up with an idea of how we could help people connect with available scholarships to pursue educational opportunities. The problem is that there is no place to go to find those available scholarships.

Melissa Holland from Awaken, an organization that works with human trafficking victims, told me that she did not know where to connect the women they are helping with scholarship opportunities to pursue their educations. She assigned a staff member to look into it and found it was extremely complicated to find the information they were seeking.

Our plan would help not only that specific population of domestic violence and human trafficking survivors but every student and adult who might be interested in connecting with scholarship opportunities available on the federal, State and local levels to advance their careers, pursue new educational opportunities and degrees or a new line of work.

This bill will establish an online portal in a single location on the State Treasurer's website for individuals seeking scholarships, grants and other funding opportunities available for educational programs. This can be used by any member of the public. However, it is particularly useful for college students, career counselors, parents, families and K-12 students in planning for their futures after graduation or for adults seeking to change their careers or for opportunities to upscale their professions. As a mother of a soon-to-be-graduating high school senior, I wish this was in place because it would be helpful.

In addition, this bill seeks to establish a pilot program out of the Office of the Attorney General to conduct outreach and provide assistance to the population that inspired this bill in the first place—victims of domestic violence and sex trafficking. They will be able to learn about and apply for applicable programs to obtain new work skills and job opportunities to help lift them out of the cycle of financial vulnerability and abuse.

ZACH CONINE (State Treasurer):

Assembly Bill 216 requires the Office of the State Treasurer to maintain a public webpage containing information about sources of funding for higher education. The webpage would include a list of programs, scholarships, grants, student loans or other forms of financial assistance available to those seeking higher education. The lists would include relevant contact information regarding a program along with eligibility requirements. The database would be publicly available, overseen by the Office and linked to an "email me form" and a telephone number for anyone who needs additional information or assistance. This works quite well with the student loan ombudsman position in a bill that was passed earlier today through the Senate.

The Office of the State Treasurer is responsible for administering a number of college savings programs, including the Nevada Prepaid Tuition Program, the Nevada College Savings Plans, traditional 529 plans, the Governor Guinn Millennium Scholarship Program and the Nevada College Kick Start Program. This repository will help foster greater opportunities for a number of underserved communities, offset the rising costs of higher education, alleviate student loan debt and make saving for the future a priority for all Nevadans.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

There are all kinds of scholarships available. How far is your Office going to reach out and find every little scholarship being put forward by every community service group in the State?

TREASURER CONINE:

Originally, we were going to take only the larger scholarships already collected in a number of places. The universities keep track of their major scholarships. We have our major programs. However, we are going to be receptive, reach out and ask groups if they have scholarship information or have parties advise us if someone finds a scholarship. Our obligation is to provide as much information as we can that is relatively easy to obtain. We want to collect information on any small community-based or small private scholarships.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

We just passed a bill off the Senate Floor sponsored by Assemblyman Howard Watts that requires the Office of the State Treasurer to designate an ombudsman for student debt which includes student loan organizations. I notice we did not give you a position for the ombudsman. Will

this be someone in your Office who will get other duties as assigned? Will this position overlap somewhere?

TREASURER CONINE:

Within A.B. 383, which created the ombudsman, a funding mechanism will pay for an individual through the Endowment Account so the General Fund will not be impacted. That person will be a collector and distributor of information through the website. We get about 17,000 calls a year in the Office asking for information about the different programs we and the Nevada System of Higher Education offer. Our goal is to have the ombudsman collect that information and provide more of it online as opposed to receiving and answering that many calls.

ASSEMBLY BILL 383 (2nd Reprint): Provides for the designation of a Student Loan Ombudsman. (BDR 18-880)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN TOLLES:

As Treasurer Conine pointed out, his Office is fielding 17,000 calls a year. Once this is established, it will actually save time and free up some staff positions instead of fielding all those calls. The other advantage to this is it really is a one-stop repository of information. Right now, people must seek that out at each individual educational institution because it is not consolidated in one place. Private databases driven by advertising dollars may direct individuals doing the searches toward certain programs and certain scholarship availability. This would be an unbiased central repository available to all.

CHAIR PARKS:

Would you create a dedicated website to handle this, or are you using an established portal?

TREASURER CONINE:

We have the State Treasurer's website that receives traffic from unclaimed property and so forth. We would just create an additional page on the website with this information. We could then directly link into that page.

CHAIR PARKS:

Therefore, there is no fiscal note.

TREASURER CONINE:

Yes, that is correct.

NICOLE O'BANION (Ombudsman, Office of Ombudsman for Victims of Domestic Violence, Office of the Attorney General):

The Office of the Attorney General supports A.B. 216 and the establishment of what we will be calling the Education and Training Victim Assistance Program. The lack of access to resources for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking pursuing higher education or career advancement has been identified regularly and consistently as a gap hindering their ability to achieve security and freedom from violence for the long term.

The Office of the Attorney General envisions the implementation of this program to be facilitated through the direct and continued communication with domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking service providers, system advocates, prosecutors, and law enforcement Statewide. Press releases, brochures and information sheets along with a specialized section for the program on the Attorney General's website will be the methods used to promote this service.

Information on the program will also be provided at all domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking events sponsored or attended by the Attorney General's Ombudsman Division which will continue to raise awareness and expand the program's reach to the general public. In addition to the promotion of the program, the Attorney General's Ombudsman Division will use an advocate trained in a trauma-informed care, victim-centered approach and domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking dynamics to provide direct services to this special population by assisting them with information contained in the database.

I look forward to working with you and the State Treasurer in establishing this program so we can achieve our mission in supporting victims of violence.

EDITH DUARTE (SafeNest):

We want to thank the sponsor for bringing this bill forward. This is another resource for victims of domestic violence. We have been working with her the entire Session. This is another resource to help victims get through education and move forward.

KIMBERLY MULL (Exquisite):

I am representing Exquisite which works with women coming out of legal brothels in Nevada to transition out of that lifestyle and look for other means of

support. Exquisite is excited about this opportunity to have a resource for these women to seek educational opportunities and other resources specifically to transition into a different career.

I am a survivor of domestic violence. I got married when I was 20 years old. I was told by my husband, who only had an eighth grade education, since I had a high school education that I was not allowed to go to college. I would secretly order college books and catalogues and hide them from him. I eventually signed up for community college behind his back. I worked my way through community college. Through an academic scholarship, I transferred to a four-year university.

I got out of my domestic violence situation after eight years by transferring to a four-year university and moving into school housing on campus. For domestic violence victims, education can be and often is their means out of the situation. It is a way for them to escape their abusers, as in my case, to obtain a career, support themselves and have a future, which is why I am here in Nevada.

I support this bill and hope you will consider it for passage.

MELISSA HOLLAND (Awaken):

Awaken is an organization that works with women and youth in prostitution and human trafficking.

As I was sitting here thinking about this bill and the provisions it allows, I realize how often I take for granted what this bill could provide and the privilege of my education. I am here, have a voice, have this conversation and do not take that for granted. To offer access to those same opportunities is important for vulnerable populations and marginalized people. The women and girls we work with and the cognitive abilities they might have coming out of a life of trauma does not equip them to confront these barriers of confusion, phone calls and websites.

Awaken runs long-term, two-year transitional housing for women exiting prostitution and sexual exploitation. I asked our house manager, who is high-functioning, to view five different sites offering opportunities for scholarships, education and job training that we would want the women to access. I was reviewing her notes, and I would like to share some of them with you. She said:

I looked over the website. Couldn't figure it out. Couldn't figure out where to begin to look for the scholarship educational opportunities. There is some information about college and planning early for tuition. But not what our participants would be looking for. I would have given up very quickly after reading most of the info.

From another website she said: "A lot of information. Difficult to navigate, not clear on to find a point of contact or someone to call with questions." And it goes on and on in this maze to access what is available. To have it streamlined so that organizations are quickly able to have a point of contact is important when working with people who are often in crisis. We take for granted the ability to function, think clearly and get out of the fire. This gives us the opportunity to remove these barriers to clear and accessible information. Access to these services is why we need this. It is a maze to get to these right now. Imagine the trauma of being in fight or flight for years and then trying to navigate that maze. It is nearly impossible.

After reviewing all the sites, our house manager ended with: "There wasn't any site that really gave us anyone to call or talk to or really how to get started. It seemed like it was never-ending." That was from a high functioning professional woman working with this population. We support this bill and recognize the need for this provision.

SARAH ADLER (Nevada Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence):

As I am sure you are aware, victims are often trapped by economic insecurity. Of course, the threats by their batterers are also key, but they suffer from the barrier of economic instability. During her visit to the Domestic Violence Resource Center, it is clear that Assemblywoman Tolles absorbed the importance of victims finding pathways to economic stability. In her partnership with the State Treasurer, she is lighting the light of hope for economic stability through higher education—something that can produce a rewarding and profitable career.

We also had the opportunity to work frequently with Ms. O'Banion. We are confident in her and the Attorney General's commitment to this pilot program of outreach to victims of domestic violence to tie this together and test it to see how it works.

We support this bill, and we thank the sponsor and the Treasurer.

GABRIELLE D'AYR:

This fantastic idea can help many Nevadans other than just the communities previously mentioned. I am an unemployed veteran struggling to find employment. I received an associate's degree in English through the GI Bill. In 2019, that gets you nowhere. I am looking to reengage with my education and go back to school. I have taken my law school admission tests and have decided to be a human rights lawyer. I am looking for ways to help me be employed and give back to the world at large. So many people could be helped by this. It is such a simple fix. I hope you will vote affirmative and pass this bill.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN TOLLES:

Years ago, I taught at Truckee Meadows Community College. About ten years ago, I had a student who was extremely engaged, a straight-A student. She was what we would call a nontraditional returning student—an older woman. One day halfway through the semester, I noticed she went gray. I could see that something was going on personally in her life. I observed it in one class and decided not to say anything. The second time she came to class, it was clear she was still in some sort of deep emotional distress. I finally pulled her aside after class and asked her if everything was okay. She immediately said she was sorry, knew she was not doing well, promised she would do better and that she was distracted.

I told her that was not my concern. I asked her if she was okay. She said her husband decided he did not want her to get an education. He did not think women should go to school. He beat her in front of her two daughters. He had done it before, but this time he did it in front of her two daughters about education. She decided she could not stay for her daughters' sakes. She moved out and was staying in a weekly motel. She was scared because she did not know what would happen next and if she could keep going to school.

At that time, I did not know where to direct her or how to help her other than the school counseling site. If we had the provisions of this bill in place, one more tool would have been available to help get her the resources she needed to stay in school. For those individuals who are fighting so hard, sometimes with their lives, to seek that education, this is a way to partner with them. I urge your support of this bill.

CHAIR PARKS:

We will close the hearing on A.B. 216 and open the hearing on A.B. 300.

ASSEMBLY BILL 300 (1st Reprint): Makes various changes relating to veterans.
(BDR 37-95)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN BRITTNEY MILLER (Assembly District No. 5):

Assembly Bill 300 is in honor of my father who was a veteran exposed to Agent Orange in Vietnam.

When most of us think of veterans' health care, we think of the physical injuries from combat or maybe the emotional stress from the trauma of war and combat. We often do not go as far as thinking about the tropical and regional diseases or even infections that our service members were exposed to such as: anemia, Hodgkin's lymphoma, leukemia, hypertension, gallstones, diabetes, lupus, Lou Gehrig's disease, Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis, fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue syndrome and multiple myeloma, including another 30 different types of cancer. These are just a few of the extensive list of diseases that veterans have developed due to their service. From World War II to the Korean War to Vietnam, from the Gulf War to Iraq and Afghanistan, service members have been exposed to mustard gas, radiation, asbestos and other fire retardants, burn pits, and pesticides. Of course, Agent Orange is the one that the general public is most familiar with. There was even 35 years of exposure to contaminated water at Camp Lejeune.

Disability compensation is paid to veterans who have been determined to be disabled by an injury or illness incurred or aggravated during active military service. If a veteran develops diseases or conditions associated with specific exposures, it is presumed to be related to his or her military service or is service-connected.

Veterans exposed to Agent Orange during the Vietnam War or radiation while on active duty are still developing certain diseases which may entitle them to benefits under federal law. Additionally, some veterans who fought in the Gulf Wars may be entitled to receive disability compensation for chronic disabilities resulting from undiagnosed illnesses and/or medically unexplained chronic multisymptom illnesses defined by a cluster of signs or symptoms. It is important to know that.

I cite Agent Orange because that is the one with which we are most familiar. However, from World War II until now, my biggest concern is all of the conditions we have not yet discovered or connected with military service. As long as people are serving and fighting in battle, conflicts and wars, there will always be exposure to some type of chemical or something that can cause harm to our service members.

People in Nevada are entitled to benefits; however, not everyone is actually receiving them. Last year, I met a woman, Barbara, whose husband passed away two years ago. He was a Vietnam War veteran. While in Washington State, he was diagnosed with cancer. Since then, they moved to Nevada. Not one of the doctors they had seen ever asked if he was a veteran or had served in the armed forces. After a few years, they discovered that his cancer was directly connected to Agent Orange. But of course 45 years later, he had not thought of that or had made that connection himself. Even though he passed away, the encouraging part is they discovered they were entitled to benefits and started receiving them. His widow is still receiving survivor benefits. She was the one who approached me about bringing this type of legislation forward.

I am happy to sponsor this bill in honor of her husband, Bill, and my father who was also exposed to Agent Orange.

The bill will increase coordination and efficiency in the process of obtaining health care and services for veterans, particularly for service-connected disabilities and diseases. It establishes a more unified system whereby healthcare providers, the State, and nonprofit and veteran groups will work closely together to identify the needs of veterans and hopefully come to quicker diagnoses. Assembly Bill 300 is a strong collaboration between the Department of Veteran Services (NDVS) and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). It is also a strong collaboration with the Nevada State Medical Association.

While this is policy, and we do not want to talk about finance or fiscal notes, it is important to know that when DHHS, the Medical Association and all the boards and commissions removed their fiscal notes, that shows the true commitment everyone has in joining together to serve our veterans.

New Hampshire is the only state doing anything similar to this. It started this initiative last year. Nevada would be the second state in the Country to do this.

The idea is to ensure that veterans who may have presumptive conditions are getting the services they need. It is a combined effort that will enable healthcare practitioners to ask if someone is a veteran, if someone served in the U.S. armed forces. With that simple question, we know that two things can happen. First, if healthcare practitioners ask that question, they would be asked to refer that individual to the NDVS and let him or her know they may be entitled to additional benefits. In addition, it will facilitate a quicker medical diagnosis. When we say healthcare practitioners, we are talking about everyone in the healthcare field, from doctors to chiropractors to social workers, counselors, and therapists. All of these people are servicing veterans, and veterans are walking through their doors every day.

Part of this bill allows for a campaign of information, education and outreach to make sure we are getting the word out about these opportunities. Some of these presumptive conditions are also hereditary, meaning the condition will actually be passed down to children and grandchildren.

The bill is about public outreach through various media, specifically to bring awareness about service-connected diseases and the availability of benefits and survivor benefits. The NDVS will collaborate with certain nonprofit organizations to provide information to healthcare offices and locations that serve veterans. It will also submit an annual report to the Governor, DHHS and the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB) to describe its outreach efforts and the effectiveness of those efforts. The DHHS will include information concerning service-connected diseases in a Statewide information referral system and submit annual reports to the Governor and LCB.

With increased coordination and shared public resources, we know more veterans can be served. Not only does the bill increase access to care for veterans and their families, it also improves the ability of healthcare providers to meet the needs of veteran patients. It is a comprehensive strategy, tackling multiple issues in the system at once. I urge your support for this legislation.

SENATOR OHRENSCHALL:

Would service-connected disabilities and diseases include PTSD, or would it be more physical diseases and disabilities?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MILLER:

It is important that it covers both physical ailments and posttraumatic stress. That is why the bill includes counselors and social workers and even substance abuse counselors, gambling counselors and so forth. It will be a holistic approach. The one challenge we have is to get specific benefits; the condition has to be something the NDVS has identified. The conditions and diseases I mentioned earlier came from the NDVS website. We are still working to get even more diseases and ailments connected to military service. However, eligibility to receive financial compensation is determined by the federal government. We know that actual treatment has a significant correlation.

CHAIR PARKS:

You spoke about the state of New Hampshire. I grew up there. Can you speak about the success it has had and how closely you are modeling your program to New Hampshire's?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MILLER:

I was not aware of New Hampshire's program until about a month ago—just before I presented this bill in the Assembly. The campaign is called "Ask the Question." It looks pretty much like what we are trying to do in Nevada. It is a coordination between nonprofits, the state, and veterans' services. It asks healthcare practitioners to "ask the question." It is quite similar to what we are attempting here.

CHAIR PARKS:

Hopefully, the NDVS will check it out and look at the possibility of replicating that.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MILLER:

The NDVS showed it to me.

CHAIR PARKS:

I know NDVS already has an outreach program. I assume this would go part and parcel with the programs they already offer.

Something I read the other day absolutely surprised me. Only one-third of Vietnam War veterans are still alive today. We have lost tremendous numbers of veterans. It is mind-boggling to me.

I see some fiscal notes were put on the bill by different boards and commissions. Has that been resolved through the Assembly Ways and Means Committee?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MILLER:

Yes, all of those fiscal notes were removed as a result of my first amendment before I presented the bill in the Assembly. Yesterday, the bill was passed out of the Assembly Ways and Means Committee. Once we changed the language from mandating to permissive and encouraging, all of those boards and commissions removed their fiscal notes.

MIKEY KELLY (Chair, Nevada Democratic Veterans and Military Families Caucus):
We support this piece of legislation. Just the other day, I was speaking with a veteran who had suffered from fibromyalgia for many years. Unfortunately, he had gone to various civilian doctors who never connected any of that to his military service until one day when he went to the NDVS clinic. They informed him that the fibromyalgia he was suffering from is potentially a result of his military service.

This bill would have helped him immensely. This man has been homeless for more than seven years. He had been suffering intense pain and had not received all the benefits he was entitled to. He has just now gotten into the system and is on the pathway to recovery and healing.

This is the type of bill we need to ensure our veterans are receiving the benefits they are entitled to and have rightfully earned and to make sure that not only veterans but their family members receive assistance.

We also do not mention that family members suffer as a result of the service of their loved ones. There are many family members who suffer debilitating illnesses and cancers because a parent who was a veteran suffered and the illnesses were passed down to the children. This is a wonderful opportunity to educate and inform veterans and military families about their health conditions associated with military service both in combat and in peacetime.

The water is contaminated at the Pease Air National Guard Base in New Hampshire. Family members of national guardsmen were not aware of the contamination. It was not until the "Ask the Question" campaign was passed

that some of the family members started to connect their illnesses to the service of their veteran loved ones.

This is an important bill. It is going to make a difference for the Nevada veteran community. It is going to pay dividends in veterans receiving proper health care and hopefully reducing incidents such as suicide and posttraumatic stress.

MISS D'AYR:

I am a U.S. Navy veteran, and I support this bill.

In March, I filed a claim for the first time for disability. I did not know that was my right. The outreach and informational portion of this bill is absolutely essential and critical for service members and their families to be aware of what they might be entitled to and receive the care and support they need.

I am also the daughter of a veteran. My father was in naval intelligence. I do not know half of what he did, but hopefully his service record documents what he did. I would be able to find out about connections to service-related illnesses through my father with this kind of program. I urge your support of this bill.

JEFF CARLSON:

I am a veteran of the U.S. Navy. I served from 1994 to 1999. In less than a month, it will be 20 years since I have been out. When I served, I flew with VQ-1, a P-3-type squadron. We flew to places like Korea, Diego Garcia and southwest Asia. On more than one occasion when I was in southwest Asia, the entire air crew was lined up and substances were injected into our arms that presumably were inoculations. Other than anthrax, I cannot tell you what most of those things were. I can tell you only two things; I have not been healthy since then. I was healthy as a kid. I rarely got sick. Never broke any bones or anything like that. But since then, my health has deteriorated. I largely attribute that to what happened during my time in the service. The second thing is that my overall quality of life has been impacted significantly from what happened in my time in the service.

After I got out, I started looking into some of the health concerns that were popping up. During this time, my care was through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). No one ever asked me whether the things happening to me were related to my military service. This was even at the VA. It was not until 2013, when I had emergency gallbladder surgery because I had been

carrying an infected gallbladder from gallstones, that I started taking my health more seriously. I started looking into things and the nature of some of the ailments I had been dealing with. Eventually, I found out that the things I had been dealing with were often directly associated with Gulf War syndrome. It kind of blew me away. I never even considered that I was dealing with some of the same things other veterans of the Gulf theater had been dealing with for years. My conditions have now been service-connected. I wish that someone in the 20 years that I had been dealing with these ailments had just asked whether they could be related to my time in the service. I wish I had put two and two together and taken a better look into my time in the military. It might have helped me a lot. I hope that a bill like this will help other veterans. For that reason, I urge your support.

SENATOR OHRENSCHALL:

I want to recognize Mr. Carlson, Miss d'Ayr and Mr. Kelly for the great work they do in advocating for veterans in southern Nevada. I know all of them personally and want to compliment them for what they do to help our veterans.

CHAIR PARKS:

I do not know if I appreciate Mr. Kelly's comment about the housing at Pease Air Force Base, New Hampshire, because I lived for a year in decommissioned military housing adjacent to Pease and now I am worried a little bit.

While I was in the service, I was subjected to some testing of sorts. I always wonder if it resulted in some difficulty of some sort.

CATHERINE O'MARA (Nevada State Medical Association):

The Nevada State Medical Association supports A.B. 300. I want to thank the sponsor for bringing this bill forward and for working with us over many hours before the first policy hearing to get the bill to a place where we were more than enthusiastic to jump on board.

This bill does many things to help connect civilian physicians to the information the NDVS has about service-connected diseases by making that information available and developing some educational opportunities for our Nevada doctors and other providers.

This will help provide information to physicians so they can better treat their veteran patients. It will also help encourage them to understand the relevance in

asking that question and enable their offices to have information so they can connect their patients to resources.

As we all know through this Session and other Sessions, we are seeing much impact on wraparound services and how they affect overall health. The physicians are ready to do their part to make sure they can connect some of that information.

I want to follow up on Senator Ohrenschall's question about posttraumatic stress. We also looked at the New Hampshire model when we were first meeting with Assemblywoman Miller. It seems to be comprehensive, particularly on the clinical side for physicians. It is not just those diseases that we would routinely connect to the Gulf War syndrome or Agent Orange. It includes PTSD, blast concussion, military sexual trauma and substance use disorders. It is the whole person and anything that might have impacted him or her through military service.

We support this bill and are happy to be part of it.

ANDY LEPEILBET (Military Order of the Purple Heart; Disabled American Veterans):
We support this bill. I ditto the last four speakers. This is an essential bill that is needed. The two of us at this table are part of the one-third of Vietnam veterans who are still alive.

MITCH ROACH (United Veterans Legislative Council):

I, too, am a Vietnam veteran. The VA has been very good. I was recently diagnosed with Agent Orange at an old age. I did not know I had anything until I had a heart attack and found out I had diabetes. No one ever asked me if there was anything wrong. I thought I was just fat, dumb and happy, and I was until then. I and the United Veterans Legislative Council support this bill.

DAN MUSGROVE (Chiropractic Physicians' Board of Nevada):

I echo the comments of Ms. O'Mara. It is an honor to participate in trying to help get information to veterans. We appreciate being a part of the bill.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MILLER:

We know that we cannot repay our service members for their service. We also know that one of the things we are proud of is that Nevada's population is over 10 percent veterans and military families. That is a point of pride for Nevadans

as well as all the beautiful diversity. This is another beautifully diverse group that makes us Nevadans.

A few decades ago, there was time when they did not ask if you were a smoker. Now every time you walk into a medical facility or healthcare provider or even for me to get my eyebrows waxed, they ask if I smoke cigarettes. To make asking the simple question normal is important to ensure proper care.

CHAIR PARKS:

There was discussion about the possibility of an amendment. I had subsequently been told that the amendment was not necessary.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MILLER:

The only amendment I am aware of on this bill would be the conceptual amendment. When I presented the bill in the Assembly, I presented it as the conceptual amendment. That was on April 22. That is the first reprint that we are working off today.

CHAIR PARKS:

Is everything fine?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MILLER:

Yes, it is.

CHAIR PARKS:

We will close the hearing on A.B. 300 and open the hearing on A.B. 489.

ASSEMBLY BILL 489 (2nd Reprint): Revises provisions relating to grants.
(BDR 18-1109)

HELEN FOLEY (Nevada Community Foundation):

Assembly Bill 489 is strikingly similar to Senate Bill 205 in that it sets up a pilot program where money is available to help local governments, State government, some Indian tribes and other nonprofits to have a match for federal grants.

SENATE BILL 205: Requires the Office of Grant Procurement, Coordination and Management of the Department of Administration to create a pilot program to award grants of money to certain governmental and nonprofit organizations. (BDR S-807)

As you recall, Nevada has ranked forty-ninth in standing in how much it receives back from the federal government. We need to do something to kick start this program. You have heard testimony that if the State could increase its ranking by 1 point, it could gain over \$250 million in federal grants, which is no shabby number.

The Nevada Community Foundation is one of the largest charitable foundations in the State. It serves to connect philanthropic donors with nonprofit organizations that improve quality of life and create opportunities for Nevadans. Since 2015, the Nevada Community Foundation has been actively supporting legislation such as this focused on improving Nevada's federal grant capacity and competitiveness.

MILES DICKSON (Chief of Staff, Office of the State Treasurer):

The idea of a match fund came out of the Nevada Advisory Council on Federal Assistance. Nevada is woefully behind in receiving its per capita share of federal grant funding. The reason for that is often cited as match funding. When I say "cited as," I direct you to the Office of Grant Procurement, Coordination and Management within the Department of Administration. The Office conducts regular surveys of grant professionals throughout the State, asking them about the barriers to receiving federal grant funding. That information is submitted to the Council. Match funding is one of the most cited barriers for State agencies, local governments, nonprofits and tribes to accessing federal grant funding. The State is expected to put in a certain amount of money for every federal grant it receives, whether it is maintenance of effort or direct match.

Section 1 of the bill adds some important language to the Office of Grant Procurement, Coordination and Management's enabling language that identifies its important role in working with nonprofits and local governments. A little context: the vast majority of federal grant funding, formula-based and competitive, when it leaves Washington, D.C., goes to a state government. Then it is pushed down to local governments, tribal nations, nonprofits and so forth. The Grants Office's ability to work with those entities is critical in helping Nevada, and ultimately Nevadans, realize a larger share of federal grant funding returning to them.

Section 1.5 of the bill creates the Grant Matching Fund.

Section 2 tasks the Grants Office with developing a program, in consultation with grant professionals, for the awarding of State-level grant matches.

Section 3 directs how match grant awards should be prioritized.

Section 4 establishes eligibility requirements for receiving grants.

Section 5 establishes the reporting requirements around the match grant program.

Section 6 initially included an appropriation. It was pulled out in light of the fiscal situation of the State regarding its ability to actually capitalize the funds. If the bill's sponsor was here, Assemblywoman Daniele Monroe-Moreno, she would tell you about the importance of building the framework for a program even though an appropriation may not exist to fund it today.

Section 7.5 appropriates funding for a position in the Grants Office to help facilitate the program and do some of the outreach work. Section 8 sets effective dates.

Assemblywoman Monroe-Moreno asked that the position be created in the south.

MARK FIORENTINO (John Ritter and The Ritter Charitable Trust):

John Ritter is the Chair of the Nevada Advisory Council on Federal Assistance. He has dedicated much of his time and his trust's resources to help the State resolve some of these issues.

The Council was put together to conduct studies on what other states do, why they do better than Nevada and to make recommendations to the Legislature on how it might close some of those gaps. Creating this program has always been a priority recommendation.

Mr. Ritter supports creating the program even if we cannot fund it today because getting the infrastructure in place is important. As I testified in the Assembly, Mr. Ritter has authorized me to say, on his and his trust's behalf, that he promises to continue to dedicate his time and resources to implementing the program if the Legislature puts the structure in place.

CHAIR PARKS:

Please extend our appreciation to Mr. Ritter for all his dedication and hard work toward this effort.

VINSON GUTHREAU (Nevada Association of Counties):

The Nevada Association of Counties (NACO) supports this measure. We hear from our members on a routine basis that not only do they struggle with the matching funds piece, but many of our rural counties lack the infrastructure to research, apply and coordinate grants. Propping up this program is supported by NACO.

WES HENDERSON (Nevada League of Cities and Municipalities):

The Nevada League of Cities and Municipalities supports this measure. It is a shame that federal dollars are left on the table because we cannot come up with the required match. This bill would help alleviate that situation.

PAUL MORADKHAN (Las Vegas Metro Chamber of Commerce):

The Las Vegas Metro Chamber of Commerce has been supportive of federal grant efforts in the last three Legislative Sessions and has worked closely with the Legislature closely over the years. It has also been a priority of the Southern Nevada Forum to improve the State's ability to capture federal grants. The Las Vegas Metro Chamber of Commerce supports this bill.

KELLY CROMPTON (City of Las Vegas):

This is a Southern Nevada Forum priority. We have talked about this in discussions in previous years. The City of Las Vegas works collaboratively with State and local entities to put together projects in which we can apply for federal grants to help southern Nevada.

NEENA LAXALT (Nevada Airports Association):

I am acting as a hitchhiker today. I began processing some paperwork through the Legislature soon after this Session started, looking for a home for a bill to provide matching funds for the Nevada Aviation Trust Fund. When Nevada contributes money to this fund, it receives 93.75 percent in return. This is something we did not want to leave on the table. The Nevada Aviation Trust Fund provides services for 22 of the State's rural airports. Whereas in Clark County, there are airports in Boulder City and Mesquite, Washoe County has none. The rest of the airports are located in rural counties.

We tried unsuccessfully to find a home for this bill. Unfortunately, we had many false starts; here I am now at the end of the game, throwing a Hail Mary. I waited for the presenter of the bill outside the Assembly Ways and Means Committee. I did not see her name on the bill. If she has any concerns, I would most respectfully pull this request back. In the meantime I ask that if she has no concerns, the Committee consider the request for this funding.

JOVON SOTAK (Office of Grant Procurement, Coordination and Management, Department of Administration):

I had been in discussions regarding the staff position being in Las Vegas. We have several concerns about that because this is a temporary two-year position.

CHAIR PARKS:

We will let the sponsor of the bill resolve that concern.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN DANIELE MONROE-MORENO (Assembly District No. 1):

Assembly Bill 489 is an opportunity for the State to bring in additional revenue. We all present bills that come from us, from someone in our community or a special interest group that has asked us to carry a bill. Many of those bills have fiscal notes on them, and many of those bills end up in the Senate Committee on Finance and the Assembly Ways and Means Committee. Then we realize we do not have the resources to carry out that legislation.

Assembly Bill 489 will give us an opportunity to create a federal grants matching program. If we put a small amount of money into a fund, it might bring in much larger dollars. We are asking for a 2-for-1 match for every grant we pursue so that maybe in the next Legislative Session and the Session after that, some of the bills we submit will get funding because we will have additional revenue coming into the State.

I cochaired a subcommittee with the Southern Nevada Forum during the Interim, and this was our No. 1 topic. We know through studies throughout the State that we leave hundreds of millions of dollars on the table because we do not have the funds to do grant-matching.

In the Assembly Ways and Means Committee, I got the Grants Office the requested one full-time equivalent (FTE). I do not believe in asking people to do more work without giving them the resources they need to get that work done. I asked for \$5 million, but I did not get that. I am hoping that once all budgets

are accounted for, there may be a little money left over that we can put into this program. If we get the program established, we have the employee we need to start working on the program. However, if I do not get the funding this Session, we will come back next Session and maybe put money into it.

I urge your support for this bill. It will make a huge difference to all families throughout the State.

SENATOR SCHEIBLE:

I am looking at the fiscal note that pertains to the second reprint of the bill. I want to clarify that it has been removed. Is that correct?

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MONROE-MORENO:

The fiscal note is for the one FTE for the grants program.

JENNI CARTWRIGHT (Administrator, Administrative Services Division, Department of Administration):

We serve as the fiscal agent for the Grants Office. We made a last-minute change, and I apologize for the miscommunication. We removed the fiscal note because it is duplicative of the items listed in the second reprint of the bill as an appropriation for the position.

SENATOR SCHEIBLE:

Now there is an appropriation but no fiscal note.

MS. CARTWRIGHT:

We did not think it was fair to ask for the same thing twice.

HEIDI CHLARSON (Committee Counsel):

The effective date section has a technical issue. The intent was that the entire bill, sections 1 through 8, would be effective on July 1. The effective date section does not cover all of the sections. If the Committee were to take action on the bill, the Legal Division could fix this if the Committee chooses to amend and do pass the bill. The only amendment would be to fix the technical issue with the effective date so the appropriation and the rest of the bill would be effective on July 1.

CHAIR PARKS:

We will close the hearing on A.B. 489. Given the fact that the entire Committee is present and that we are running out of time, I would like to suggest that we consider these three bills today for passage.

Let us start with A.B. 489 to amend and do pass with the changes that were recommended by Committee Counsel.

SENATOR SCHEIBLE MOVED TO AMEND AND DO PASS AS AMENDED A.B. 489 WITH THE CHANGES RECOMMENDED BY COMMITTEE COUNSEL.

SENATOR OHRENSCHALL SECONDED THE MOTION.

SENATOR GOICOECHEA:

I am not sure I understand what Ms. Chlarson said. What does that do with the amendment proposed by Ms. Laxalt? Is that not included?

CHAIR PARKS:

My recommendation at this time would be to not consider the amendment from the Nevada Airports Association; however, I invite anyone who might wish to do a Floor amendment to discuss that.

SENATOR GOICOECHEA:

I just wanted clarification.

CHAIR PARKS:

Ms. Laxalt's proposal is a great idea, but for this bill we will amend and do pass with Committee Counsel's recommendation.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

* * * * *

CHAIR PARKS:

The next bill to consider is A.B. 216.

SENATOR SCHEIBLE MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 216.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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CHAIR PARKS:
The last bill is A.B. 300.

SENATOR SCHEIBLE MOVED TO DO PASS A.B. 300.

SENATOR OHRENSCHALL SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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CHAIR PARKS:

Having nothing further to come before the Senate Committee on Government Affairs, we are adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Suzanne Efford,
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Senator David R. Parks, Chair

DATE: _____

EXHIBIT SUMMARY				
Bill	Exhibit / # of pages		Witness / Entity	Description
	A	1		Agenda
	B	6		Attendance Roster