

**MINUTES OF THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE OPERATIONS AND ELECTIONS**

**Eightieth Session
May 28, 2019**

The Senate Committee on Legislative Operations and Elections was called to order by Chair James Ohrenschall at 4:40 p.m. on Tuesday, May 28, 2019, in Room 2144 of the Legislative Building, Carson City, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 4412E 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 James Ohrenschall, Chair
Senator Yvanna D. Cancela, Vice Chair
Senator Marcia Washington
Senator Heidi Seevers Gansert
Senator Keith F. Pickard

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Michael Stewart, Committee Policy Analyst
Kevin Powers, Committee Counsel
Rick Combs, Director
Janae Johnson, Committee Secretary

CHAIR OHRENSCHALL:

I will open the hearing on Senate Bill (S.B.) 552.

SENATE BILL 552: Revises provisions governing the administration of the legislative process. (BDR 17-1277)

RICK COMBS (Director):

The Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB) reserves a bill draft request from the Legislative Commission each Session for cleanup and changes to make the legislative process better. Senate Bill 552 is basically recommendations from the LCB for improving the legislative process. Sections 1 and 3 address the telephone allowances received by the members of the Legislature for each Legislative Session. Each Legislator receives a \$2,800 allowance. If a Legislator

is a chairperson or member of leadership, these positions get an additional \$900 allowance. These allowances are termed in statute as allowances for telephone expenses. The LCB proposes to take the word telephone out to indicate long-distance telephone services and stop applying this charge against the allowance.

The LCB accounting staff are going through and picking out 88-cent, long-distance telephone calls and then billing the Legislators for them. The average this Session for the amount of charges received for long-distance telephone calls is \$8.50. This is not efficient for staff to be spending their time sorting out phone bills. It is not efficient for Legislators to be getting billed every month. This is during Session; during the Interim, these amounts are much smaller. The \$2,800 and \$900 allowance for Legislators would stay in there and be considered allowances for expenses.

Sections 1 and 2 contain a provision that removes the requirement for considering the availability of State-owned vehicles when you are determining the least-expensive method of travel when Legislators are in travel status. This applies to Legislators right now. The LCB does not have any State-owned vehicles available for Legislators. The State motor pool does not stock up for availability during Session when it is needed. For many years, we have used the rental car option when Legislators need a vehicle. Also, there is a mileage allowance for using a personal vehicle.

Section 4 authorizes the Commission to adopt regulations that place certain requirements on reports submitted electronically to the Legislature. The reason for this request is this is a time-consuming process to make the Legislature website more accessible to people who have hearing and vision difficulties. It is imperative that reports for submission to the LCB website are created in a certain way for people who have hearing and vision impairments. This basically authorizes the Commission to place additional requirements on those documents already required to be submitted electronically.

Section 5 addresses the starting and ending dates for Interim study committees approved for each Interim. The statute does not allow Interim studies to start until January 1; LCB is recommending to move the start date to November 1. This is not a method on LCB's part to create additional meetings. We are not budgeting any more meetings, but LCB would like to give the opportunity for more time between these committees. We are finding that staff are getting

asked to do things, and people outside are presenting information at the next meeting. If there are only three to four weeks between meetings, it can be difficult to get all that material back to the committees. This would be an option for the committee chairs to consider, but meetings could still start in January if that is their preference.

Sections 6, 11, 13 and 14 are the same concept but for the statutory committees. These committees are on health care, public lands, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, education and many others. The statute says the committees cannot start meeting until November 1 after Session; LCB is recommending to move this to September 1. The LCB does not want to go into the summer because there are a number of things staff needs to complete after Session. By offering an early start in the fall, this gives more time available to the committees.

Section 15 deals with a number of provisions that require the Legislative Commission to adopt records addressing the public defenders and district attorneys on what type of information they should submit to the Legislative Commission. The Commission made a determination a number of years ago that it was not going to require those reports anymore. The requirement in statute for the Legislative Commission is to adopt records, and it never came out of the statute. We have referenced this requirement, and it does not apply to anything at this point.

Proposed Amendment 6045 ([Exhibit C](#)) adds section 12.5 to S.B. 552. Section 12.5 rewords the description in statute where the Legislature property line is with respect to the property line of the Executive Branch in the Capitol Complex. The reason for this is related to the Firefighters Memorial which was approved from S.B. No. 540 of the 79th Session. This bill requires the Legislative Commission to approve both the location and design for the Firefighters Memorial. The Commission made this approval on May 16, 2018. The site chosen is a triangular area not in LCB's control but under the Executive Branch.

I was working with the Nevada State Firefighters' Association, and LCB agreed to take over responsibility for this memorial so it could work with one entity on the construction of the Firefighters Memorial going forward. The LCB would provide the same services for the Firefighters Memorial as provided for the Police Memorial on security. Two maps show the area for the memorial.

([Exhibit D](#) and [Exhibit E](#) contain copyrighted material. Original is available upon request of the Research Library.) If section 12.5 is approved, it takes the triangular area out and makes the line go straight down the sidewalk, which is the corner to the Capitol Mall.

SENATOR PICKARD:

I did not realize the Legislature was responsible for the Police Memorial. I find this odd for it seems like it would be an Executive Branch function. Are there any other memorials planned that would fall into the Legislature's space? Is there a plan looking forward?

MR. COMBS:

For the last six months, I have been researching the Firefighters Memorial and found a quitclaim deed done before that transferred the entire Capitol Complex to the Legislature. It does not match the description in section 12.5 from Proposed Amendment 6045. After Session, LCB will be working with the Division of State Lands and the Executive Branch to revise the quitclaim deed so it will be straightened out and in line with [Exhibit E](#). [Exhibit D](#) shows the understood lines of the Legislature areas for responsibility on landscape upkeep and utility bills. The Firefighter Memorial is a big deal to LCB that will bring new challenges for camera angles, but it is the Legislature's responsibility since S.B. No. 540 of the 79th Session tasked the Legislative Commission with approving the location and design.

SENATOR PICKARD:

As to the telephone charges, most systems have gone chargeless for long distance. I assume Legislators are not actually getting charged for these? If [S.B. 552](#) is passed, then Legislators will no longer be charged for long distance? It is not that the State is picking up long-distance charges. Are Legislators actually getting charged for long distance calls?

MR. COMBS:

Few long-distance calls come out of this building. It would be more expensive to enter a Charter contract where LCB would get free long distance; we would actually pay more per month per line. Since LCB has so little long-distance charges for 18 months out of a 2-year period, it is almost nonexistent. The Legislative Fund would just pick up the cost of long-distance telephone service. The Legislature will continue to track long-distance usage. If we see something strange, there will be a discussion about the usage for long-distance calls and

charging the State with personal business. This is an oddity, for most people do not pay for long distance anymore.

CHAIR OHRENSCHALL:

Finding out these grounds are owned by the Legislature, I have seen trespassers on this property—the four-legged kind. I do not know if the Legislature can charge them rent or maybe they help out with the landscaping.

MR. COMBS:

Between falcons and deer, we have had our fair share of fun with animal friends. It is nice part of the Capitol that we share these grounds with people and animals.

SENATOR PICKARD MOVED TO AMEND AND DO PASS AS AMENDED
S.B. 552.

SENATOR CANCELA SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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CHAIR OHRENSCHALL:

I will open the meeting in work session on Assembly Bill (A.B.) 449.

ASSEMBLY BILL 449 (1st Reprint): Directs the Legislative Committee on Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice to conduct a study relating to juvenile detention in this State. (BDR S-450)

MICHAEL STEWART (Policy Analyst):

Assembly Bill 449 was heard on May 15 as referenced from the work session document ([Exhibit F](#)).

CHAIR OHRENSCHALL:

I reached out to Assemblywoman Daniele Monroe-Moreno about the amendment language. She has done a great job on A.B. 449 and is supportive of the new language.

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SENATOR PICKARD MOVED TO AMEND AND DO PASS AS AMENDED
A.B. 449.

SENATOR CANCELA SECONDED THE MOTION.

SENATOR PICKARD:

I have some connection with juvenile justice, and this is something that they talk about at ground level. This is a great bill, and I support it wholeheartedly.

CHAIR OHRENSCHALL:

A lot of us have difficulty seeing kids in facilities who are sentenced in the adult system. Assembly Bill 449 is important for the Interim Committee to get this information.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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CHAIR OHRENSCHALL:
I will adjourn this meeting at 5:02 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Janae Johnson,
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Senator James Ohrenschall, Chair

DATE: _____

EXHIBIT SUMMARY				
Bill	Exhibit / # of pages		Witness / Entity	Description
	A	1		Agenda
	B	1		Attendance Roster
S.B. 552	C	15	Rick Combs	Proposed Amendment 6045
S.B. 552	D	1	Rick Combs	Current Map
S.B. 552	E	1	Rick Combs	Modified Map
A.B. 449	F	1	Michael Stewart	Work Session Document