

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS**

**Eighty-First Session
March 10, 2021**

The Committee on Government Affairs was called to order by Chair Edgar Flores at 9:02 a.m. on Wednesday, March 10, 2021, Online. 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/81st2021.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Assemblyman Edgar Flores, Chair
Assemblywoman Selena Torres, Vice Chair
Assemblywoman Natha C. Anderson
Assemblywoman Annie Black
Assemblywoman Tracy Brown-May
Assemblywoman Venicia Considine
Assemblywoman Jill Dickman
Assemblywoman Bea Duran
Assemblyman John Ellison
Assemblywoman Susie Martinez
Assemblyman Andy Matthews
Assemblyman Richard McArthur
Assemblywoman Clara Thomas

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:

Assemblywoman Sarah Peters, Assembly District No. 24

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jered McDonald, Committee Policy Analyst
Judith Bishop, Committee Manager
Geigy Stringer, Committee Secretary
Cheryl Williams, Committee Assistant



OTHERS PRESENT:

Justin Luna, Administrative Services Officer, Division of Emergency Management,
Department of Public Safety
Terri Laird, Executive Director, Retired Public Employees of Nevada

Chair Flores:

[The meeting was called to order. Committee protocol was discussed.] Members, I hope you gave yourself the opportunity to familiarize yourself with the bills on the work session for this morning. We have seven of them, and we are going to take them slightly out of order just to ensure that we have everybody logged in should we have questions.

As I said, we are going to take things slightly out of order. We will go ahead and move to our work session. First on the work session document is Assembly Bill 14.

Assembly Bill 14: Revises provisions relating to emergency management. (BDR 19-335)

Jered McDonald, Committee Policy Analyst:

Assembly Bill 14 reviews provisions relating to emergency management [[Exhibit C](#)]. It was sponsored by this Committee on behalf of the Division of Emergency Management and heard on February 9, 2021. The bill changes the required frequency of meetings of the Nevada Resilience Advisory Committee, the Nevada Tribal Emergency Coordinating Council, and the State Disaster Identification Coordination Committee. The bill removes the requirement that the State Disaster Identification Coordination Committee or a subcommittee perform certain specified duties. Finally, the bill makes certain reports submitted by a provider of health care to the State Disaster Identification Coordination Committee discretionary during a state of emergency, declaration of disaster, a public health emergency, or other health event.

We did receive one amendment from Mr. Fogerson at the Division of Emergency Management. There is a conceptual amendment on page 2 of your work session packet [[Exhibit C](#)]. The amendment proposes adding some language to make it so the Disaster Identification Coordination Committee meets at the call of the chair, or as frequently as required to perform its duties, but not less than once each calendar year.

I believe this was discussed during the hearing. It will align this Committee with language consistent with the other committees listed in the bill: the Tribal Emergency Coordinating Council and the Resilience Advisory Committee. That is all we have for that bill.

Chair Flores:

At this time, I would like to entertain a motion to amend and do pass Assembly Bill 14.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN TORRES MOVED TO AMEND AND DO PASS
ASSEMBLY BILL 14.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN ANDERSON SECONDED THE MOTION.

Now, we will open it up for discussion.

Assemblyman Ellison:

One of the questions I have is about the ones that would only meet once a year. Are those paid meetings or are they just on a volunteer basis? I know they probably pay per diem.

**Justin Luna, Administrative Services Officer, Division of Emergency Management,
Department of Public Safety:**

I am here on Chief Fogerson's behalf, who unfortunately has a conflicting priority this morning and sends his apologies. These meetings are not paid, so the members who participate in the meetings are not paid. They participate as subject matter experts in their field to bring their knowledge and experience to the committees.

Assemblyman Ellison:

For some of these committees and councils that go from meeting quarterly to meeting yearly, does that really give you enough information for the whole year?

Justin Luna:

The one committee that is going from quarterly to yearly is the State Disaster Identification Coordination Committee. During the COVID-19 response, when we met with committee members several times, it was determined that a lot of the requirements that are outlined in the statute are duplicated at the local level. As Mr. McDonald mentioned, we want to maintain the ability to meet as frequently as we need to, especially if there is a disaster that warrants this group coming together. That would be available within statute, with the proposed new language, at the call of the chair.

However, if there is not a disaster, we still want to make sure we are meeting on an annual basis to review any processes that may have changed. Also, many of the members participate in either public bodies that we administer or trainings and exercises throughout the year that allow us to have multiple touchpoints other than this one committee. I believe it does give us plenty of opportunities to coordinate and collaborate with the partners that are involved. Having the provision to meet at the call of the chair when necessary gives us that other opportunity to call meetings as we need to, more than once a year if necessary.

Assemblyman Ellison:

That satisfies that concern I had, so I am in favor of the bill.

Chair Flores:

Members, are there any additional questions or comments? [There were none.]

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

I would like to ask Assemblyman Ellison to do the floor statement. Thank you, Mr. Luna, for your explanation.

Next on the work session document is Assembly Bill 22.

Assembly Bill 22: Requires the establishment and maintenance of a transition assistance program for veterans and servicemen and servicewomen. (BDR 37-283)

Jered McDonald, Committee Policy Analyst:

Assembly Bill 22 requires the establishment and maintenance of a transition assistance program for veterans and servicemen and servicewomen [[Exhibit D](#)]. This bill was sponsored by this Committee on behalf of the Department of Veterans Services and heard on February 16, 2021. The bill requires the director of the Department of Veterans Services to establish and maintain a program to assist veterans and servicemen and servicewomen in transitioning to life as a civilian. The program is required to provide information and resources specific to this state concerning higher education, career development, physical and mental health care, and other benefits available to veterans, servicemen, and servicewomen. We have no amendments on this bill.

Chair Flores:

At this time, I would like to entertain a motion to do pass Assembly Bill 22.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN DURAN MADE A MOTION TO DO PASS
ASSEMBLY BILL 22.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN THOMAS SECONDED THE MOTION.

Members, is there any discussion? [There was none.]

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

I would like to ask Assemblywoman Anderson to do the floor statement.

Next on the work session document is Assembly Bill 48.

Assembly Bill 48: Authorizes certain retired public officers and employees to reinstate insurance under the Public Employees' Benefits Program. (BDR 23-321)

Jered McDonald, Committee Policy Analyst:

This bill authorizes certain retired public officers and employees to reinstate insurance under the Public Employees' Benefits Program [[Exhibit E](#)]. This bill was sponsored by this Committee on behalf of the Public Employees' Benefit Program and heard on February 26, 2021. The bill authorizes a retired public officer, employee, or surviving spouse to reinstate insurance under the Public Employees' Benefits Program if the retired public officer or employee:

1. Did not have more than one period during which he or she was not covered by insurance under the Program on or after October 1, 2011;
2. Retired from a nonparticipating local governmental agency;
3. Was enrolled in the Program as a retiree on November 30, 2008; and
4. Is enrolled in Medicare Parts A and B at the time of the request for reinstatement.

We have no amendments on this bill.

Chair Flores:

At this time, I would like to entertain a motion to do pass Assembly Bill 48.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN TORRES MADE A MOTION TO DO PASS
ASSEMBLY BILL 48.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN CONSIDINE SECONDED THE MOTION.

Members, is there any additional discussion? [There was none.]

THE MOTION PASSED. (ASSEMBLYMEN BLACK, ELLISON,
MATTHEWS, AND MCARTHUR VOTED NO.)

Assemblyman Ellison:

I would like to reserve the right to change my vote on the Assembly floor because I am checking what the impact would be back on our city and county.

Chair Flores:

I would like to ask Assemblywoman Considine to do the floor statement.

Next on the work session document is Assembly Bill 63.

Assembly Bill 63: Makes various changes relating to the financial administration of local governments. (BDR 31-404)

Jered McDonald, Committee Policy Analyst:

Assembly Bill 63 makes various changes related to the financial administration of local governments [[Exhibit F](#)]. It was sponsored by this Committee on behalf of the Nevada League of Cities and Municipalities and heard on February 12, 2021. The bill authorizes the use of funds to stabilize the operation of a local government and mitigate the effects of a declared emergency.

We did receive one amendment from Mr. Harper of the Nevada League of Cities and Municipalities. The amendment proposes to replace the definition of an emergency in section 1, subsection 8, with "a sudden, unexpected occurrence that involves clear and imminent danger and requires immediate action to prevent or mitigate loss of life or damage to health, property, or essential public services."

Chair Flores:

At this time, I would like to entertain a motion to amend and do pass Assembly Bill 63.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN TORRES MOVED TO AMEND AND DO PASS
ASSEMBLY BILL 63.

ASSEMBLYMAN ELLISON SECONDED THE MOTION.

Members, is there any discussion?

Assemblywoman Considine:

I wanted to confirm that the language in section 1, subsection 8, paragraph (a) would then read, "'Emergency' means a sudden, unexpected" Also, will the last sentence, which reads, "The term does not include a natural disaster," remain?

Jered McDonald:

Yes, I believe that is correct.

Chair Flores:

Members, is any additional discussion? [There was none.]

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

I would like to ask Assemblyman Matthews to do the floor statement.

Next on the work session document is Assembly Bill 70.

Assembly Bill 70: Revises provisions governing the deposit of child support payments collected by the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services of the Department of Health and Human Services. (BDR 31-299)

Jered McDonald, Committee Policy Analyst:

Assembly Bill 70 revises provisions governing the deposit of child support payments collected by the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services of the Department of Health and Human Services [[Exhibit G](#)]. It was sponsored by this Committee on behalf of the Division and heard on February 18, 2021. Assembly Bill 70 requires the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services to deposit within two working days any child support payments it accumulates in excess of \$10,000 on any day, except money for which the Department is unable to identify the obligee within two working days, which must be deposited within five days, if the Department identifies the obligee or returned to the payor.

Chair Flores:

At this time, I would like to entertain a motion to do pass Assembly Bill 70.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN THOMAS MADE A MOTION TO DO PASS
ASSEMBLY BILL 70.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN BROWN-MAY SECONDED THE MOTION.

Members, is there any discussion? [There was none.]

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

I would like to ask Assemblywoman Thomas to do the floor statement. Members, I do want to tell you that I will always ask you if you are comfortable doing a floor statement; I will not force it upon you. If you are ever uncomfortable with doing a particular floor statement for whatever reason, feel free to decline. We can assign it to another member.

Next on the work session document is Assembly Bill 77.

Assembly Bill 77: Revises provisions concerning the Department of Veterans Services and certain advisory public bodies relating to veterans. (BDR 37-285)

Jered McDonald, Committee Policy Analyst:

Assembly Bill 77 revises provisions concerning the Department of Veterans Services and certain advisory public bodies relating to veterans [[Exhibit H](#)]. It was sponsored by this Committee on behalf of the Department and heard on February 16, 2021. Assembly Bill 77 requires the director of the Department of Veterans Services to assist veterans experiencing homelessness by connecting veterans to housing and other support organizations; and to create, coordinate, and support veteran suicide prevention programs and resources. The bill also increases the length of a term for a member of the Nevada Veterans Services Commission, the Advisory Committee for a Veterans Cemetery in Northern Nevada, and the Advisory Committee for a Veterans Cemetery in Southern Nevada. It increases that term from two years to three years for each of those. Finally, the bill decreases the length of a term for a member of the Women Veterans Advisory Committee from four years to three years. We have no amendments on this bill.

Chair Flores:

At this time, I would like to entertain a motion to do pass Assembly Bill 77.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN DICKMAN MADE A MOTION TO DO PASS
ASSEMBLY BILL 77.

ASSEMBLYMAN MATTHEWS SECONDED THE MOTION.

Members, is there any discussion? [There was none.]

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

I would like to ask Assemblywoman Dickman to do the floor statement.

Last on the work session document is Assembly Bill 86.

Assembly Bill 86: Makes various changes relating to the recovery of certain expenses and costs incurred in extinguishing wildfires. (BDR 42-111)

Jered McDonald, Committee Policy Analyst:

Assembly Bill 86 makes various changes relating to the recovery of certain expenses and costs incurred in extinguishing wildfires [[Exhibit I](#)]. It was sponsored by this Committee on behalf of the Committee to Conduct an Interim Study Concerning Wildfires and heard on February 22, 2021. The bill authorizes the governing body of a county, city, or general improvement district created to furnish fire protection to bring an action against a person, firm, association, or agency that is responsible for willfully or negligently causing a wildfire to recover any expenses incurred in extinguishing the wildfire and reasonable attorney's fees and litigation expenses.

The bill also revises the circumstances under which a person, firm, association, or agency may be liable for the cost to extinguish a fire or meet an emergency to remove the requirement that the fire or other emergency must have threatened human life for expenses to be recovered. Finally, the bill provides that a person, firm, association, or agency may also be liable for the expenses incurred in extinguishing a fire or meeting an emergency by a city agency or general improvement district created to furnish fire protection. We have no amendments on this bill.

Chair Flores:

At this time, I would like to entertain a motion to do pass Assembly Bill 86.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN TORRES MADE A MOTION TO DO PASS
ASSEMBLY BILL 86.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MARTINEZ SECONDED THE MOTION.

I will now open it up for discussion. Assemblyman Ellison, please.

Assemblyman Ellison:

I have some concerns with the bill and some of the things that came out of the Committee when we were talking about it. One was the catalytic converters, and they said they had fixed that problem. There are still thousands of trucks out there where the chain could drop when they go into ditches. The other thing that was mentioned was target shooting causing a fire's arc. We have been trying to duplicate that and we have not been able to do it, personally. My problem with this is that it is so vague. When I checked with somebody in the district attorney's office, they said they still had the rights to the county commission—if they went up and said, Hey, we had somebody negligently start a fire, then they could go after them. This bill is vague, and I do have a problem. I do not know if somebody wants to address it, but I have some strong concerns with the bill, and I just thought I would let you know that.

Assemblywoman Sarah Peters, Assembly District No. 24:

I think we addressed some of those concerns during the presentation. I would have to ask for the professional opinion of my copresenter and colleague in order to respond to these concerns, but I do not know if he is on the call today. However, I do believe there are precedents set in these cases, for the chain dropping, the catalytic converter issue, and the target shooting, that support this bill.

Assemblyman Ellison:

I am going to reserve my right to change my vote on the floor. Assemblywoman Peters, I was hoping that I could meet with you or the other individual and see if I can get my concerns addressed before this bill does come up on the floor, if you do not mind.

Assemblywoman Peters:

Absolutely. I will work with my colleague, who assisted in presenting the bill, on getting a time set up with you.

Assemblywoman Dickman:

I am going to reserve my right as well, based on the concerns over the target shooting.

Chair Flores:

Members, is there any further discussion? [There was none.]

THE MOTION PASSED. (ASSEMBLYMEN ELLISON, MATTHEWS,
AND MCARTHUR VOTED NO.)

Assemblyman Matthews:

I reserve my right to change my vote on the floor.

Chair Flores:

I understand the reservations that might lead to changing your votes, and I appreciate the heads-up on that. I would like to ask Assemblywoman Brown-May to do the floor statement.

That concludes our work session document for today. We are moving seven bills down to the floor; I think we are ready to continue working. At this time, I would like to invite those wishing to speak in public comment to join us.

Terri Laird, Executive Director, Retired Public Employees of Nevada:

We are a nonprofit organization that formed in 1976 to represent all public employees in Nevada and to strive to protect the pension and benefits earned while working. We currently have nearly 8,000 dues-paying members with at least 1,000 who are still working. We testified in support of Assembly Bill 48 on February 26, 2021, during your first hearing, and would like to go on the record again today in support because it does eliminate the inequity between state and non-state Medicare retirees in the Public Employees Benefits Program's Medicare exchange.

Chair Flores:

Is there anyone else wishing to speak in public comment? [There was no one.] Members, we do have one bill on the agenda for tomorrow's meeting. That is Assembly Bill 186, which will be presented by Assemblywoman Nguyen. Please be sure to reach out to her preemptively if you have any questions or concerns that maybe you can knock out for the sake of efficiency. This meeting is adjourned [at 9:39 a.m.].

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Geigy Stringer
Recording Secretary

Lindsey Howell
Transcribing Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Assemblyman Edgar Flores, Chair

DATE: _____

EXHIBITS

[Exhibit A](#) is the Agenda.

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

[Exhibit C](#) is the Work Session Document for [Assembly Bill 14](#), with a proposed amendment dated February 9, 2021, presented by Jered McDonald, Committee Policy Analyst, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau.

[Exhibit D](#) is the Work Session Document for [Assembly Bill 22](#), presented by Jered McDonald, Committee Policy Analyst, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau.

[Exhibit E](#) is the Work Session Document for [Assembly Bill 48](#), presented by Jered McDonald, Committee Policy Analyst, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau.

[Exhibit F](#) is the Work Session Document for [Assembly Bill 63](#), presented by Jered McDonald, Committee Policy Analyst, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau.

[Exhibit G](#) is the Work Session Document for [Assembly Bill 70](#), presented by Jered McDonald, Committee Policy Analyst, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau.

[Exhibit H](#) is the Work Session Document for [Assembly Bill 77](#), presented by Jered McDonald, Committee Policy Analyst, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau.

[Exhibit I](#) is the Work Session Document for [Assembly Bill 86](#), presented by Jered McDonald, Committee Policy Analyst, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau.