

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

**Eighty-First Session
March 16, 2021**

The Committee on Growth and Infrastructure was called to order by Chair Daniele Monroe-Moreno at 1:31 p.m. on Tuesday, March 16, 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:

Assemblywoman Daniele Monroe-Moreno, Chair
Assemblyman Howard Watts, Vice Chair
Assemblywoman Tracy Brown-May
Assemblyman John Ellison
Assemblyman Glen Leavitt
Assemblyman C.H. Miller
Assemblywoman Sarah Peters
Assemblyman Tom Roberts
Assemblyman Jim Wheeler
Assemblyman Steve Yeager

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Assemblywoman Shondra Summers-Armstrong (excused)

GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:

Assemblywoman Shannon Bilbray-Axelrod, Assembly District No. 34

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Daniel L. Crossman, Legislative Auditor
Katie Siemon, Committee Policy Analyst
Devon Kajatt, Committee Manager
Lori McCleary, Committee Secretary
Trinity Thom, Committee Assistant



OTHERS PRESENT:

Sean Sever, Administrator, Division of Management Services and Programs,
Department of Motor Vehicles
April Sanborn, Administrator, Division of Central Services and Records, Department
of Motor Vehicles
Alphecca Muttardy, Macroeconomist, Coalition for a National Infrastructure Bank
Zach Conine, State Treasurer
Janine Hansen, State President, Nevada Families for Freedom
Stanley Forczek, Board Member, Coalition for a National Infrastructure Bank
Lynn Chapman, Treasurer, Independent American Party of Nevada
Rob Benner, Secretary-Treasurer, Building and Construction Trades Council of
Northern Nevada
Ainslee Archibald, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
Cyrus Hojjaty, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

[Roll was called. Committee rules and protocol were explained.] We will start today's meeting with the work session. Our policy analyst, Katie Siemon, will start the work session with Assembly Bill 12.

**Assembly Bill 12: Revises provisions relating to the Department of Transportation.
(BDR 35-345)**

Katie Siemon, Committee Policy Analyst:

Assembly Bill 12 was first heard in this Committee on February 25, 2021, and was presented by the Department of Transportation. Assembly Bill 12 changes the minimum qualifications for deputy director of the Department of Transportation to include at least two years of administrative experience as either an assistant director or the chief engineer within the Department or 15 years of experience in engineering or project management. The bill also moves the position of chief engineer from classified to unclassified state service [[Exhibit C](#)].

There have been no amendments received on this measure. There are two fiscal notes that have been received from the Department of Transportation and the Division of Human Resource Management within the Department of Administration. Both fiscal notes show no fiscal impacts.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

I will entertain a motion to do pass Assembly Bill 12.

ASSEMBLYMAN WATTS MOVED TO DO PASS ASSEMBLY BILL 12.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN PETERS SECONDED THE MOTION.

Is there any discussion on the motion? [There was none.] We will conduct a roll call vote.

THE MOTION PASSED. (ASSEMBLYWOMAN SUMMERS-
ARMSTRONG WAS ABSENT FOR THE VOTE.)

I will assign the floor statement to Assemblywoman Peters. The next bill on work session is Assembly Bill 41.

**Assembly Bill 41: Revises provisions governing the operation of certain vehicles.
(BDR 43-346)**

Katie Siemon, Committee Policy Analyst:

Assembly Bill 41 was heard in this Committee on February 25, 2021, and was presented by the Department of Transportation. Assembly Bill 41 clarifies how vehicles and their loads are to be measured to determine whether they exceed the maximum height, length, and weight permissible by law. The bill removes both the requirement that applications for permits to operate or move oversized vehicles, combinations of vehicles, special mobile equipment, manufactured or mobile homes, or similar structures or loads be submitted in writing and the requirement that permits to move oversized manufactured or mobile homes or similar structures be issued by the Department of Transportation in writing. The measure authorizes the Department, upon request, to waive the maximum width of 192 inches for special movement permits for manufactured or mobile homes, similar vehicles, and structures [[Exhibit D](#)].

There were no amendments received, and there is no fiscal note associated with this measure.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

I will entertain a motion to do pass Assembly Bill 41.

ASSEMBLYMAN WHEELER MADE A MOTION TO DO PASS
ASSEMBLY BILL 41.

ASSEMBLYMAN WATTS SECONDED THE MOTION.

Is there any discussion on the motion? [There was none.] We will conduct a roll call vote.

THE MOTION PASSED. (ASSEMBLYWOMAN SUMMERS-
ARMSTRONG WAS ABSENT FOR THE VOTE.)

I will assign the floor statement to Assemblywoman Brown-May. The next bill on work session is Assembly Bill 53.

Assembly Bill 53: Revises provisions relating to the establishment of certain systems of communication on highways. (BDR 35-347)

Katie Siemon, Committee Policy Analyst:

Assembly Bill 53 was heard in this Committee on February 25, 2021, and was presented by the Department of Transportation. Assembly Bill 53 changes the requirement that the Department of Transportation establish a system of public communication along highways for emergencies and driving conditions to a discretionary function [[Exhibit E](#)].

There were no amendments received, and there is no fiscal note associated with this measure.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

I will entertain a motion to do pass Assembly Bill 53.

ASSEMBLYMAN ROBERTS MADE A MOTION TO DO PASS
ASSEMBLY BILL 53.

ASSEMBLYMAN WATTS SECONDED THE MOTION.

Is there any discussion on the motion? [There was none.] We will conduct a roll call vote.

THE MOTION PASSED. (ASSEMBLYWOMAN SUMMERS-
ARMSTRONG WAS ABSENT FOR THE VOTE.)

I will assign the floor statement to Assemblyman Roberts. The last bill on work session is Assembly Bill 123.

Assembly Bill 123: Revises provisions governing special license plates indicating support for the Vegas Golden Knights hockey team. (BDR 43-797)

Katie Siemon, Committee Policy Analyst:

Assembly Bill 123 was first heard in this Committee on March 2, 2021, presented by Assemblywoman Jauregui, Assemblyman Yeager, and members of the Vegas Golden Knights. The measure imposes an additional \$10 fee for the issuance and renewal of a special license plate in support of the Vegas Golden Knights franchise of the National Hockey League, which will be deposited with the state treasurer for credit to the State General Fund. On a quarterly basis, the state treasurer is required to distribute the additional fees to the Vegas Golden Knights Foundation to assist with its work supporting nonprofit and charitable organizations [[Exhibit F](#)].

There have been no amendments received for this measure. This measure requires a two-thirds majority vote. There have been two fiscal notes received. The Office of the State Treasurer has determined there is no fiscal impact, and the multiyear estimates provided by the Office of Project Management within the Department of Motor Vehicles are attached for reference [page 2, [Exhibit F](#)].

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

I will entertain a motion to do pass Assembly Bill 123.

ASSEMBLYMAN YEAGER MADE A MOTION TO DO PASS
ASSEMBLY BILL 123.

ASSEMBLYMAN WATTS SECONDED THE MOTION.

Is there any discussion on the motion?

Assemblyman Ellison:

I thought the two-thirds vote had been removed on this bill because the charge would go to the individuals purchasing the license plates and not the state.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

I believe on the day of the hearing our legal counsel was not present, but did make a decision. It is a two-thirds vote because of the language in the bill. There was nothing mentioned in the hearing, but a two-thirds vote is still required.

Assemblyman Wheeler:

I checked into this a little further and it remains a two-thirds vote because there is a slight increase in revenue, but since the license plate and the fees are voluntary, meaning no one has to do it, then it is not a tax budget violation. It is simply because of the language in the bill.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Did that answer your question, Assemblyman Ellison?

Assemblyman Ellison:

Yes, it did.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Is there any further discussion on the motion? [There was none.] We will conduct a roll call vote.

THE MOTION PASSED. (ASSEMBLYWOMAN SUMMERS-
ARMSTRONG WAS ABSENT FOR THE VOTE.)

I will assign the floor statement to Assemblywoman Jauregui. That will close the work session. We will move on to the hearing for Assembly Bill 188. I will be presenting that bill along with Assemblywoman Brown-May.

[Assemblyman Watts assumed the Chair.]

Assembly Bill 188: Abolishes the Commission on Special License Plates. (BDR 43-476)

Assemblywoman Daniele Monroe-Moreno, Assembly District No. 1:

I am here to provide some background information on Assembly Bill 188 for your consideration before turning the presentation over to Assemblywoman Brown-May, who will finish the introduction of the bill.

For those familiar with the work of the Commission on Special License Plates during the interim, you may recognize Assembly Bill 188 as one of the five recommendations made by the Commission as a result of our meetings together. Although the original recommendation turned over all duties related to special license plates to the Department of Motor Vehicles, this bill retains the requirement that the legislative auditor compile and present a report based on fiscal financial information from charitable organizations pursuing special license plates.

I will be introducing an amendment to this measure that makes a few changes designed to clarify each agency's role during the financial reporting process and streamlines the procedure itself. Rather than taxing the Department of Motor Vehicles with collecting financial information from charitable organizations and transferring this information to the legislative auditor, the amendment will require charitable organizations to transfer their financial information directly to the legislative auditor. The review of the financial information provided does not constitute an audit by definition, but it does produce an annual written report.

As introduced, the measure requires the legislative auditor to present a financial report to the Department by September 30 annually, only to require the Department to then forward the report to either the Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau for transmittal to the Legislature or the Legislative Commission by January 31 annually. The amendment removes this inefficiency by requiring the legislative auditor to present the report to both the Director and the Department by September 30 annually.

At this time, I would like to introduce Assemblywoman Brown-May, who will explain the provisions of Assembly Bill 188.

Assemblywoman Tracy Brown-May, Assembly District No. 42:

I am pleased to provide additional information related to Assembly Bill 188. As many of you may know, the state of Nevada permitted the use of special license plates in certain circumstances beginning in 1977. Assembly Bill 358 of the 72nd Session expanded the creation of special license plates for different organizations and created the Commission on Special License Plates. The Commission has met every interim since then, and its membership consists of five legislators and three members representing the Department of Motor Vehicles, the Department of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, and the Department of Public Safety.

The responsibility of the Commission is to approve or disapprove applications for the design, preparation, and issuance of special license plates that are submitted to the Department of Motor Vehicles. The application process is according to the process described in Chapter 482 of the *Nevada Revised Statutes* and the corresponding regulations. Additionally, the Commission has met to make certain determinations related to charitable organizations receiving fees from special license plates, to notify charitable organizations that have failed to comply with certain requirements, and to make additional actions when organizations have not taken corrective action following notification from the Commission.

Special license plates have remained a resourceful way for charitable organizations to raise revenue to support their respective causes while covering production costs of special license plates funding, technological upgrades at the Department, and providing additional revenue to the State Highway Fund.

Nothing in Assembly Bill 188 is intended to disrupt or alter the ability of the organizations to apply for special license plates. Additionally, there are no new requirements regarding how special license plates are issued. There are no revisions to the standard for applications. Special license plates and the entities requesting a special plate will continue to have the same requirements under existing laws and regulations and will continue to be processed chronologically by the Department. This measure retains the existing application process for charitable organizations and requires the Department of Motor Vehicles to hold public meetings to review, approve, or disapprove the applications. The Department may also notice or take action against charitable organizations that do not meet certain program requirements within existing law. Finally, the measure abolishes the Commission on Special License Plates due to its redundancy.

Prior to becoming a member of the Nevada State Assembly, I had the good fortune in representing a nonprofit organization that applied for a special license plate, and I had the pleasure of presenting this request to the Commission. The application itself was filed five years prior to the organization receiving authorization to present and it included a number of requirements being met to qualify. There is a lengthy application process and a required bond must be posted.

The process to acquire a special license plate is detailed, and it requires multiple reviews by professionals who ensure safety standards and visibility requirements are met prior to a plate going into production. As stated, this bill recommends that the Commission itself be abolished in an effort to streamline and reduce redundancy. As you heard Assemblywoman Monroe-Moreno mention, the legislative auditor will retain the existing requirement to examine the financial records of each charitable organization receiving a special license plate fee and provide an annual report to the Legislature. As she stated, as introduced, this bill requires the back-and-forth between charitable organizations, the Department, and the legislative auditor. A future amendment, as she discussed, will streamline the financial reporting process for all parties involved, but it will not fundamentally change the existing process.

Through the diligent efforts of various members of the Commission over the past 18 years, Nevada has developed and refined a process for application, review, approval, and issuance of special license plates that provides for accountability and the effective oversight of the program. Fully transferring approval and oversight responsibilities for special license plates to the Department, laws requiring transparency through public meetings and financial reporting will ensure that the process remains fair and equitable for all applicants, and it will eliminate duplication of efforts between two branches of government.

I urge the Committee's support of Assembly Bill 188 and will remain available for questions from members, along with Assemblywoman Monroe-Moreno. The Department of Motor Vehicles' Administrator, April Sanborn, is available to answer technical questions regarding the bill, as well as the Department's liaison, Sean Sever. We are happy to talk to the bill, if you would like, or entertain questions, whatever you prefer.

Assemblywoman Monroe-Moreno:

That will end our presentation on Assembly Bill 188. We are available for questions.

Vice Chair Watts:

Are there any questions from members?

Assemblyman Ellison:

As a supporter of the Department of Motor Vehicles, it seems like the Commission did a really good job. They were more in tune with the constituents who asked for the plates. Is there any reason why this should be changed? I like what you are doing, but I think it works better the way it is.

Assemblywoman Monroe-Moreno:

I had the opportunity, the pleasure, or the displeasure on some days, to serve on the Commission for Special License Plates for the last two sessions. This previous interim, I chaired the Commission. I found, as other members of the Commission did, that the duties of the Commission were, in some ways, repetitive and duplicative of the work done by the Department of Motor Vehicles. There was contention for one organization when we had to remove their privilege of having a special license plate. However, as we look at doing things more efficiently, being more fiscally responsible, and still being in tune with the needs, concerns, and requests of our constituents, it was in the interest of the Commission that it would be best to turn the day-to-day operations over to the Department with the Legislature retaining the "audit part" of the job.

In addition, I believe it puts everyone on a more level playing field so that legislators who may have a special interest in one organization or another do not use that interest to influence the process.

Assemblywoman Brown-May:

Having had the opportunity to present on behalf of a nonprofit organization requesting a special license plate, the process itself is laid out within the regulations. A nonprofit must follow all of the regulations as have been determined and go through the Department of Motor Vehicles. Because there is a department involved, it was easy to move through the process relatively quickly, but then there had to be a stopgap as we waited for the interim Commission to meet to consider special license plates.

There are only a certain number of plates allowed according to regulations, so there was a period of time when the nonprofit had to wait for its turn in the queue. I think that would be the case irrespective of whether a legislative body was overseeing that or whether it went to the Department of Motor Vehicles. Primarily, it was just one extra meeting nonprofits needed to wait to happen that could have been handled at a public hearing with the Department of Motor Vehicles.

Assemblyman Ellison:

I like what my colleagues had to say. However, I believe the Department has a lot on its plate. It covers the whole state on so many issues. I cannot thank the Department enough for what it has done. I just hate to place another burden on the Department. I know hearings would still have to be held and it would take a lot of time when the Department is busy now. I hope someone from the Department is here to discuss it. I see where you are coming from, and I appreciate your comments.

Vice Chair Watts:

Are there any further questions from the members?

Assemblyman Roberts:

I know this bill is doing away with the Commission, and the Department was already doing a considerable amount of work to prepare for those Commission meetings, as you testified to. Is this going to result in a cost savings by eliminating the Commission?

**Sean Sever, Administrator, Division of Management Services and Programs,
Department of Motor Vehicles:**

We do not anticipate any additional cost savings.

Assemblyman Roberts:

I do not necessarily mean from the Department, but from the legislative side. We were paying legislators and staff to hold those Commission hearings.

Assemblywoman Monroe-Moreno:

There would be a considerable savings. We would not have to assign staff from the Legislative Counsel Bureau or assign legislators to participate in this interim committee. I will also remind the Committee, the Commission only provides recommendations on special license plates. The Department has and will maintain the final authority on any plate that is produced.

Assemblyman Roberts:

Do we have the dollar amount available on what we have spent in previous sessions? That would be helpful when we get to work session.

Assemblyman Wheeler:

The legislative staff gets paid, but the legislators do not get paid. This is one of the very few committees where the legislators do not get paid.

I was chairman of the Commission in one interim session and I have been on it every session since, except the last one. As Assemblywoman Monroe-Moreno said, there was an instance when, after years of investigation, we revoked the privilege of a nonprofit. How is the Department going to handle complaints, and would they have to bring them before the Legislature before revoking a privilege as we did in the interim committee?

Sean Sever:

April Sanborn is here and can answer that question.

April Sanborn, Administrator, Division of Central Services and Records, Department of Motor Vehicles:

Assemblyman Wheeler, could you repeat the question, please?

Assemblyman Wheeler:

The Commission started the procedure to revoke money coming in from a special license plate. If the Department or the Legislature receives a complaint, what will the procedure be as far as hearings, et cetera, in that type of situation to mirror what the Legislature has done in the past?

April Sanborn:

Currently, Assembly Bill 150 has language that is designed to give the Department some teeth to be able to take action when we receive complaints or an organization is not meeting legislative requirements. In the current framework, the Department has no authority to take action, so Assembly Bill 150 will be vital to the Department. We are hoping that bill will be passed so we can have the authority to take action on organizations. Currently, the Department has no authority, but moving forward, we need the ability to work with our administrative hearing process to work through any issues with organizations.

Assemblyman Wheeler:

This is basically the first step in giving the Department more power.

April Sanborn:

Yes.

Vice Chair Watts:

Are there any further questions? [There were none.] I will open the hearing for testimony in support. As a reminder, in order to provide testimony for the bills on the agenda today, you must register in advance on the Nevada Electronic Legislative Information System. We will be limiting testimony to two minutes in order to accommodate all speakers. Are there any callers waiting to testify in support of Assembly Bill 188? [There were none.] Are there any callers waiting to testify in opposition? [There were none.] Are there any callers waiting to testify in neutral?

Daniel L. Crossman, Legislative Auditor, Audit Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau:

I am testifying in the neutral position today on Assembly Bill 188. I would like to provide some brief remarks. Under the new process defined by this legislation, as noted, the legislative auditor retains its responsibilities to perform a review of financial information required to be submitted by certain special license plate charitable organizations. We are happy to continue to do the work we have done in this area historically. Under the changes in this bill, as also noted, the legislative auditor's annual report with the results of our review will now be submitted directly to the Department of Motor Vehicles as well as to the Legislature.

As also mentioned in the presentation, the proposed amendment to the bill will help clarify that process, as it relates to the Audit Division of the Legislative Counsel Bureau, to help ensure the process of obtaining, reviewing, and reporting on the financial information from these special license plate organizations is done as efficiently as possible.

Vice Chair Watts:

Are there any questions for Mr. Crossman? [There were none.] Are there any other callers waiting to testify in neutral? [There were none.] Are there any final remarks from the presenters?

Assemblywoman Monroe-Moreno:

In response to Assemblyman Wheeler's question, this Committee heard Assembly Bill 150 earlier in the session. It is scheduled for a work session soon. It addresses the punitive changes that would be needed by the Department of Motor Vehicles for actions concerning special license plates. I urge the Committee's support for Assembly Bill 188.

Vice Chair Watts:

I will close the hearing on Assembly Bill 188.

[Assemblywoman Monroe-Moreno reassumed the Chair.]

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

I will open the hearing for Assembly Joint Resolution 7 and welcome Assemblywoman Bilbray-Axelrod.

Assembly Joint Resolution 7: Urges the Congress of the United States to pass the National Infrastructure Bank Act of 2020. (BDR R-765)

Assemblywoman Shannon Bilbray-Axelrod, Assembly District No. 34:

I am here to present Assembly Joint Resolution 7 for your consideration. As background, according to the Congressional Budget Office, revenues to the federal Highway Trust Fund [Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation] have fallen short of federal spending on highways for more than a decade. If excise taxes on fuel were to continue at the current rate, and if funding for the highway and transit programs were to increase annually at the same rate of inflation, by 2030 total accumulated budget shortfalls for the Highway Trust Fund alone would total \$189 billion nationally. That is just the Highway Trust Fund. This does not take into account the fact that the term "infrastructure" properly refers to airports, transit, bridges, dams, energy, infrastructure, solid waste, wastewater treatment plants, and the like.

The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) reviews and evaluates the infrastructure of each state in the United States as a whole on an annual basis, providing a report card intended to give a snapshot evaluation of a state's infrastructure. In 2021, the infrastructure report card, which was based on 2018 data, the ASCE gave America's infrastructure a "C-". Nevada received a "C", which was a modest improvement from its prior rating of a "C-" in 2014.

The ASCE estimates that the failure to close the national infrastructure funding gap will cost more than \$10 trillion in gross domestic product, more than 3 million jobs, and approximately \$2.4 trillion in exports if we do not significantly address the issue by 2039. Phrased differently, this lack of investment on infrastructure today will cost the American household \$3,300 per year, or \$63 per week, by 2039. In Nevada, the state is facing the following costs for estimates of rehabilitation and future maintenance of various infrastructure: for critical dams, \$40 million; for drinking water infrastructure, over \$5 billion over the next 20 years; and for our backlog of road and bridge repairs, which are mostly in rural Nevada, nearly \$450 million.

What will this bill do? Assembly Joint Resolution 7 urges the U.S. Congress to pass H.R. [House Resolution] 6422 of the 116th Congress. This is more commonly known as the National Infrastructure Bank Act of 2020. This is a funding model that has been successfully employed four times in our nation's history, requiring a minimal initial appropriation but is ultimately designed to be budget neutral. Let me say that again: It is designed to be budget neutral.

Before I turn my time over to my copresenters to further explain how the National Infrastructure Bank works and how it may benefit Nevada specifically, I would like to note that in the 2017 Session, we had the passage of Assembly Bill 399 of the 79th Session, which created the Nevada State Infrastructure Bank within the Department of Transportation.

Under the governance of a board of directors, the Infrastructure Bank is charged with providing loans and other financial assistance to various units of state and local government for the development, construction, repair, improvement, maintenance, decommissioning, operation, and ownership of certain transportation facilities and utility infrastructure. To date, nearly 35 other states have followed suit by implementing infrastructure banks of their own.

Infrastructure banks remain a popular method for meeting long-term needs to close the infrastructure funding gap. The National Infrastructure Bank may be able to accomplish the same goal. With the Chair's permission, I would like to invite State Treasurer Zach Conine and Alphecca Muttardy, who is a macroeconomist from the Coalition for a National Infrastructure Bank, to further explain the provisions of this measure and H.R. 6422. We will then be available to answer any questions the Committee may have.

Alphecca Muttardy, Macroeconomist, Coalition for a National Infrastructure Bank:

I worked for 25 years at the International Monetary Fund and I am currently calling you from northern Virginia, working with the Coalition for a National Infrastructure Bank on H.R. 6422, to create a National Infrastructure Bank.

Assemblywoman Bilbray-Axelrod did a great job of explaining why we have these great needs to finance infrastructure nationwide. There is a very large gap. The ASCE, in their report card, said that over the next ten years, we need at least \$6.1 trillion nationwide, of which maybe only \$3.5 trillion is financed through the normal means. That is, through the federal budget or through state and local budgets. Definitely, \$2.6 trillion is not funded. In addition, we also need other things outside of what they normally cover, including high-speed rail, affordable housing, and broadband everywhere.

This bank would actually finance all of those projects across the country. It is purposely made large enough to cover every single need in every single state. In Nevada, for example, out of the \$5 trillion that will be made available, the state could qualify for up to \$37 billion. This would cover all the needs the Assemblywoman just identified for dams, drinking water, roads, bridges, and broadband everywhere. Of course, Nevada is a fast-growing state, so it has fast-growing infrastructure needs. Nevada has been hit particularly hard by the pandemic, so there is larger-than-normal unemployment. Some of those jobs will come back, some might not come back, but there will be a need for retraining folks for the jobs that are not coming back. There is no reason why we cannot hire and train all of the unemployed or marginally unemployed in Nevada to build its own infrastructure.

The way this would work is, entities that own infrastructure would request a loan from the bank. The Coalition would help build things in such a manner that would mobilize and build back better by building great integrated systems where trains leave off and roads begin. There would be more mass transit and affordable housing. Schools could be built out, and broadband could be built everywhere to make sure the state is covered with broadband connectivity and road connectivity to get all the products to markets.

As a macroeconomist, I can tell you my eye is on not only having a program to finance infrastructure, but to grow the economy much faster than it has grown in the past. The last time we had such a bank, the Reconstruction Finance Corporation during the Great Depression, there were growth rates up around 5.5 percent per year. We think we can replicate that again with the new bank. Higher growth rates need many more receipts coming into federal, state, and local coffers to assist in paying back the loans. That is it in a nutshell. I will welcome any questions.

[Submitted but not discussed is [Exhibit G.](#)]

Zach Conine, State Treasurer:

In his State of the State address, Governor Sisolak highlighted the importance of infrastructure as one of his priorities for Nevada's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. To put it simply, infrastructure creates real jobs for real people. For every \$1 we spend on a public infrastructure project, anywhere from \$3 to \$7 is returned back into our economy and to disadvantaged communities in need of investment. We know Nevada has very acute needs when it comes to things like affordable housing, broadband connectivity, water and sewer projects, and school construction.

In order to ensure the state can provide the best services it can to all residents, we need the federal government to help provide us with the initial resources. We need to get these projects off the ground, putting Nevadans back to work.

Assembly Joint Resolution 7 is an important first step in this process as it will show the federal government that Nevada is ready and willing to meet the challenge and work to accelerate capital projects that will help move the state forward.

As the Biden Administration works through its upcoming infrastructure package, we need to make sure we have all the right tools from a state perspective to identify potential projects, work collaboratively with local governments, and start building Nevada's economic recovery. To that end, we have been working diligently with the Office of the Governor and other state agencies to stand up and reform the State Infrastructure Bank, as Assemblywoman Bilbray-Axelrod mentioned, to streamline infrastructure projects throughout our state. The National Infrastructure Bank, similar to what is being proposed in A.J.R. 7, would complement all the efforts already underway at the state level to increase access to capital and provide much-needed funding to areas of our state in desperate need of infrastructure investment.

I would like to thank Assemblywoman Bilbray-Axelrod for bringing this legislation, and I am happy to answer any questions from the Committee.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Are there any questions from members regarding A.J.R. 7? [There were none.]

Assemblywoman Bilbray-Axelrod:

If I may, as you look at the cosponsors, it is a very bipartisan bill. Thank you to all those who signed on. If you have any questions, I will make myself available offline as well.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

I thought I had signed on, but I do not see my name listed. I would love to be added. I believe we have one question.

Assemblywoman Brown-May:

Thank you for presenting this great bill. It is always great to talk about financing and how we service debt and recover from this pandemic. Do you have any indication of the support for H.R. 6422 on a national level?

Alphecca Muttardy:

We have a list of endorsements we can provide. It is safe to say, we have resolutions introduced or passed in 20 legislatures across the country. We have testified in a number of legislatures, as we are doing today, and we have seen a huge, keen interest because every single state has huge, unmet infrastructure needs, unemployment problems, and marginal unemployment problems. This is seen as a great way to complement the financing and get growth started in these states.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

I am not seeing any further questions. I will open the hearing to callers who are wishing to testify in support of A.J.R. 7.

Janine Hansen, State President, Nevada Families for Freedom:

We are supporting A.J.R. 7, which provides a creative way to create jobs and revive the economy without tax dollars and debt. Currently, the United States, in order to get money into the economy, borrows money from a private Federal Reserve Bank, which charges interest on the money, then the U.S. Department of the Treasury prints the dollars, and the U.S. taxpayers pay the interest. This current process will never allow us to pay off the national debt.

Starting with Alexander Hamilton and the first Bank of the United States, the United States used the creative power of the U.S. government and created credit for Americans, which cost the taxpayers nothing. Through this successful program, the federal government paid off the war debt for the War of Independence. Henry Clay, who served in the House of Representatives and ran for President of the United States, supported this idea, calling it the "American System," which was to fund national production with sovereign or U.S. money and credit.

President Abraham Lincoln printed the U.S. greenbacks through the U.S. Treasury, which helped pay for the Civil War, using these same ideas. This allowed him to avoid borrowing the money from British banks and paying them interest.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Reconstruction Finance Corporation, from 1932 through 1957, used these same principles to build infrastructure to help get the U.S. out of the Great Depression without using additional tax dollars or going into debt to the Federal Reserve.

A National Infrastructure Bank would put Americans back to work, creating many jobs in this devastated economy without tax dollars. We support A.J.R. 7. [[Exhibit H](#) was also submitted.]

Stanley Forczek, Board Member, Coalition for a National Infrastructure Bank:

I am a retired executive from Amtrak, where I spent over 30 years. I also worked in the energy consulting business and have my own firm. I thoroughly support this resolution in order to support H.R. 6422. I think this is a prime example of two organizations, or two bills, supporting the one thing needed in this country, which is infrastructure.

The infrastructure in this country is anywhere from 75 to 200 years old. It is time to get it fixed to a point of good repair. I do not think the time is right to think about money. There is no money out there and the appropriations process is fairly clear. Unless the people are taxed, there will not be any money. The only way around it is a model of a National Infrastructure Bank. We should not think about the money. We should think about the value that is put into place by fixing the infrastructure throughout the United States, including Nevada. The value is important. We have not fixed our infrastructure for the last 60 years. We missed fixing it by the twenty-first century. We need to get ready for the twenty-second century.

I urge all Committee members to approve this resolution in order to get a good starting point to move forward, build the transportation system, build water systems, take care of broadband, and do everything needed to bring infrastructure up to a point of good repair.

Lynn Chapman, Treasurer, Independent American Party of Nevada:

Our infrastructure is in dire need of help. I just finished reading an article of our nation's terrible infrastructure. In the article, our infrastructure was described as "third world" and in desperate need of upgrading.

Our roads are not the only part we have to worry about. We have to worry about power and water. That made me think about the terrible winter storm in early February that hit the nation. It left at least 12 people dead. There were a lot of problems in Texas where the temperature went below zero. It really put the elderly and infants at high risk. We need to find a way that will not hurt families, meaning higher taxes, to help fix the infrastructure problems. We should go forward with whatever we can.

I would like to add that I hope American companies and American workers would be used in the fixing of our infrastructure and not foreign companies and foreign workers. This is one way to help put Americans back to work. We do support A.J.R. 7.

Rob Benner, Secretary-Treasurer, Building and Construction Trades Council of Northern Nevada:

We believe the National Infrastructure Bank has the potential to rebuild American industry and create millions of new jobs with no new taxes and no new debt. Jobs like this will be essential for Nevada's economic recovery.

William H. Stanley, Executive Secretary-Treasurer from the Southern Nevada Building Trades Unions, could not join this meeting. He wanted me to pass on his support for this resolution as well.

Ainslee Archibald, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

The National Infrastructure Bank would lay the foundation, pun intended, for the Green New Deal. In the process of combating climate change, we can start creating millions of good jobs through initiatives like this one. Our country needs to get more comfortable spending money on infrastructure, especially green infrastructure, in order to build our way out of the twin crises of economic instability and environmental collapse. We need to start building mass transportation, renewable energy infrastructure, and sustainable architecture. In the next decade, the impacts of environmental breakdown will make it more and more necessary to take bold action to combat climate change. The National Infrastructure Bank is one way to start building the political will to do so. Also, I like trains. Please support A.J.R. 7.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Seeing no further callers in support, I will open the hearing to callers wishing to provide testimony in opposition. [There were none.] Are there any callers wishing to testify as neutral?

Cyrus Hojjaty, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I am neutral for this bill. We certainly do need a lot of infrastructure, great economic output, more public spaces, things like traffic circles, more repair of our utilities, and a lot of other different things.

There are some concerns I heard about affordable housing. Why not address the reasons why the price for rent keeps going up? An issue that I found with infrastructure is I hope we do not see more of the failed projects, like California's high-speed rail, which ended up wasting a lot of money and had to be cancelled, because I fear a lot of these funds could be used for wasteful government departments and do not actually go to the project itself.

I really enjoy driving on the freeways around the Las Vegas Valley. They are in fine shape, so it would be harsh to see them go into disrepair. I think the major roadways need help and could use a lot of traffic lights. I think we could invest in up-to-date technology like a hyperloop.

The other concern I have is, I was very skeptical about having Wall Street, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the Federal Reserve Banks involved in all of this. There are a lot of crooks in there, and I believe they did not learn their lesson in 2008. I think there is another economic downturn coming along because real estate is overinflated. We saw this happen about 15 years ago. I am very concerned because our national debt is skyrocketing. The problem is, a lot of the money that gets spent, particularly in stimulus, does not actually go to the people unlike other countries, it goes to the fat cats on top. If there is any infrastructure built, I hope it actually goes to good quality infrastructure for the people and not just a handful of special interests and wasteful government departments. We have to plan that it is for the average Joe and not the few who are pulling the strings.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Mr. Hojjaty, I believe you have gone past the neutral stance, so I want to thank you for calling in today and for your comments. Are there any other callers wishing to testify in neutral? [There were none.] Do the presenters have any final remarks?

[[Exhibit I](#) was submitted but not discussed and is an exhibit for this hearing.]

Assemblywoman Bilbray-Axelrod:

Thank you for hearing this bill, and thank you to the diverse callers in support. Thank you to my copresenters. I want to say this National Infrastructure Bank could really be a game changer for generations to come. I encourage your support. I want to let you know that history has its eyes on you.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

I will close the hearing on A.J.R. 7. That brings us to the last item on our agenda, public comment. Are there any callers wishing to participate in public comment?

Cyrus Hojjaty, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I think public infrastructure and public safety is very important. I do not know about you, but I think Las Vegas is one of the most privatized societies in the world. We hardly have any public spaces other than roads and a few parks. In fact, a lot of places that are somehow shared spaces, like miniparks, clubhouses, and other things like that, are privately owned. A lot of places that are typically public are actually private. I am hoping people will be aware of this. I do not know why we live in a society where everyone wants to be hiding from one another and living in guard-gated areas. This is a sign that our society is becoming dysfunctional in its thinking. I think it is a symptom of income inequality. As you legislators drive through neighborhoods, you should think about this because it was not the case decades ago. What are your thoughts?

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Are there any other additional callers for public comment? [There were none.]

That will conclude today's meeting. Our next meeting will be on Thursday, March 18, 2021, at 1:30 p.m., when we will have a work session.

This meeting is adjourned [at 2:40 p.m.].

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Lori McCleary
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Assemblywoman Daniele Monroe-Moreno, Chair

DATE: _____

EXHIBITS

[Exhibit A](#) is the Agenda.

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

[Exhibit C](#) is the Work Session Document for Assembly Bill 12, submitted and presented by Katie Siemon, Committee Policy Analyst, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau.

[Exhibit D](#) is the Work Session Document for Assembly Bill 41, submitted and presented by Katie Siemon, Committee Policy Analyst, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau.

[Exhibit E](#) is the Work Session Document for Assembly Bill 53, submitted and presented by Katie Siemon, Committee Policy Analyst, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau.

[Exhibit F](#) is the Work Session Document for Assembly Bill 123, submitted and presented by Katie Siemon, Committee Policy Analyst, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau.

[Exhibit G](#) is a document titled "Quick Summary of Legislation – HR 6422 – To Create a National Infrastructure Bank," dated March 6, 2020, submitted by Coalition for a National Infrastructure Bank.

[Exhibit H](#) is written testimony in support of Assembly Joint Resolution 7, dated March 16, 2021, submitted and presented by Janine Hansen, State President, Nevada Families for Freedom.

[Exhibit I](#) is a letter to the Assembly Committee on Growth and Infrastructure, dated March 16, 2021, submitted by Andy Kunz, President and CEO, US High Speed Rail Association, in support of Assembly Joint Resolution 7.