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

Eighty-First Session
April 28, 2021

The Committee on Health and Human Services was called to order by Chair Rochelle T. Nguyen at 1:33 p.m. on Wednesday, April 28, 2021, Online and in Room 3138 of the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada. Copies of the minutes, including the Agenda (Exhibit A), the Attendance Roster (Exhibit B), and other substantive exhibits, are available and on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau and on the Nevada Legislature's website at www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/81st2021.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Assemblywoman Rochelle T. Nguyen, Chair
Assemblywoman Sarah Peters, Vice Chair
Assemblywoman Teresa Benitez-Thompson
Assemblywoman Annie Black
Assemblywoman Michelle Gorelow
Assemblyman Gregory T. Hafen II
Assemblywoman Lisa Krasner
Assemblyman Andy Matthews
Assemblyman David Orentlicher
Assemblywoman Shondra Summers-Armstrong
Assemblywoman Clara Thomas
Assemblywoman Robin L. Titus

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:

Senator Dallas Harris, Senate District No. 11
Assemblywoman Alexis Hansen, Assembly District No. 32
Senator James Ohrenschall, Senate District No. 21

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Patrick Ashton, Committee Policy Analyst
Karly O'Krent, Committee Counsel
Nick Christie, Committee Manager
Terry Horgan, Committee Secretary
Trinity Thom, Committee Assistant

OTHERS PRESENT:

Ross E. Armstrong, Administrator, Division of Child and Family Services, Department of Health and Human Services
Nick Shepack, Policy and Program Associate, American Civil Liberties Union of Nevada
Daniel Pierrott, representing Fingerprinting Express
Diane Redleaf, Legal Consultant, Let Grow
Gillian Block, representing Nevada Coalition of Legal Service Providers
Brigid J. Duffy, Chief Deputy District Attorney, Juvenile Division, Clark County District Attorney's Office
Rachel Flynn, Ph.D., Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada
Dora Uchel-Martinez, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada
Charlie Melvin, Director of Public Relations, Power2Parent
Lenore Skenazy, President, Let Grow
Andrea Keith, Executive Director, Let Grow
Daniel Hansen, M.D., Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada
Kendra G. Bertschy, Deputy Public Defender, Washoe County Public Defender's Office
Jeanette Belz, representing Children's Advocacy Alliance
Amy Honodel, Staff Attorney, Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada
Laura Drucker, Psy.D., Legislative Co-Chair, Nevada Psychological Association
Alexis Tucey, Deputy Administrator, Community Services, Division of Child and Family Services, Department of Health and Human Services
Joanna Jacob, Government Affairs Manager, Clark County
Tim Burch, Administrator of Human Services, Clark County

Chair Nguyen:
[Roll was taken. The Chair reminded Committee members, witnesses, and members of the audience of Committee rules, protocol, and procedures for in-person and virtual meetings.]

We will move on to our first agenda item. I will open the bill hearing on Senate Bill 21 (1st Reprint).

Senate Bill 21 (1st Reprint): Revises requirements relating to background investigations conducted by certain institutions, agencies and facilities that serve children. (BDR 5-303)

Ross E. Armstrong, Administrator, Division of Child and Family Services, Department of Health and Human Services:
Senate Bill 21 (1st Reprint) started as a boring, kind of nerdy government administrative bill to standardize the crimes that we check in child-serving agencies in terms of background checks for hiring employees who are working with vulnerable populations. In the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) within the Department of Health and Human Services, we currently have three different sets of rules about the backgrounds that can either qualify or disqualify an individual to work in our agency. We occasionally get an employee who wants to transfer or even promote their career, but they cannot get from one part of the agency to the other because of these differing background checks.

The original Senate Bill 21 set the list of exclusionary crimes across the board and also put some time limits, particularly on minor drug offenses. We had a lot of folks who had minor drug charges. It did not matter how old those drug charges were; those people were excluded from working at the agency. That is what the original bill did. Every bill starts as an idea, but then it opens doors to conversations, and you hope you can get to change. As we worked with stakeholders throughout the process in the other house, it became clear that, when we are talking about these child-serving agencies, we are talking about agencies whose whole idea of existing is to give folks a second chance—a brighter future ahead of them than what they may be experiencing now and that our employment practices should reflect those core values of our agencies.

The bill was amended so that there is consistency in terms of what crimes are checked across the different parts of child-serving agencies, but also giving each one of those agencies the ability to do a weighing test to determine if somebody does come back with a particular crime on their background and the statute says that they can be excluded, that you could really take a look at each individual situation and weigh the crime, the conduct that occurred, with what their role is going to be and that those exclusionary crimes can be waived so long as that objective test is followed. Anytime we add human discretion, of course, there is an opportunity for human bias, implicit or otherwise, so also amended into the bill is a requirement that an agency that is using that weighted test periodically checks the results of that test to make sure that there are not biased results in those tests. We started with just making sure all the crimes were consistent and we have added this ability for agencies to waive that. One other factor that helped us move in that direction was that, in working with the families and children, there is inherent value a lot of times in lived experience. So we were unable to hire folks who, because of their own life experience, can actually really help in the rehabilitation or safety of our children.

To run through the actual sections of the bill, we are talking about three different types of entities: juvenile justice detention centers and facilities, child welfare agencies, and state-operated mental health facilities for children. Some of the things we did across the

board, including the time limit on drug offenses, was to add domestic violence as one of the crimes to check against. That crime had some existing behaviors into the workplace that were not good; also, in talking with stakeholders, prostitution alone has been removed due to the nature of how that crime is charged.

In the bill, sections 1 and 2 apply to those juvenile justice agencies; sections 3 and 4 make the adjustment to the child welfare agencies. The child welfare statute had the most comprehensive list to start with, so that served as the model for the others. Division-operated mental health facilities are in sections 5 and 6, and section 7 gives the bill an implementation date of January 1, 2022. That would give us sufficient time to implement the weighing test and for the Division to provide any technical assistance to those local entities that were trying to do the same thing.

That is S.B. 21 (R1). The main goal is to have some consistency in our background approach across child-serving agencies and also to have an opportunity to take a look at each individual case to make a determination of whether past criminal conduct still presents a potential risk to the agencies or the individuals they serve. With me is Sherri Vondrak, the DCFS personnel officer who did a tremendous job in terms of researching what other states were doing and found that Oregon was using this weighted test.

Chair Nguyen:
Do we have any questions from Committee members?

Assemblywoman Krasner:
What is the current law and how are we changing it?

Ross Armstrong:
The current law varies from agency to agency. For example, the child welfare agencies have the greatest list of exclusionary crimes. The juvenile justice agencies did not have us check for involuntary manslaughter or require that a felony has use of force or threatened use of force. In the mental health and juvenile justice statutes, it adds to that list. The biggest changes are the time limit on drug offenses, the inclusion of checking for domestic violence, and the addition of the sex crimes, with the exception of prostitution because we know in a lot of cases those are instances of coercion—it was charged that way. The biggest thing is that right now, if any of these crimes pop up, it is an automatic exclusion—there is no discretion. So we have had cases where someone was convicted of marijuana in 1982 and they have been great since, and they want to come work with one of our juvenile justice facilities, and we have to say no. In this case, we could weigh the length of time it has been and all those individual factors and actually hire the individual to work at the agency. The way the law works now is that in each of those areas, if one of those crimes pops up, the person is barred from employment. This would give discretion to the agency to take a closer look at those cases and hire an individual regardless of that particular crime.

Assemblywoman Krasner:
I appreciate that we want to give people a second chance regarding drug-related offenses. It is not possible with this bill that someone who was convicted of molesting or raping a child would now work in child welfare services, correct?

Ross Armstrong:
That is correct. I would imagine that all of the agencies that would apply that weighted test would have particular offenses that, no matter what the circumstances, would still be prohibited. In particular, in our juvenile justice agencies, we have to comply with the federal Prison Rape Elimination Act, so that would absolutely be a nonstarter for those entities.

Assemblywoman Summers-Armstrong:
I saw in here that there would be a review every two years. Is that if the person is hired with something in their background that you are giving them a probationary situation, or is that if someone, after being employed, gets into trouble and will be reviewed every two years, or is it both?

Ross Armstrong:
There are two review periods. Currently, and this bill does not change a lot, after someone is hired by one of these entities, they have to run the background check every five years to make sure no new crimes have popped up. There is some clarifying language in the statute that talks about what "pending charges" is, for that analysis by the agency. The two-year review is for an agency using the weighted test to waive those exclusionary crimes. They have to check it every two years to see if the results of that test, not for an individual but agency-wide, have any bias or discrepancies. If two years down the road you are looking at the test and all of the Black applicants were denied using the test and all the white applicants were approved using the test, that would be a huge red flag you would want to address. Because we are adding that human decision point, we wanted to make sure there was data collection and regular analysis to make sure there was not a human bias seeping into the system. The hard line—no discretion—in statute can lead to a structural bias with no way out. We wanted to make sure those entities were regularly taking a look at their practices with an eye toward making sure those areas where there was discretion were not being misused.

Assemblywoman Summers-Armstrong:
Let us say I am an employee of either juvenile justice, child welfare, or mental health. After I am hired, every five years, you are going to run a background check on me, period. Correct?

Ross Armstrong:
Correct.

Assemblywoman Summers-Armstrong:
If I am hired with something in my background and you are using a waiver to employ me—I smoked pot in 1982 and got convicted but have been a model citizen—and you are going to hire me because I can bring something to that agency, you are still going to check me every five years. Is that correct?

Ross Armstrong:
Correct.

Assemblywoman Summers-Armstrong:
But the two-year waiver, the two-year review, is to ensure that your agency is, without bias, applying the waiver you gave me to everybody evenly.

Ross Armstrong:
Correct.

Assemblywoman Summers-Armstrong:
Okay, I understand. Thank you.

Chair Nguyen:
Do we have any other questions from Committee members? Seeing none, is there any testimony in support of S.B. 21 (R1)?

Nick Shepack, Policy and Program Associate, American Civil Liberties Union of Nevada:
I want to thank Mr. Armstrong for working so hard with us on this piece of legislation. We believe that the reprinted version of this bill represents a department that really believes in second chances and that can hire the best people to work with kids, especially people with maybe checkered pasts but who have been doing really well. We think this bill is a great step for the department and we encourage you to support it.

Daniel Pierrott, representing Fingerprinting Express:
I am testifying in support of S.B. 21 (R1) on behalf of our client, Fingerprinting Express. Fingerprinting Express utilizes the latest technology in fingerprint background checks in addition to a myriad of other services to ensure the safety and security of Nevadans. As it stands, there are over 80 industries in Nevada that are required by statute to complete a fingerprint background check. While we think that anyone who works with children should complete a fingerprint background check, this piece of legislation moves the needle in creating additional protections for Nevada's children. We would like to conclude by thanking the Committee for hearing this important piece of legislation and to Administrator Armstrong for his work on this issue.

Chair Nguyen:
With no more callers in support, do we have anyone in opposition to S.B. 21 (R1)? [There was no one.] Is there anyone in neutral? [There was no one.] At this time, I will turn this back over to Mr. Armstrong for closing remarks.

Ross Armstrong:
Thank you, Madam Chair, and members of the Committee. There are a few bills where you get more and more excited about the bill as it goes along, and this has been one for us as we made that shift from a nerdy administrative law change to real change in the way we approach employing our staff. I thank you for your time and consideration. If there are questions as we go forward, please feel free to reach out.

Chair Nguyen:
At this time, I will close the hearing on S.B. 21 (R1) and open the hearing on Senate Bill 143 (1st Reprint).

Senate Bill 143 (1st Reprint): Revises provisions relating to the care of children. (BDR 15-721)

Senator Dallas Harris, Senate District No. 11:
Thank you for taking the time to hear Senate Bill 143 (1st Reprint). This bill has been a labor of love. This bill is sponsored by Assemblywoman Hansen and me. The basis behind this bill is to codify the idea that parents know their children best and that they should allow their kids to go outside and play and engage in what we call "independent activities" if it is safe to do so. This by no means says that any parent who thinks their two-year-old is an Olympic swimmer and does not need floaties could not be prosecuted for child abuse and neglect. However, it does provide some guidelines, for both the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) as well as for parents, to make it clear that if you would like your child to be able to walk to school by themselves or with a group of friends, you could, or that you will not have someone banging on your door simply because you left your kids at home while you went to the grocery store while they have their cell phones and are able to reach you in multiple ways.

We know very well that these types of laws are often applied a little bit more harshly toward folks who do not have as much money, folks who do not look like the majority of people in this country, so the second piece of this bill is to try to provide a little bit more equity in that application. At this time, I would like to invite my cosponsor, Assemblywoman Hansen, to the table to speak a little bit about why she felt it was important for us to team up and bring this bill to you.

Assemblywoman Alexis Hansen, Assembly District No. 32:
Thank you for your time and the opportunity to hear the "reasonable childhood independence" bill, and I am honored to be cosponsoring with Senator Harris. I served in the interim on the Legislative Committee on Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice, and I am very aware of the serious issues that face our children and families in the state of Nevada. That is

not lost on me nor on Senator Harris. I have appreciated the opportunity we have had to be able to talk to many stakeholders and appreciate their input and the amending language that has been submitted.

To be clear, the intent of this bill is not to make the important work of law enforcement or child protective agencies and prosecutors more difficult. We appreciate the difficult work they attend to in our state on a regular basis. We are here today to talk about the other end of the spectrum—responsible parents—and the sometimes unnecessary hindrances or the stigma that they can be caught up in under the broad scope of that Nevada neglect statute. We hope with this legislation to assure responsible parents that they can use their reasonable judgment to determine if their children are capable of independently engaging in certain activities of childhood independence.

Many of you know that Senator Harris and I were raised by single moms. If they were raising us as children today, I worry that our mothers could be caught up in this broad net of neglect statute. My mother's circumstances were such that she allowed me—and sometimes had no other choice—to experience reasonable childhood independence, and I benefitted from that. In turn, my eight grown and very successful children are products of growing up with the same kind of confidence I was allowed to develop. Today, many parents and legislators do not know whether it is allowable by law for their children to engage in these independent activities. Unfortunately, a culture of fear has begun to grip many parents in our communities about what is okay or what is neglect in the eyes of the law or even in the eyes of their neighbors. I see this legislation as enabling good parents to be given the autonomy to make decisions about childhood independence within reasonable—and that is the key word—guidelines that are codified in statute. This is not a solution in search of a problem; the problem already exists. The parents in our communities today are being stigmatized.

Senator Harris:
In the spirit of working with stakeholders, we have gone back and forth on language 50 or so times. I want the Committee to be aware that the most recent amendment you have before you will likely be changed one more time. With your permission, Chair, I would like to read through what I would like the language to ultimately read in section 1.5, subsection 2.

Chair Nguyen:
Patrick Ashton, our policy analyst, has something to clarify as well.

Patrick Ashton, Committee Policy Analyst:
Committee members, we just received the amendment from Senator Harris [Exhibit C] and I sent it to you by email. It should be uploaded on the Nevada Electronic Legislative Information System (NELIS) shortly if you want to follow along.

Senator Harris:
Thank you very much. Ultimately, section 1.5, subsection 2, paragraph (b) will read as follows: pursuant to NRS 62E.280, the child is alone or with other children outside the direct supervision of the child's parent, guardian, a stepparent with whom the child lives, an adult

person continually or regularly found in the same household as the child and the child is of sufficient maturity, physical condition, and mental ability that indicates that their health or welfare is not harmed or threatened with harm; being alone or with other children outside the direct supervision of the child's parent, guardian, a stepparent with whom the child lives, an adult person continually or regularly found in the same household as the child as defined in subsection (c) may include a child engaging in independent activities. You will see that then connects to DCFS putting forward some regulations to further define what "independent activities" are in order to give both courts and those who are out in the field clear direction on what it actually means for an independent activity to be engaged in, and that connects it with the legislative intent even further, to allow parents to let their children be children.

We have two folks on the Zoom, Ms. Diane Redleaf, who is the legal consultant with Let Grow, and Dr. Rachel Flynn, a child development psychologist. They are both available to answer the more technical questions the Committee may have.

Chair Nguyen:
I am really excited about this bill. Having two young kids of my own, recognizing their maturity, their responsibility, giving them these kinds of freedom only improves their ability to cope, their ability to problem-solve, and gives them confidence. I think we have questions from the Committee.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson:
In looking over the amendment, it looks as though you are working very hard to, by regulation, get intent on concepts. That can be really hard because we know that other states might put a hard-and-fast age in, but it looks like when we talk about the word "maturity," you are going to want the Division, the Department, to define through regulation what maturity is. For the direction to the Department on how they might draft it, could you give us a little bit more for the record about what you would see the intent is around "maturity" when it is not tied to a chronological age?

Senator Harris:
You hit it right on the nose. The idea of putting in a hard-line age for this type of legislation is not appropriate, given that we know there are some eight- or nine-year-olds who are able to be at home for 30 minutes, and there are other eight- or nine-year-olds who will set the place on fire. The maturity is really about allowing the parent to make a reasonable assessment about what their child's capabilities are, within the norms of childhood development. I think it is best that the Department is able to take input from the folks in the field, from people in different regions of the state, and be able to come up with clear guidance on what that looks like.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson:
That is going to be the sticky wicket, right? As the bill's sponsors, explain to me how you imagine this playing out. Let us take an apartment complex situated next to a busy street. There are children playing outside, unsupervised. Anyone could call saying, I see children unsupervised. That call goes into child welfare; there is a worker who takes that call and has

to figure out how fast we have to get there. One thing they will usually ask is the age of the children. It makes a difference if it is a three-year-old versus an adolescent-looking child. If they send a social worker, what are the criteria you would want that social worker to consider before a decision would be made concerning whether to take the child into custody or take other measures—to determine whether they need to be involved versus not involved?

Senator Harris:
You hit on a couple of things I want to point out. There is nothing in this bill that would suggest folks should not continue to call child protective services. Relevant citizens who see something wrong should continue to call, so this bill does not touch on that front-end process. I do not expect people to stop calling when they think a child is truly in danger. We may disagree about that, but there is very little we can do on that end and, for the most part, it can be helpful in finding bad situations, correct?

When it comes to the social worker assessing, I will be honest, that is not my expertise; that is theirs. A lot of what we are trying to codify is practice that they are already doing. They are not removing children who are outside playing on their bikes, even if they do have to show up as a matter of protocol. Frankly, I trust the social workers in the field to make these calls and assessments. They are well-versed in it. What you are also looking at though, is when people are actually charged for criminal abuse and neglect. That is not often the social worker's call on the spot, so we are giving the courts guidance, the parents guidance, and the social workers as well. Out of the three, the social workers probably need the least amount of it.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson:
I want to make sure we are getting a feel for how this would work. If the intent is taking some existing practices in which they can document that a child is safe, in which they would document that there is no harm and they are not going to substantiate a case, then it looks as though what you are trying to do is clear a path where regulations would better say what that is, and then those regulations would be the backing for whether an agency decided to take action or not. I guess we may hear this in more testimony in support—instances where parents felt their children were safe and they got pulled into the child welfare system. Maybe hearing about some of those will help draw a bit more of a bright line to help us understand where the system overstepped.

Senator Harris:
That is correct. We want parents to be able to feel that they can do what they do; we want social workers to also feel like they can do what they are chartered to do. The key here is to ensure and make very clear that, if you are solely allowing your child to engage in these independent activities, as will be defined later, you should be left alone.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson:
Perfect. And then we will just clarify for the record—and I am sure someone else will—but even within our child welfare agencies, they might not all be social workers. The counties

and the state have policies on social workers, but Clark County has a different policy regarding whether it is a social worker or child welfare worker.

Senator Harris:
Correct.

Assemblyman Matthews:
As a follow-up to Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson's question, given the flexibility, the lack of specificity, are there other states that have something similar in place? Could that be something we could look to as a guide—what has been tried, what has worked, what has not worked—general lessons to be learned from experiences elsewhere?

Senator Harris:
I will turn it over to Ms. Redleaf to answer that question. She is well-versed on the different laws across the states.

Diane Redleaf, Legal Consultant, Let Grow:
[Diane Redleaf submitted a proposed amendment, Exhibit D, and additional information, Exhibit E.] Thank you for that question and thank you for hearing this bill. My role is to monitor legislation around the country for the group Let Grow. We have been working this year in four states. I am pleased to announce that the bill in Oklahoma was sent to the governor on a reconciliation vote that took place this morning. There is a similar bill in Texas that is on a consent calendar in their senate. This legislation is modeled on Utah legislation passed in 2018 that sets out independent activities with children having sufficient maturity, physical condition, and mental ability. All the bills Let Grow has been endorsing, supporting, and working with stakeholders on have that element of supporting independent activities, deferring to reasonable parental judgment. Nevada, so far, is the only state where we are going to engage in a more detailed rulemaking process; we look forward to providing that sort of guidance. The other states have it more spelled out in the law what "independent activities" are, including walking to school, playing in parks, being alone at home—those kinds of activities the laws set forth. They all have that element of maturity and physical condition, and leave the determination of neglect up to the agency to make, using their judgment, using their own standards, and not really changing procedure except to give parents that reasonable flexibility to make their own decisions based on their knowing their child best.

Assemblyman Matthews:
It may be too broad to get into this afternoon, but I would be curious to delve a little more deeply into what some of the lessons learned have been and what the experiences in other states have shown us. That is something we can follow up on at another time.

Assemblywoman Thomas:
Thank you for bringing this much-needed bill forward. I say that because I too was a single parent raising two children, and at one time I was on active duty in the military. I am sure you would not have a parent looking at a three-year-old running in the street and think that

child was mature enough to be alone, but I am wondering why a number was not put in the bill. When I first got to Las Vegas, in order for a child to be alone in a house, I believe the age was 12. I do not know where they got that number, but I do remember it had to be 12. Until my children reached that point, I had to have a child care provider. As a single parent bringing in one salary, that is difficult, so I was wondering why within this bill the guidance is the parent. I am grateful for that because I think that is the way it should be, but we do have some parents who are not mature enough to believe that a three-year-old running in the street is not mature.

Senator Harris:
You are hitting exactly on why we do not have that age in the law. I have a general belief that parents know their children best. Are there parents who misbehave? Certainly, and I believe this bill was designed to walk that line—allow parents to make a decision based upon their child's maturity and ability, but also allow parents who leave three-year-olds at home alone to be able to be prosecuted under the language in this bill. I think we can all agree—you are correct—that leaving a three-year-old at home is not appropriate, especially for any sustained period of time. However, I feel free to admit on the record that I left my nine-year-old at home while I went to the grocery store or perhaps picked something up from Walmart's curbside. That is exactly why we do not have that number in there. You need to allow parents to be able to make those decisions. You need to allow parents to not feel like they cannot step out when they need to go get one or two things if their child is of substantial maturity, especially with the price of child care here in America. So you are hitting on something very real that this bill is trying to address.

Assemblywoman Thomas:
Thank you, and again, I wish this bill was there when my kids needed it.

Assemblyman Hafen:
I have to thank you both, Senator Harris and Assemblywoman Hansen, for all the hard work you have put into this bill. This happens to be my favorite bill of the session. I think it is one of the most important things we can be doing for our children—to let them grow in a manner that is fitting for each parent. Would you consider this "free-range" parenting or "cage-free" parenting?

Senator Harris:
I am not sure those are mutually exclusive. We could call it both.

Chair Nguyen:
I know some of the agencies may be planning to testify in support, opposition, or neutral. If you are from one of those agencies, after you speak, please pause to see if we have any questions.

Senator Harris:
We have Brigid Duffy on Zoom, and she will be giving testimony as well.

Chair Nguyen:
Are there any other questions for our bill presenters at this time?

Assemblywoman Summers-Armstrong:
If the child has to use public transportation, is there a prohibition for that?

Senator Harris:
No, there is no prohibition for that. Although it is not in the list we put down, I do think DCFS will have to consider allowing children to ride public transportation—whether that is to get to school or to the next activity. That needs to be considered.

Assemblywoman Summers-Armstrong:
I think that is really important and that there has to be clarity there. I am in a district that is public transit-dependent. Although I have, and always have had, a vehicle, when I was single parenting, and even afterward, and my kids had school and then baseball, we did the training—this is where you walk to get on the bus; put your money in; sit next to the driver; and then go to baseball. That really changes how children see themselves and grows their confidence. Plus, I was able to call the bus company because I worked for them and have them check with the drivers. Again, this is really important, so please have them consider that.

Senator Harris:
Definitely. Right now in the bill language it says travel to and from school. It does not have a limitation on the mode, and that is definitely the intention of this bill—to allow children to be able to engage with the world. That is how they become functional adults, so learning how to take public transportation is definitely a part of that.

Chair Nguyen:
Are there any other questions from Committee members? I do not see any, so with that, we will begin testimony in support of S.B. 143 (R1).

Gillian Block, representing Nevada Coalition of Legal Service Providers:
Washoe Legal Services and the Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada represent 100 percent of children in the child welfare system. We support S.B. 143 (R1) because we believe it will clarify the law on child neglect and will help prevent unjustified interventions that disproportionately affect low-income families and families of color.

Brigid J. Duffy, Chief Deputy District Attorney, Juvenile Division, Clark County District Attorney's Office:
Today I am speaking on behalf of the Department of Family Services. I am testifying in support. I originally registered in opposition because we have been working on an amendment, so I want to qualify my testimony, on behalf of the agency, if these amendments that have been presented today by Senator Harris are accepted, then the Department of Family Services in Clark County is supportive of them, and thank you to both sponsors, Assemblywoman Hansen and Senator Harris, for working with us so closely.

As far as this legislation goes, when the first week of the session came out, this bill was in our queue early on. We had a meeting with the stakeholders from Let Grow and different child welfare organizations across the state. What we were told, as child welfare was, "Parents do not know what they are allowed to have their children do. Parents in Nevada live in fear that they cannot leave their children alone." I offered an example of how I understand that maybe we are not clear enough with parents. We had a case in Clark County: an eight-year-old successfully killed himself with a firearm in a home. He was home alone with his five-year-old sister. It was ruled a suicide by the coroner. I got a lot of calls from the press asking how this eight-year-old could be home alone and was that not illegal. How old do they have to be to be home alone? The answer to the press was that it is not an age-based decision; it is a maturity level; it is a developmental level; it is a physical condition level. So it was easy for us as stakeholders from the district attorney's office, to the public defenders, to legally say, let us make it clear in statute so parents do understand that a child can be alone or outside direct supervision of a parent or someone responsible for their welfare, if they are of sufficient maturity and physical condition and mental ability. That indicates that they are not threatened with harm or would be harmed. We want to make it clear for parents in the state of Nevada.

The issue of the independent activity that the stakeholders and the lobbying groups use—for us, alone is alone. When a call comes into the hotline, we do not have a lot of removals in our county based upon lack of supervision unless it is really young children found wandering in the streets in August in diapers without shoes on. Think about that. When a call comes in, it is different from an apartment complex where a five-year-old is on the swing set and a neighbor is calling in. If it is April and the child is wearing a sweatshirt, the weather is fine, they are on the swings doing a childhood activity and no one can see an adult around, that is not necessarily going to rush child protective services out there. If it is August, the child is three years old and does not have shoes on and the playground is hot and there is no one there, that may amp the situation up a little, as well as children around pools. We have to be very careful when we have young children around pools without adult supervision.

Also, to address Assemblywoman Summers-Armstrong's issue around public transportation, I grew up in Philadelphia, and we were taking the subway at a very young age because that is how we got everywhere. Just to be clear, child protective services does not go in and remove children from public transportation. It is a mode of transportation that children use to get to and from school. Again, it is based on the maturity, physical condition, and mental ability of the child. We could not just put an age into statute because a 12-year-old may not have the mental ability of a 12-year-old. We have many 12-year-olds who have the mental ability of a 3- or 4-year-old due to developmental delays, so it is better to do these general criteria that will then be screened by the child protective service hotline.

We hope that by working with the sponsors we allowed our concerns as the people who practice day-in and day-out in the child welfare agencies, courtrooms, and in the field, that alone is alone and it is okay, and a parent can be clear, as long as their child is of sufficient maturity, physical condition, and mental ability, that would indicate that they are not harmed or threatened with harm. Like the organization Let Grow came in wanting to let parents, and

encourage parents, to allow their children to get out and get some independence and do some activities, that is also captured in this amendment as a balance for both us and them. Again, thank you to the Senator and Assemblywoman for working with us.

Chair Nguyen:
Ms. Duffy, we do have some questions for you.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson:
Once again, this is for the record because we will be having the state department promulgate these regulations. This is the same question I had for Senator Harris. When we talk about the concept of maturity, what would you want on the record to help indicate to folks who are going to be writing those regulations what you would hope to see encapsulated in that concept of maturity? What would help that bright line? If we are not listing ages, we are going to be listing characteristics. I want to make sure we do not get into a circular reference where we have regulation that ends up being as muddy as status quo.

Brigid Duffy:
That is absolutely right. We are basically going to be looking at situations. Take my example of the eight-year-old who, sadly, took his life. The five-year-old sister was mature enough to know, and she was the one who went next door to the neighbor. The parent had a window of approximately 45 minutes between her working and the stepfather working, so there were 45 minutes where the children would be home alone. They had a plan with the children that involved the neighbors who knew the children were home alone. In fact, that five-year-old knew to implement that plan as she was in the room with her brother who was dying. That five-year-old was at a maturity level—even in a crisis situation—so it is really about reasonable parenting. I am sure when Senator Harris went to Walmart to pick up things that her nine-year-old knew who to call if there was an emergency in that 15 minutes she may have been out of the house. It is really those situational things.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson:
It sounds as though we are talking about protective capacities. That is the way we talk about parents when we are talking about neglect—it is their protective capacities; their ability to protect their child from harm and to do so willingly, right? Would you look for language and be supportive of language that talks about a child's protective capacity? The capacity to know how to call for law enforcement or for help if they needed to? Would that be the direction you would want to see people go?

Brigid Duffy:
Yes, absolutely.

Chair Nguyen:
Next, we have Dr. Rachel Flynn.

Rachel Flynn, Ph.D., Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada:
I am a developmental psychologist and currently a professor of child development. I also have a private practice working with children. For over a decade, I was a director of youth development programs and I worked really closely on many cases with child protective services. I support this bill because I believe it is good for child development. I have worked with a huge range of children from diverse ethnicities, socioeconomic statuses, urban and rural populations, and with a lot of different cognitive abilities—from the gifted and talented to those with severe intellectual delays who are nonverbal.

I want to address this idea of maturity. A lot of it has already been said, but it is very important to recognize that chronological age does not often align with developmental age. There are so many variations based on an individual child—their capacities, their cognition, their self-regulation, and also their culture. Context matters so much—the things that have been said around parent responsibility but also professional responsibility in this. While leaving things vague might seem challenging, anyone who is trained to work with children understands the differences between chronological age and developmental age and knows how to take those contexts into consideration.

The culture of fear that has been discussed previously is creating a culture of children who have higher mental health challenges. They have more learning disabilities. It is creating stress and anxiety and limits their agency. What we really need to do is overestimate sometimes children's developmental abilities. We need to call on the developmental science research to understand that children need to practice using their executive functioning skills to make decisions, to solve problems. They need to use their visual-spatial skills to move through the world in different ways. They need to have these complex social interactions that flex their theory of mind, and they need to be able to play—unstructured play that is not always adult- or technology-directed or adult-supervised. For all those reasons, that helps lead children to develop into being intelligent, resilient, and independent children.

Chair Nguyen:
Do we have any other callers on Zoom?

Diane Redleaf:
I am the legal consultant to Let Grow and I advocate for laws such as the one you are considering today. I wanted to address a couple of points that were brought up in the hearing. Our office did a 50-state survey of these laws that was published back in May. I went back to that survey to look at the question of age limits. What I found in the survey we had done—an exhaustive study—is that approximately 13 states have some reference to age, but the age ranges from 6 to 12 and there does not seem to be any consistency about what the age allows for. As Dr. Flynn just explained, our concern about age limits is that they do not bear a direct relationship to actual functional abilities and they can function as a double-edged sword. We have also seen policy guidance in the course of reviewing these state policies, and we can provide some of that to the Committee as they consider the rules, because guidance is something that not only the caseworkers and social workers need, but the

parents also need in order to know how to make a decision as to whether their child is mature enough.

We believe these laws, as they have been passing, actually help provide safety and security for children because they not only address their mental health needs, but they make them more capable for the future. We talk about this as a measure that actually "future-proofs" our children. As mentioned, we believe that there is tremendous variation in the needs of parents to be able to address the needs of their children in their own ways without having the chilling effect of a threat of possibly guessing wrong about what someone else is going to think is neglect.

This is a small step. It does not change investigation procedures; it does not change the duties of mandated reporters. It will continue to support and increase the ability of child protective services to concentrate on the serious cases and apply their judgment to the specific children who are engaged in independent activities. We believe we need to more clearly define the difference between good and bad parenting, and that when children are ready, giving them independence needs to be within the lines that the law recognizes as part of good parenting. Thank you for considering the bill, and I appreciate the hard work the sponsors have put into this and all the consideration the other advocates and stakeholders have put into this measure.

Chair Nguyen:
At this time, I will go to the phone lines and begin testimony in support of S.B. 143 (R1).

Dora Uchel-Martinez, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada:
I am representing the Nevada Disability Prevention Coalition and thank you so much, Senator Dallas Harris. I used to be a single mom of five. Two kids have made it to the military—one is in the Marines. We do know our children better than anyone else, despite our disability.

Nick Shepack, Policy and Program Associate, American Civil Liberties Union of Nevada:
The American Civil Liberties Union believes that this bill addresses a very serious racial justice issue. To drive home that racial justice issue, I want to share a few numbers from Washoe County. From 2016 to 2020, the North Lake Tahoe area, which is 95 percent white with a population of about 10,000 people, had 42 child welfare investigations and only 2 child removals. The south Reno area, which is 90 percent white, has a population of 27,000, had 142 investigations and 33 removals. The ZIP Code in which I live in Reno, which includes Midtown and the area around the Reno airport, is only 65 percent white with a population of about 40,000. It had over 18,000 investigations and 535 removals. North Reno up to North Valleys is 59 percent white and has a population of 20,000. They had over 1,000 investigations and 336 removals. What we have found through our research in looking at ZIP Codes is that, by looking at the number of investigations and child removals, you can directly tell which ZIP Codes have the highest minority populations. This is a real problem,

and we believe this bill takes real steps to address this issue. For these reasons, as well as the other reasons stated by the presenters, we urge you to support this bill.

Charlie Melvin, Director of Public Relations, Power2Parent:
[Charlie Melvin submitted a letter of support from Erin Phillips, President, Power2Parent, Exhibit F.] We represent nearly 10,000 parents across the state of Nevada. Our organization exists to empower parents to advocate for their children because we believe that parents know their children best. We are in support of S.B. 143 (R1) because we believe that only parents understand the maturity of their child and can make the best decisions regarding their level of independence. We also know low-income families can be disproportionately affected for multiple reasons but especially because both parents may need to work, and families should not be punished for providing for their families.

Parenting is difficult enough without the fear of child protective services or other government agencies second-guessing reasonable parenting decisions. We understand and appreciate the need for these agencies in cases of real and serious neglect or abuse, but we also know that responsible parents can and should be allowed to make reasonable parenting decisions about the maturity and independence of their kids. We are grateful for this bipartisan legislation that protects the rights of parents to make reasonable parenting decisions for their children. To that end, we also appreciate Assemblyman Hafen's question and agree with Senator Harris that both "free-range" and "cage-free" parenting titles are appropriate for this bill. Thank you to everyone who worked on this.

Lenore Skenazy, President, Let Grow:
[Lenore Skenazy submitted written testimony in support, Exhibit G.] Let Grow is a nonprofit that promotes childhood independence. We push back on the idea that helicopter parenting is good for kids. Before this, I wrote a book called *Free-Range Kids*, not cage-free kids. At Let Grow, we believe in safety—helmets, seat belts, car seats, all the ways parents can keep their kids safe from unnecessary harm. We also believe it is great for kids to have some independence, just like you have been hearing throughout this amazing session. Kids can run some errands and climb some trees when their parents feel they are ready for it, but I get so many letters from parents saying that they want their kids to walk to the store and play outside. They do not want them on the couch all day staring at a screen, but they are afraid to let them do anything on their own because someone could call 911, someone who does not know their kids the way they do. So they second-guess themselves and keep the kids inside.

The problem is that when kids are treated as if they are fragile, they start to believe it. Childhood anxiety and depression are on the rise, but in 2018, as you heard, Utah passed a law changing that. It was the "free-range parenting law." We heard from parents in Utah who told us that once the law passed, they could breathe easier. One dad told us he was kind of a helicopter dad; he was always worried about letting his kids walk to school or trick-or-treat without an adult, but as they got older, he saw the kids were getting frustrated easily and unable to solve problems on their own. For this, he blamed a lack of real-world interaction. His kids were not getting on the bus, paying the right money, sitting next to the bus driver. In desperation, he started to let them play in the park on their own and wander around the

neighborhood and play, and thanks to Utah's childhood independence law, he felt he could do what was best for his kids.

Sometimes I ask people to think back on what they most loved doing as a kid. Almost everyone will say what I bet you will say—that they loved playing with their friends, riding their bikes, building forts. No one has ever said that what they loved most was having their mom right there hovering over them. That is why we are so excited to be working in Nevada, and we so appreciate our sponsors and all the stakeholders—all the people who have spoken today. Together I think you will do great things for the kids and parents of Nevada. Thank you for supporting reasonable childhood independence.

Andrea Keith, Executive Director, Let Grow:
I am the Executive Director of Let Grow and a resident of Nevada. I started my career as an elementary school teacher in California and also taught in northern Colorado and in Illinois. My classrooms were always very diverse—academically, economically, and racially—and I had to fulfill my obligation more than once as a court-mandated reporter. I believe strongly that society must protect children from harm, but I also have known hundreds of children who, while in the same grade, were each unique in their maturity and their capacity for handling things on their own. Experience is definitely the best teacher, and children need to be able to learn to navigate their world, advocate for themselves, and solve real-life problems—which is difficult to do if we keep them inside and do not give them those opportunities. I can tell you that child development experts, psychologists, and educators will all tell you that children who are allowed to have independent experiences are more resilient, happier, more confident, and more successful in school. In fact, this is one area that can give lower-income and other cultures an advantage, as their children are often expected to be more mature and independent, out of necessity, as opposed to privileged children who frequently have things done for them. Thank you for your attention and for considering this bill, and I am very proud to be a Nevada resident with this going on.

Daniel Hansen, M.D., Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada:
[Daniel Hansen submitted a letter of support, Exhibit H.] I am a physician and a father calling in support of this bill. Thank you, Assembly Committee, for hearing this. I want to concur with the vast majority of the testimony and want to highlight the excellent points made by the psychologist about the discrepancy we often see between developmental age and chronological age. I deal with a lot of pediatric anesthesia and, on the front lines, see some of the worst cases of neglect and abuse. It is horrible stuff and this legislation in no way makes it okay, nor is there any hint that, as a state, we are okay with neglecting and abusing our children. In the setting of this last year in particular, we have all seen the deleterious effects of children being sequestered inside. We are increasingly seeing the actual clinical manifestations of problems from children not being able to go out, play in the park, fall down and scrape their knees and have to deal with it without a parent being right there.

More than anything, this legislation has done a great job of finding that balance between giving parents the latitude to decide what is best for their children, but also keeping the final say in the hands of the people on the ground—the agencies that are dealing with this—and

not being restricted by an age cutoff or some legislative mandate. The message we are sending to our parents, especially to the single parents, the lower-socioeconomic strata, the minority parents, is incredibly encouraging, and we should all stand with our heads high and proudly support this bill. Perhaps more than anything, it is a legislative unicorn. When you have Assemblywoman Hansen and Senator Harris side by side, with the support of Senator Ira Hansen on a bill, it is probably something we all should pay attention to.

Chair Nguyen:
Are there any other callers in support? [There were none.]

[Exhibit I, testimony in support, was submitted but not discussed and will be included in the record.]

Do we have any callers in opposition to S.B. 143 (R1)? [There were none.] We will now begin testimony in neutral here in our committee room.

Kendra G. Bertschy, Deputy Public Defender, Washoe County Public Defender's Office:
My office represents not only individuals who are accused of crimes, but we also represent the parents in these *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS) Chapter 432B cases. I have had the privilege of also being a children's attorney at Washoe Legal Services. I have worked at the University of Nevada, Reno, teaching a course on families and public policies. This issue is very near and dear to my heart, and I want to thank Senator Harris and Assemblywoman Hansen for all their hard work on this bill. It really has been a journey, with several different amendments as you heard even today, and with an additional proposed amendment.

We absolutely support the intention of this bill. It is greatly needed. We need to clarify our child abuse/neglect statutes not only in the dependency system, but also in the criminal system. It is very concerning when we are hearing stories about individuals whose children have been removed or a criminal proceeding that has been initiated because of things like a child being outside the home unsupervised where there were no other issues. So we greatly appreciate this bill and hope this will provide some additional clarity to a confusing system that has significant consequences.

If someone is convicted of child abuse or neglect, it could be a misdemeanor, a gross misdemeanor, or it could be a felony. A gross misdemeanor or felony are mandatory prison or jail sentences unless there is an evaluation saying that they are not a high risk. So there are very significant consequences. All defense attorneys have examples of cases where this bill in particular would have helped ensure that a child would have remained with the family, or that criminal proceedings would not have been initiated. We just hope that when the Division of Child and Family Services creates those regulations, we are kept in those discussions to ensure that we are doing what we need.

To Assemblywoman Thomas's point, I would note that in Washoe County, in Sparks, and in Reno, there are different ages as to what the requirements are for someone to be at home.

Unfortunately, with a lot of the population I work with, they move from Reno to Sparks and back, depending on what is available for housing. As we all know, housing is a huge issue right now, and people may not know that if they cross to the other side of the street, there might be a different age limit they have to be aware of. We hope this provides some much-needed clarity.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson:
This is the same question I asked the bill's sponsor and Ms. Duffy. We are going to prescribe in regulations this concept—there is not going to be a chronological age; so when we talk about sufficient maturity, for the record, how do you see that as being well-defined in a regulation?

Kendra Bertschy:
That is a very important question. I agree with the statements that have been made on the record. I would just note that one of the things I think is extremely important is that it should not be the defense attorney or the parent who has to prove that the child was of sufficient maturity. Just because of the way our criminal justice system works and the dependency system, the onus should be on an agency to have to provide some of that information if we are going to have regulations. That is why I want the defense bar to be able to participate in that.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson:
Thanks. I will follow up. This is not a trick question, but being on the Legislative Commission, you are going to have members who have to vote yes or no once these regulations are put in front of them. There will be three workshops where they will be considered and language will change, but if a regulation comes in front of me and has a chronological age, does that keep with the intent of the legislation, or not? I think I am hearing no, but I have not heard anyone definitely say no. So I am guessing the regulation is going to use words to describe "maturity." When we are looking at that regulation, in what direction are we looking for the agency to go when they are writing those regulations? Clearly, we could put in there that the defense attorney for a parent should have a say, or something like that. I am not trying to be tricky. I asked about protective capacities and kind of heard "maybe yes," but I would think for sure, protective capacities, but what does that mean for a child?

Because we have some references to ages in other pieces of the statute, you might want to put in a floor such as under three, because we know when child welfare gets the call, there is a consideration for age. Generally, if the child is under three, those are elevated. I do not know if there is a consideration for a floor, or if the sponsor would be offended if there was a floor—some kind of age in there. You also have a bunch of grey area you are trying to define. Since NRS Chapter 432B is about what you ought not to do, then we are defining the inverse in this section—which is what you can do. That is harder because it is a different paradigm than the way the rest of the chapter is written. This is a sincere question for the record so we can look back to see if we are close or are getting it right. If I get a set of

regulations in front of me and you folks say, "This is not what we intended," we would look back to the record to see if that was right or wrong from the hearing. Did they get close?

Kendra Bertschy:
We had some discussions. I do not speak for the sponsors and I am sure they will provide this in their closing remarks, but I would not feel that having an age limit of, for example three years old—saying that someone at age three should not be allowed to be unsupervised—that that would negate the intent of this bill. That was one of the discussions we had about possibly having a floor. The main issue is because every child is different, having that limit of 12 years old may work for some children but may not work for others. That is why I agree with you. Some of the terms we used were exactly what you were including in your remarks as what to consider with a child's capacity, with classes they have had, and things of that nature, where they know, as we discussed, the numbers to call. They know grandma is down the street and they can go there if they need help. They are fully capable of calling 911, and those are part of the discussion we had. I would not be opposed to—if there is included in the bill—a floor that we discussed.

Ross E. Armstrong, Administrator, Division of Child and Family Services, Department of Health and Human Services:
We submitted some information to the Committee that is on NELIS [Nevada Electronic Legislative Information System] about child neglect in general [Exhibit J]. We have heard a lot that the intent of this bill is to help educate parents, and we wanted to make sure that there was still a lot of good information out there in terms of what child neglect and what the child welfare process looks like in the state of Nevada. You can see that a lot of neglect in many cases ends in physical or sexual injury to a child. We want to make sure that in no way are we downplaying the nature of neglect.

I also think it is important in our neutral testimony today to note that there is no current prohibition in Nevada law on children engaging safely in independent activities. Sometimes when we are discussing an issue, it might seem as though we have to make those changes because there is currently some obstacle. The way our child welfare workers in the field assess any situation is there is a call and an allegation, and that child welfare worker goes into the field and assesses the entirety of that situation. There does need to be a determination of whether there is going to be a substantiation to the actual allegation of abuse or neglect. The model of child welfare now is very different than, say, the criminal justice process where the idea is that something has happened; you determine beyond a reasonable doubt whether it happened; and if so, here is your punishment. The child welfare system is very much focused on getting to a situation that someone has alerted the agency to and working to determine if there are actual, ongoing, safety threats to that child. We are not going to open a case just because there might have been a kid walking down the street alone and that one particular instance was unsafe. We are going to take a holistic approach to the family, and so, we provided that data to the Committee for your information.

To respond to some of Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson's questions about the regulations, I cannot speak for the bill's sponsors, but I really appreciated the concept of

protective capacity. Generally, when we analyze protective capacity in the child welfare system, we are talking about the parent's ability to protect the child from harm. Taking that framework of maturity which is synonymous with development, and then adding that element of the child's protective capacity, really makes sense in terms of how to articulate that advice to the three different child welfare agencies. I do not imagine that the regulations will have some sort of age and activity or region matrix, but rather it is really the regulations where we get guidance to social workers in the field when they have an instance where neglect has been called in and it is a child who is not under the supervision of anybody, who may be engaging in independent activities or may be neglected. Those regulations really help educate and get the child welfare workers to view those particular situations with certain standards. I think having information about a child's protective capacity in there is key. In all of our cases, we take a look at that individual's family situation—because no two families are the same—when making determinations about a substantiation of allegation of abuse or neglect, and also the need for an agency to become involved—to step in and try to help and support that family maintain safety and really trying to get to the point of the Division of Child and Family Services vision of safe, healthy, and thriving kids in every Nevada community.

We are neutral on this. We appreciate the many meetings and the work trying to make sure that this language is designed to be helpful to parents and not judgmental to kids. There has been a lot of work from a lot of different stakeholders, and we certainly appreciate that.

Chair Nguyen:
Do you have any follow-up questions?

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson:
No, I think there is enough there for a direction. Obviously, Mr. Armstrong will be tasked with writing this, so we will see it from his Division coming forward. It sounds as though the workshop process will help inform the process as well. It is not just this piece; it is any law where you are silent on something and you are going to put a regulation in, but then you are no longer silent—you are doomed to what is in and what is out. Right now, nothing is in, so we are going to clearly define what is in by defining what is out. You want to make sure you have a bright line showing where you are going to walk as things are drafted moving forward.

Chair Nguyen:
Someone else is here to testify in neutral.

Jeanette Belz, representing Children's Advocacy Alliance:
I would like to extend the regrets of our Executive Director, Dr. Tiffany Tyler-Garner. She was unable to attend the hearing today. The Children's Advocacy Alliance (CAA) is neutral, after consultation with many parties, including the child welfare agencies, law enforcement, the bill's sponsors, and attending their briefing. The Children's Advocacy Alliance appreciates the amendments to improve the bill, including Clark County's amendments, and implores you to continue to ensure protection for children while addressing

the overrepresentation of certain populations and communities in the child welfare system. We would like to extend special thanks to Sarah Adler for her diligence and many conversations and texts about this, and CAA definitely looks forward to working with DCFS and other stakeholders in the development of these regulations. We tend to agree with Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson that that is where the "meat" is going to be, ultimately, and appreciate her questions in that regard.

Chair Nguyen:
Do we have any other testimony in neutral on this bill? [There was none.] With that, I will call our bill sponsor back for any closing remarks on S.B. 143 (R1).

Senator Harris:
Thank you for giving us so much time to hear this important bill. I really appreciate it. There has been a lot of discussion and great questions from the Committee. I have a lot of faith in Mr. Armstrong and the administrative procedures, as I am an administrative attorney. I believe through the workshops, with the participation of the experts, they can nail down these details much better than I could in statute.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson, to answer your question about a floor of three years old, I would be more than happy to have a floor of age three, but that is as much as I would be willing to commit to when it comes to an age limit. That is particularly because we can all agree that a three-year-old does not have that protective capacity, as you were describing—even the most mature of three-year-olds.

With that, I think we are probably going to have one last amendment to add on some bill sponsors. I know Assemblyman Hafen would like to be added on, and Assemblywoman Krasner expressed interest in being added on, as well as Assemblywoman Nguyen, Assemblywoman Peters, and Assemblywoman Gorelow. Look, the whole Committee. I will be working with Assemblywoman Hansen to make sure we get you all amended onto the bill. Thank you for your time.

Assemblywoman Hansen:
I just want to thank you so much and reiterate that we are not here in any way to discourage concerned citizens from reporting suspicious or concerning behavior they might see in their neighborhoods involving children. In fact, we would ask them to reach out and contact those parents person-to-person. If that is not possible, of course they should report it if they are concerned. Again, this is the spectrum we are talking about: reaffirming responsible parents who have the ability to make those kinds of decisions about their children and their reasonable independence. Thank you again for your time. We appreciate the stakeholders involved and all those, including yourselves, who work hard on behalf of the children of the state of Nevada.

Chair Nguyen:
With that, I will close the hearing on S.B. 143 (R1). At this time, I will welcome Senator Ohrenschall to the Assembly Committee on Health and Human Services and we will start with Senate Bill 146 (1st Reprint).

Senate Bill 146 (1st Reprint): Revises provisions relating to mental health services for children. (BDR 39-870)

James Ohrenschall, Senate District No. 21:
Senate Bill 146 (1st Reprint) is a short bill but a very important bill. It deals with children being admitted to an inpatient mental health facility. Being admitted acute is a scary thing, especially if it is your child or a child you are representing in court or even a child you just happen to hear about. Often, the treatment is desperately needed, and that is why the child is being admitted. Senate Bill 146 (1st Reprint) tries to make sure that if that child—who is being admitted acute to an inpatient mental health facility—already has a mental health provider, is already getting treatment, that that provider is consulted, that if the child is to be admitted, the strongest attempts at continuity of care occur. Many of us who practice in juvenile court or family court have seen cases where a child is admitted and maybe there is a disconnect between the mental health provider who treated the child before and the information that provider has is not always available. Now I will turn this over to Gillian Block and Amy Honodel of the Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada.

Amy Honodel, Staff Attorney, Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada:
I am a staff attorney with the Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada in the Children's Attorneys Project where I also serve as the strategic initiative manager. This bill is short, but it is critical for our youth in foster care in that it opens and solidifies a conduit of communication between mental health providers, those seeing foster youth regularly, and those who are seeing a child in crisis as they are being admitted or considered for admission into a mental health facility.

Section 1, subsection 1 requires the admitting facility to find out from the legal custodian if there is a treating provider of mental health services for that child and to make a reasonable effort to contact that person. The provider who usually sees the child and the admitting facility must talk about the child's condition, including whether or not to admit that child. Subsection 3 requires the admitting facility to try to get consent from the legal custodian as well as consent from the child to have this ongoing dialogue with the main treating provider, including coordinating discharge planning. Subsection 4 of section 1 says that if an admitting facility cannot get consent from either the legal custodian or the child, that they can still take the necessary actions, including communicating with that main treating provider if it is in the child's health and welfare to either maintain it or improve it.

This bill is brought out of our real-world experiences down here, representing children in Clark County in foster care. In some cases, we see where this communication would have prevented an admission. I have a former client who was facing going with her biological father and made some comments that were considered to be enough to admit her to a facility.

But when her primary treating therapist got involved, it turns out the comments were not about a crisis but her repeating something she had heard someone else say to avoid being moved, and we were able to address her concerns without her being admitted to this facility.

Another client of mine who is still my client was admitted to a facility and was given a new medication, which really helped his behavior and some other concerns that were addressed. For whatever reason, as he was discharged, the fact he was on new medication did not get relayed to his ongoing providers—his therapists or his doctors—so he had an outburst which caused him to disrupt. He was with an uncle who had no children of his own at the time. Because of the intensity of the outburst and an inability to contain it, he was afraid to take this client of mine back into his home. If we had more coordination of discharge planning, we might have been able to avert this crisis. This is in no way to undermine the care these hospitals provide. We just want to get everyone communicating and on the same page with children who are not in the system; this is something that a parent would do, but a lot of my clients do not have healthy parents right now to do this, so this would just solidify that communication.

Chair Nguyen:
Are there questions?

Assemblywoman Titus:
I have a question about section 1, subsection 4, which reads, "Failure of a person or entity having legal custody of a child or a child to provide consent . . . ." Then this gives directives to go ahead and proceed anyway, based on if it was "necessary to protect or improve the health or welfare of the child." If the person or entity having the legal custody said, No, we do not want you to do that, will this supersede if they say, No, you cannot do that? Are you going to go ahead and do it anyway? Is that what I am reading here?

Senator Ohrenschall:
The way I read it, the objection of the guardian to the contact between the treating mental health provider prior to admission to the facility, that conversation could still happen even if there is an objection. This is trying to make sure there is continuity of care.

Amy Honodel:
To the point Senator Ohrenschall stated, it is limited to that particular part of the consent. It would still allow for continuity of care in this case.

Assemblywoman Titus:
I just needed some clarity.

Amy Honodel:
There is language in there limiting that, so it is only when necessary to protect or improve the health or welfare of the child. It does not allow the provider to go beyond that.

Assemblywoman Titus:
Thank you for that clarity. There could be an instance in my mind where maybe the parent did not like the initial provider and would not want that provider communicating with another provider. I wanted to make sure there was some level of parental control still involved—or whoever had legal custody. I do understand the concept of a safe handoff; I do understand being able to communicate with fellow providers; but I had a concern over that issue.

Senator Ohrenschall:
The way I read this, it would be more of a case where that parent or guardian might not be quickly available versus trying to go against their wishes. That is how I interpret where this would mostly be used.

Chair Nguyen:
Do we have other questions?

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson:
I want to go over how you see this being enacted. Section 1, on the "shall," about asking: I assume that would be one of the questions on the questionnaire as you start that admission process for someone when you are collecting demographic information. That would be a piece of information being requested on those admission forms. Would that be acceptable, or do you want a verbal request?

Senator Ohrenschall:
I would want as much effort as possible from the inpatient treatment facility trying to reach the current provider. I have had cases where I represented children who may not be under *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS) Chapter 432B but that were in the delinquency system, and I have had parents who feel that they were doing very well with their outpatient mental health provider prior to being in an inpatient facility and were not doing so well. I would want as much effort as possible from the inpatient hospital trying to reach the mental health provider.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson:
Then in section 1, subsection 2, after they have asked for the information and have it, it says, "reasonable effort to consult." Typically, when we think of "reasonable" or "due diligence" we tend to think of a number such as "three"—make three phone calls or make two phone calls. Are you looking for them to make one or two calls; and if, at that point, they have not heard back, they can abandon the effort? What would you say is "reasonable"?

Senator Ohrenschall:
In law school, they teach us about the "reasonable person" standard. I certainly would want as much effort as possible made to contact that prior mental health provider. However, there will be a point where the physician or treating health care provider at that inpatient hospital will have to make some decisions and try to stabilize the child. I know we have a letter from the Nevada Psychological Association, but I am not sure we are going to have any testimony from them, because I think someone with that expertise might be better suited to answer that

question. Possibly Ms. Honodel would care to jump in but, certainly, there would be a point at which the treating provider at the inpatient hospital would have to take over if they cannot get ahold of the prior mental provider.

Amy Honodel:
I do not think we can quantify with a number, but what typically happens is these children actually go to our emergency rooms while the staff of the emergency room or the legal custodian is trying to find a bed for them at a facility that will take a youth. During that time, that is, the time when we would be looking for a facility that has been identified that has a bed, that they would be making those efforts to find or talk to or communicate with the main treating provider. I do not think it is a good idea to put a number, but it would obviously depend on the time—after hours or a weekend—and maybe making an effort the next day during business hours and reaching out to that physician's call service. But the idea would be to make those efforts and also start bringing the child into care. Any concerns would then be addressed with the next part when we talk about coordinating care and then discharge planning, so that even if an admitting facility is not able to connect with the main provider, that later on they are connecting with that provider, so when the child is able to leave, there is continuity of care on that end.

Assemblywoman Thomas:
Is this just regulated to Clark County or to the entire state?

Senator Ohrenschall:
This would apply to all the counties. This is just trying to make sure that if a child is admitted acute, that there is that conversation with the prior provider. It would be helpful across the state.

Assemblywoman Thomas:
I appreciate that. When I heard "Clark County" I was not sure. I am sure throughout the state, foster care youth are in crisis, so I appreciate that clarification.

Senator Ohrenschall:
Sometimes there are children in the foster care system who also end up in the delinquency system. They get arrested and sometimes the juvenile judge in Clark County may commit a child to a youth correctional facility such as the Caliente Youth Center in Caliente, Nevada, or to the Nevada Youth Training Center in Elko, or there are some other facilities around the state that are privately run. If a child who we call a "dual ward" child—who is also in the foster care system—might have a mental health crisis and needs to be admitted acute, their prior treating physician might be in Clark County, Washoe County, Carson City, or in Douglas County, so this bill would be even more important because you could have a child at one of those facilities. Here, at least, we would be requiring that they try to reach out to that doctor even if the doctor is in Las Vegas, Henderson, or Reno. In the past, I am not sure that effort was always made.

Chair Nguyen:
Do we have any other questions from Committee members at this time? [There were none.] Do we have anyone to testify in support of S.B. 146 (R1)?

Kendra G. Bertschy, Deputy Public Defender, Washoe County Public Defender's Office:
We wanted to put our support for this bill on the record. We have seen instances where children have been harmed because they were admitted into hospitals for these emergency placements when their treating physicians were adamantly opposed to it afterwards. I can speak from personal experience with my clients that this has been an issue in Washoe County, so I assume it is occurring across the state, from what we have heard. We really appreciate Senator Ohrenschall for bringing this bill and championing to improve the lives of our children. We thank you and urge your support.

Chair Nguyen:
I do not see anyone else in the room, so we will go to the phone lines to take testimony in support of S.B. 146 (R1).

Brigid J. Duffy, Chief Deputy District Attorney, Juvenile Division, Clark County District Attorney's Office:
I am appearing on behalf of the Department of Family Services in Clark County that believes Senate Bill 146 (1st Reprint) is solid policy in the best interests of children in foster care. It supports better coordination of care between admitting acute psychiatric treatment facilities and our current treatment providers. We thank Senator Ohrenschall for bringing forth this piece of legislation and our community partners at Legal Aid Services for their work on behalf of our children in foster care.

Laura Drucker, Psy.D., Legislative Co-Chair, Nevada Psychological Association:
[Laura Drucker submitted a letter in support, Exhibit K.] I am here to testify in support of this legislation. I want to thank Senator Ohrenschall and the Committee for your work on this legislation to improve the coordination of care for foster kids in Nevada. We appreciate that the language has expanded to include notification of a wider range of providers of mental and behavioral health care for these children. We believe that the efforts to notify the primary treatment providers of kids when there is a crisis, when they may need an acute stay, would be beneficial for the children primarily and also for the coordination of care across the system—both inpatient and outpatient treatment.

Chair Nguyen:
Do we have anyone in opposition? [There was no one.] Do we have anyone testifying in neutral on S.B. 146 (R1)?

Alexis Tucey, Deputy Administrator, Community Services, Division of Child and Family Services, Department of Health and Human Services:
I am testifying in neutral today. It has been a great pleasure working with the bill's sponsor as well as with the stakeholders and working through the amendments on this bill. We are

really looking to improve our continuum of care and process with this population through the important services they need.

Chair Nguyen:
Are there any questions? I do not see any. Is there anyone else who wishes to testify in neutral? [There was no one.] Do you have any closing remarks, Senator Ohrenschall?

Senator Ohrenschall:
Thank you for hearing S.B. 146 (R1). It is always scary when a child has to be admitted acute to an inpatient treatment facility. Sometimes there is a lot of great treatment that a child can receive there and it is the best option for that child. I think this legislation, if it passes, will try to help improve outcomes for those children who have to be admitted, or perhaps do not have to be admitted. If that communication can happen—if they have an ongoing treatment provider—there will be better outcomes whether they are admitted or not. I want to thank Bailey Bortolin, Amy Honodel, and Gillian Block at the Legal Aid Center; and Brigid Duffy with the Clark County District Attorney's Office; Dr. Tucey; and many other stakeholders who worked on this legislation. We did amend it over in the Senate, trying to get it right. I appreciate your Committee's consideration.

Chair Nguyen:
With that, I will close the hearing on S.B. 146 (R1) and open the hearing on Senate Bill 376 (1st Reprint).

Senate Bill 376 (1st Reprint): Revises provisions relating to child welfare. (BDR 38-503)

Senator James Ohrenschall, Senate District No. 21:
During the interim, I had the honor of chairing the interim Legislative Committee on Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice. We were able to have six meetings—two in-person meetings before the pandemic hit. We were not sure how we would finish all our work because we had a lot of work from bills that came through from the prior session, but with the great help of our staff—Patrick Guinan, Julianne King, Eileen O'Grady, Karly O'Krent, Broadcast and Production Services, IT [Information Technology], and other people here at the Legislative Counsel Bureau, we were able to continue, have our meetings, and come up with ten recommendations on different issues. We really accomplished a lot of good work. Most of our recommendations were bipartisan—many were unanimous—so we were able to come to consensus on a lot of the work of the interim Legislative Committee on Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice. The Vice Chair was Assemblywoman Daniele Monroe-Moreno, who ably guided policy through that committee.

One of our recommendations is Senate Bill 376 (1st Reprint). This bill is an effort to try to protect children in terms of the child welfare system and trying to make sure that someone who works for either child protective services, sometimes called the Department of Family Services, will have the information they need to make the best decision for the protection of that child. Now I would like to turn this over to Tim Burch and Joanna Jacob from Clark County.

Joanna Jacob, Government Affairs Manager, Clark County:
I am here to share the PowerPoint [Exhibit L], which will give you an overview of the bill.

Tim Burch, Administrator of Human Services, Clark County:
This change is a technical change, so it is helpful to show you within context where that fits. One of the primary goals of child welfare is the safety, permanency, and well-being of our children. One of the principal tools we have to achieve that are investigations into reports of abuse and neglect [page 2, Exhibit L]. Each investigation should end in the disposition of that investigation so we know the outcome. The dispositions of substantiations help us frame intervention with a family—what protective capacity is the parent lacking in the situation? How can we help surround that family with the proper resources to potentially address that gap? It helps inform future investigations as well, in case we have a repeat situation where a child comes to our attention, to examine past patterns—always looking to examine the protective capacity of a parent. If we find there is a substantiation, a positive finding of abuse or neglect, that maltreatment happened in that household, we report that to the Central Registry. The Central Registry is important because that is where employers look to screen individuals who will be employed to work with children in the future. It is also where we would pull a lot of our reporting data to help justify our funding and other types of things. There were amendments to the initial bill presented in the Senate that clearly articulate that we are only, as we have always, reporting substantiations into that Central Registry.

There has been a lot of conversation today about what happens when someone calls into the child welfare system [page 3, Exhibit L]. We receive a report from someone who suspects child abuse or neglect is happening. We screen those decisions in, using a rubric to examine the law and to see if anything being told to us rises to meet the standard of abuse or neglect according to *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS) Chapter 432B. In situations where that does appear to be the case, we assign that out for investigation to a child protective services worker. We can also assign a priority to whether that person needs to respond immediately—within the next three hours—or within one business day, to go out and investigate that allegation.

This last year, we received 25,000 calls into our hotline [page 4] reporting abuse or neglect. Fewer than half of those, about 11,600, actually wound up being assigned for investigation—about 40 percent. Once an investigation is assigned, we go through a process [page 5]. Some of that has already been discussed here today. We look to see if that family has Central Registry history, if that person is in our case management system, do we have prior interactions, is there past history or patterns. We do this initial assessment; we then go out and interview the alleged victim, the alleged perpetrator, collateral sources—teachers, responsible adults in the home, and the like [page 6]. We move then into doing a full safety assessment. We have 45 days in order to fully assess the well-being of that child, to move to a place of giving a disposition. Right now, when we enter a disposition to the case, we have two choices in the state of Nevada—substantiated or unsubstantiated. Substantiated is there is reasonable cause to believe abuse or neglect occurred in the situation and the person alleged to be the perpetrator was responsible for said abuse or neglect. Unsubstantiated

means there was insufficient evidence—we could not establish that threshold. We have to choose one of those two dispositions.

You will see that a vast majority of cases go unsubstantiated [page 7] for a myriad of reasons. We are very thorough. It is our goal to always keep children safely in the home with the parent if possible and wrap that child with resources. This last year, we had 2,400 substantiated investigations, and this is Clark County-specific data. These next two slides are just to show you in context how other states deal with this issue [pages 8 and 9]. Right now, we have the two disposition types; Texas has five; New Hampshire has about seven; Missouri has about a dozen; California has three. What we have done is look more toward the Texas model.

What we are bringing before you is the ability to amend NRS 432B.300, section 6, to allow us to add the two following types: unable to locate or contact; and administrative closure, and likewise, change the standard of proof from "reasonable cause" to "preponderance of evidence." That really just aligns with current state policy and current practice [page 10]. We are looking at trying to align everything so families know exactly what to expect from the system and that we are right out front with that.

Unable to locate or contact [page 11, Exhibit L]: You are all well-familiar with how transient some of our population can be. It is not uncommon for us to get a report of suspected child abuse or neglect at a particular weekly motel or apartment and even within the hour that we respond to that call, that family is unable to be located and no longer in that facility. Currently we have no choice but to label that "unsubstantiated" because that is the only disposition type that would lend itself toward insufficient evidence at that time. The "unable to locate or contact," if supported, would allow us to label it in that way so we know it had not really thoroughly been investigated, so other jurisdictions, even within Nevada, would see that there was an allegation of child abuse or neglect that was not sufficiently investigated, and they can pick that up as part of any potential future interaction with that family.

"Administrative closure" tells us we do not have the authority to investigate that—it is out of jurisdiction [page 12]. This allows us to put an actual administrative closure on a case that came to us from another jurisdiction and be able to properly hand that over to that appropriate jurisdiction to investigate while wrapping up that case in the case management system so we know it was properly adjudicated.

As I stated before, this is a very technical change, but we feel it would help us more clearly articulate the status and disposition of investigations so we can better provide for the safety and well-being and permanency of the children we are charged with providing protection to.

Chair Nguyen:
Do we have any questions?

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson:
I appreciate this. This makes a lot of sense—to have something more than just "substantiated" or "unsubstantiated" and give a better description to what is happening when you cannot move forward with something. Let us take "unable to determine." Let us say you have a call regarding sexual abuse of a child of six. That child is of an age where they might not accurately be a self-reporter so to ask them yes or no if they have indeed been harmed by a family member, you are not sure they are going to tell you yes or no. For "undetermined," if you see some evidence but after investigations, you get to the end of the process and you are not able to have enough sufficient evidence, would this be a case where you would say "unable to determine" and then there would be that history of the investigation? Six months later if another call came in with the same kind of thing, you would be able to look back and see a trend of these kinds of calls and the work the agency has done? Would that be the right way for us to think about how something like that would be used?

Tim Burch:
Currently, that situation you described would be "unsubstantiated." In the case of a young child about whom there was an allegation of sexual abuse, we would take them to our children's advocacy center where we are collocated with forensic interviewers. They would go through a very in-depth, rigorous process geared specifically toward the psychology of a child and conduct that interview in a very safe way for them. Meanwhile, law enforcement and other professionals would be interviewing the alleged perpetrator. If there was insufficient evidence there, that would still be unsubstantiated because we did conduct an investigation. This "unable to locate or contact" or "administrative closure" would not apply in that specific situation because we did contact that family. That case would most likely wind up in that substantiated or unsubstantiated category because of the investigation being conducted.

Senator Ohrenschall:
I think this will give the agencies more tools, but it will also protect families and parents, because only a substantiation would go to that Central Registry. That was an amendment proposed by the Washoe County Public Defender's Office in the Senate. We agreed with that amendment to try to make sure that only a substantiation would go into the Central Registry.

Assemblywoman Thomas:
Thank you, Senator Ohrenschall, for bringing this Senate bill to us. I feel very fortunate today to hear such bills. I am a child advocate. Mr. Burch indicated there were 45 days to assess the child. Is that of the child's environment? Also, are the 45 days consecutive?

Tim Burch:
Yes, the assessment is done of the child's functioning, the family functioning, parent protective capacity, the environment—anything that plays into the allegation. If it was an environmental neglect allegation, and certainly, environment plays a heavy role in that, although we assess the environment for every investigation. It is 45 consecutive days for us to wrap up those safety assessments so we can keep in line with the practice model and, of course, giving parents their rights and day in court in a timely fashion as well.

Chair Nguyen:
As it stands right now, we only have those two dispositions. Does that make us an outlier nationally? Do other states have multiple dispositions, as this bill proposes?

Senator Ohrenschall:
My recollection of the presentation during the interim committee hearing was that many states have more than just the substantiated/unsubstantiated in terms of possible outcomes. As to how many have just what we have, I do not have that answer but can try to get that for you.

Chair Nguyen:
Thank you. That would be great. Are there any other questions from Committee members? Seeing none, is there anyone in support of S.B. 376 (R1)?

Kendra G. Bertschy, Deputy Public Defender, Washoe County Public Defender's Office:
I want to thank Senator Ohrenschall as well as the other stakeholders for allowing me to participate in the discussion to ensure that we are protecting the rights of the parents as well. There were concerns we initially had that we were able to resolve with the amendments, to make sure that if one of the new dispositions was determined, that that information was not provided to the Central Registry, and then that information, if there is anything that exists in the Central Registry for an unsubstantiated claim, that that is not provided to employers. The biggest concern was that the additional information would be provided, which has significant consequences on parents. I have a parent I am still working with; we are trying to figure out employment and housing because of the substantiated disposition that was released, so we appreciate this bill.

Chair Nguyen:
Is there additional testimony in support of S.B. 376 (R1)? [There was none.] Next, I will begin opposition testimony of S.B. 376 (R1). [There was none.] Finally, I will go to neutral testimony on S.B. 376 (R1).

Alexis Tucey, Deputy Administrator, Community Services, Division of Child and Family Services, Department of Health and Human Services:
I am testifying in neutral today for S.B. 376 (R1). We appreciate working collaboratively with the sponsors as well as with the stakeholders involved in this bill and moving forward toward looking at safe, healthy, and thriving youth in every Nevada home.

Chair Nguyen:
Are there more callers in neutral? [There were none.] I will ask the sponsor for any closing remarks he might have.

Senator Ohrenschall:
During the interim committee, there was no opposition or concerns to this bill. During this session, we heard the concerns of the Washoe County Public Defender's Office Family

Defense unit that represents parents in these actions. I appreciate Clark County, Tim Burch, and Brigid Duffy from the Clark County District Attorney's Office working with the Washoe County Public Defender's Family Defense unit, trying to strike a balance here. I think this bill does give the Division of Child and Family Services workers extra tools so they have a little more knowledge to know if something was not necessarily unsubstantiated, but the family was unable to be located; or there was not jurisdiction to open up a case there, but also to protect parents where there is no substantiation. I think it makes that clear in the law, which is an improvement.

I definitely want to thank Administrator Armstrong, who worked tirelessly during the interim on that committee, Bailey Bortolin of Legal Aid, and Holly Welborn of the American Civil Liberties Union. I think we came up with some good legislation, and I hope your Committee will consider moving forward with S.B. 376 (R1).

Chair Nguyen:
I will close the hearing on S.B. 376 (R1). Our final item on the agenda is public comment. Is there anyone who would like to testify in public comment? [There was no one.] At this time, I will close public comment. This will conclude our meeting for today. This meeting is adjourned [at 3:58 p.m.].

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

_____
Terry Horgan
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

_____
Assemblywoman Rochelle T. Nguyen, Chair

DATE: _____

EXHIBITS

Exhibit A is the Agenda.

Exhibit B is the Attendance Roster.

Exhibit C is a revised conceptual amendment to Senate Bill 143 (1st Reprint), dated April 28, 2021, presented by Senator Dallas Harris, Senate District No. 11.

Exhibit D is a proposed amendment to Senate Bill 143 (1st Reprint), dated April 27, 2021, submitted by Diane Redleaf, Legal Consultant, Let Grow.

Exhibit E is written testimony dated March 8, 2021, submitted by Diane Redleaf, Legal Consultant, Let Grow, in support of Senate Bill 143 (1st Reprint).

Exhibit F is written testimony submitted by Erin Phillips, President, Power2Parent, in support of Senate Bill 143 (1st Reprint).

Exhibit G is written testimony dated March 1, 2029 [2021], presented by Lenore Skenazy, President, Let Grow, in support of Senate Bill 143 (1st Reprint).

Exhibit H is a letter dated March 7, 2021, presented by Daniel Hansen, M.D., Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada, in support of Senate Bill 143 (1st Reprint).

Exhibit I is written testimony dated April 28, 2021, submitted by Janine Hansen, State President, Nevada Families for Freedom, in support of Senate Bill 143 (1st Reprint).

Exhibit J is supplemental information dated March 7, 2021, submitted by Ross E. Armstrong, Administrator, Division of Child and Family Services, Department of Health and Human Services, regarding Senate Bill 143 (1st Reprint).

Exhibit K is a letter dated April 28, 2021, submitted by Laura Drucker, Psy.D., and Christina Patterson, Ph.D., Legislative Co-Chairs, Nevada Psychological Association, in support of Senate Bill 146 (1st Reprint).

Exhibit L is a copy of a PowerPoint presentation titled "Case Dispositions and Child Welfare System Improvement," submitted by Tim Burch, Administrator of Human Services, Clark County, in support of Senate Bill 376 (1st Reprint).