

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

**Eighty-first Session
April 29, 2021**

The Senate Committee on Legislative Operations and Elections was called to order by Chair James Ohrenschall at 3:35 p.m. on Thursday, April 29, 2021, Online and in Room 2149 of the Legislative Building, Carson City, Nevada. [Exhibit A](#) is the Agenda. All exhibits are available and on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator James Ohrenschall, Chair
Senator Roberta Lange, Vice Chair
Senator Heidi Seevers Gansert
Senator Carrie A. Buck

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Senator Nicole J. Cannizzaro (Excused)

GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:

Assemblywoman Shondra Summers-Armstrong, Assembly District No. 6

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Michael Stewart, Policy Analyst
Bryan Fernley, Counsel
Diane Rea, Committee Secretary

OTHERS PRESENT:

Myisha Williams, Vice-Chair, Nevada Commission on Minority Affairs,
Department of Business and Industry
Ashanti Lewis, Three Square Food Bank

CHAIR OHRENSCHALL:

We will open the hearing on Assembly Bill (A.B.) 302.

ASSEMBLY BILL 302: Authorizes the Nevada Commission on Minority Affairs to request the drafting of not more than 2 legislative measures for each regular session of the Legislature. (BDR 17-990)

ASSEMBLYWOMAN SHONDRA SUMMERS-ARMSTRONG (Assembly District No. 6):
Assembly Bill 302 authorizes the Nevada Commission on Minority Affairs (NCMA) to request drafting of two legislative measures for each regular session. The Commission leadership requested I bring this bill before the Legislature.

I would like to read the second paragraph of an email from Evan Louie ([Exhibit B](#)) who sat on the Commission from 2013 until 2020 and served as Chair of the Economic Development Committee for the NCMA. His full email address is available on the legislative website.

MYISHA WILLIAMS (Vice-Chair, Nevada Commission on Minority Affairs, Department of Business and Industry):
I will read my presentation ([Exhibit C](#)) which explains the purpose of the bill and the Commission.

SENATOR LANGE:
Commissions come to the Legislature with requests for bill draft requests (BDR). How does the Legislature decide how many BDRs a commission gets?

BRYAN FERNLEY (Counsel):
The requests for State agencies are set forth in statute determining how many BDRs an agency or commission gets. The Office of the Governor has 110 BDRs allocated, which come from requests submitted by Executive Branch agencies to the Governor. There are 110 selected to submit to the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB) for drafting. There are a few other commissions and boards with their own BDRs. This is all set out in *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS) 218D. I will provide the Committee with a list of those entities with the bill draft requests.

SENATOR LANGE:
Legislators only get so many BDRs. If we give a bunch out to different agencies, it can become a compounding problem. Is this the best way to get the Commission BDRs to accomplish their goals, or is there another way that is better?

MR. FERNLEY:

Under this bill, the two BDRs for the Nevada Commission on Minority Affairs would need to be submitted to LCB for drafting by September 1 and filed by the third Wednesday in November. They would be ready for hearing and consideration at the beginning of session.

CHAIR OHRENSCHALL:

With the timeline given for the Commission, if this bill passes into law, is it likely that these bills would be prefiled bills, ready for early hearings?

MR. FERNLEY:

Yes. In the bill it says these two BDRs would be filed by the third Wednesday in November preceding the session. They would be prefiled and available at the beginning of session.

SENATOR BUCK:

Can you list how many volunteer organizations get BDRs when you send the information in response to Senator Lange's request?

MR. FERNLEY:

Yes. I will send the Committee a list of State agencies and local governments that have BDRs.

SENATOR BUCK:

When a BDR is submitted early, does it take priority over Legislator BDRs?

MR. FERNLEY:

These would have to be completed, drafted and prefiled with the Senate or Assembly by the third Wednesday in November. That is the same day the State agencies and local government bills have to be prefiled. With that allocation, they would all be ready to precede the beginning of session.

SENATOR LANGE:

Some agencies have early BDRs and some are dedicated to the Senate and the Assembly. Is there a chance for the Commission to dedicate one to each?

MR. FERNLEY:

We have the prefiled bills that are introduced in the name of the committee of jurisdiction for the subject matter of the bill. They are assigned randomly to the Senate or Assembly to even out the number in each. The committee that introduces the BDR depends on the subject matter of the bill.

CHAIR OHRENSCHALL:

Has it been your experience that a minority business owner or others have come to the Commission seeking a change in the law and hoping the Commission can do that when it really needs to be a legislative change to the NRS?

MS. WILLIAMS:

We have commissioners assigned to each of the subcommittees working directly within communities. It is less likely an individual would come directly to the legislative chair and propose changes. It is based on the community interactions.

Legislation we are championing is impacting all minority groups, not singular issues. There is a precedence we have followed in the past with only two legislative measures to push forward. We need to be selective to make sure they are impacting the most people.

SENATOR LANGE:

Having the two dedicated BDRs does not prohibit the Commission from finding Legislators for additional help.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

As an alternative we have Assembly people and Senators in the community for BDRs.

ASHANTI LEWIS (Three Square Food Bank):

Three Square advocacy team has worked closely with the NCMA and supports A.B. 302.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN SUMMERS-ARMSTRONG:

The NCMA could ask others to help with their BDRs. But since they are volunteers, we would like to see them allowed to put BDRs in early and not wait for the deadline.

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CHAIR OHRENSCHALL:
We will close the hearing on A.B. 302.

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CHAIR OHRENSCHALL:

With no further business, we are adjourned at 4:01 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Diane Rea,
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Senator James Ohrenschall, Chair

DATE: _____

EXHIBIT SUMMARY				
Bill	Exhibit Letter	Begin s on Page	Witness / Entity	Description
	A	1		Agenda
A.B. 302	B	1	Assemblywoman Shondra Summers- Armstrong	Email from Evan Louie
A.B. 302	C	1	Myisha Williams / Nevada Commission on Minority Affairs	Presentation