

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

**Eighty-first Session
March 2, 2021**

The Senate Committee on Legislative Operations and Elections was called to order by Chair James Ohrenschall at 3:32 p.m. on Tuesday, March 2, 2021, Online. [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 Nicole J. Cannizzaro
Senator Heidi Seevers Gansert
Senator Carrie A. Buck

GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:

Senator Patricia Spearman, Senatorial District No. 1

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Michael Stewart, Policy Analyst
Bryan Fernley, Counsel
Barbara Young, Committee Secretary

OTHERS PRESENT:

Dan Musgrove, Nevada Donor Network
Joe Ferreira, President/CEO, Nevada Donor Network
Katie Ryan, Dignity Health - St. Rose Dominican
Tyre Gray, Nevada Mining Association

CHAIR OHRENSCHALL:

We will begin with Senate Concurrent Resolution (S.C.R) 2.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 2: Honors former State Senator Allison Copening for her advocacy for organ donation and expresses the support of the Nevada Legislature for the development of a transplant institute. (BDR R-66)

SENATOR JAMES OHRENSCHALL (Senate District 21):

Many of us served with Senator Allison Copening in the Nevada State Senate. I was privileged to serve and work on legislation with her. We worked on legislation to prevent foreclosures and keep people in their homes. Together, we worked on healthcare issues. One session, we had nearly identical bills and worked on those bills collaboratively. Consequently, both bills passed and were signed by the Governor.

During Senator Copening's term in the Senate from 2008 through 2012, she sponsored an impressive collection of successful bills, including: legislation regarding the use of environmentally safe painting products in schools, safe handling of waste tires, the instruction of financial literacy in high schools and organ donation. She also raised awareness of the importance of early detection of melanoma and skin cancer.

Senate Concurrent Resolution 2 honors Senator Copening's legacy and her advocacy for organ donation. With her unexpected passing in January 2020, she modeled what she preached in life. She donated her organs so that others could live.

Nationwide, over 107,000 people are waiting for lifesaving organ transplants, and of those, at least 600 are Nevadans. Since 1988, nearly 800,000 organ transplants have occurred in the United States with more than 30,000 organ transplants performed annually. Even so, according to the American Transplant Association, on average, 20 people die every day in the United States due to the lack of available transplants. This is why organ donation is so critical. One deceased donor can save up to eight lives through organ donation. A person can also save and enhance more than 100 lives with the lifesaving and healing gift of tissue donation.

Senate Concurrent Resolution 2 and the need for a transplant institute in Nevada face particular challenges when it comes to organ transplant services. As noted in S.C.R. 2, Nevada's transplant services and facilities are severely limited. University Medical Center in Clark County is the sole transplant

provider in Nevada. Currently, it only provides kidney services. Because of our State's limited transplant resources, Nevadans were unable to receive Senator Copening's gift of life. Most Nevadans must leave the State to receive the transplantation services they need.

The Nevada Donor Network has embraced the mission of growing the number of organ donors in Nevada, increasing this number by 190 percent since 2008. However, due to the lack of robust transplantation services in our State, more than half of all donated kidneys in Nevada are exported to transplant programs in our neighboring states.

Senate Concurrent Resolution 2 highlights the efforts of the Nevada Donor Network Foundation to bring a full-scale transplant institute to Nevada and establish Nevada as the center for health innovation and economic development. Such an institute would enhance research opportunities, create thousands of jobs and satisfy the demands of a growing region. The economic benefits of a transplant institute are clear. According to S.C.R. 2, it is estimated that more than \$356 million could be added to the regional economy by 2040 if transplantation services are added to satisfy the demand in our State. Moreover, Nevada could serve as a magnet for transplant patients from outside the region.

With our increased populations of communities of color in Nevada, the need for a robust organ transplant infrastructure has never been greater. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health, African Americans make up the largest minority group in need of organ transplants. African Americans accounted for 28.7 percent of the candidates waiting for transplants, but they comprised just 12.5 percent of organ donors in 2019. In the Hispanic population, there were over 20 percent awaiting transplants, while just 14.6 percent were organ donors in 2019. The efforts of a full-scale transplant institute will promote organ donation among Nevada's communities, which will help locate more suitable donor matches due to similarities in blood and tissue types within ethnic groups.

DAN MUSGROVE (Nevada Donor Network):

The last item mentioned by Chair Ohrenschall was the issue regarding minorities. We in Nevada are self-critical when it comes to our work with the minority community. I know this is an important issue to Senator Spearman in terms of reaching out to those communities which are not well-served when it

comes to donation. We did a full-scale campaign, including working with the Clark County Board of Commissioners. Former Commissioner Lawrence Weekly enacted a resolution declaring August as National Minority Donation Awareness Month. We also worked with the Nevada Hispanic Legislative Caucus to dispense information through social media to the Hispanic community, because we know we need to ensure organ donation is understood.

With the passing of Senator Copenig, we reached out to her family. We thought it would be an absolutely perfect memorial to Senator Copenig for us to come to the Legislature and talk about her gift of life, as well as introduce the Legislature to the transplant institute. In 2019 and 2020, Medicaid sent 70 Medicaid patients out of state for liver transplants, which only accounted for the Medicaid population. It is a tremendous burden and cost for families to leave the State to be on a transplant list, or for families to reside near a transplant center and wait for an organ which meets the criteria. Expanding transplant services in Nevada would be a benefit to all citizens. We are here asking for support for S.C.R. 2.

JOE FERREIRA (President/CEO, Nevada Donor Network):

This is a Statewide initiative. Nevada Donor Network has operations in Clark County, as well as an office in Reno. We are a federally designated, Statewide organization. There is a great need across the Nation for organ transplantation. We have been able to cultivate a culture of donation to demonstrate how we are a world leader in organ donation and transplantation, as noted in the Executive Summary ([Exhibit B](#)). Organs recovered in Nevada are transplanted outside of our State at a high rate. Our challenge is acquiring the ability to transplant more of those organs into Nevadans. The legacy we hope to leave for Senator Copenig is the creation of a transplant institute.

The greatest need for transplantation in our State is in the minority population; 60 percent of people waiting for these critical organs to save their lives are in the minority community. We realize we need to do a better job conveying the need and the benefits to those populations on becoming organ donors. Since 2012, we underwent a cultural transformation and decided that we were going to be better on behalf of the minority population and methodically reengaged with many stakeholders in the community.

The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) is a huge partner of the Nevada Donor Network, given that most people register to become an organ donor at the DMV. We also partnered with law enforcement and all of the hospitals. We have a large footprint in the community, which has the ability to turn this idea of a transplantation institute into a reality. We set about on a campaign to raise significant funds, because we know we need to transplant more of these organs in Nevada. We want to help people, no matter where they are, and are grateful to the heroic donors who were able to save lives. We feel compelled to advocate on behalf of Nevadans so they do not have to relocate and experience the financial stress of going to a neighboring state to wait for an organ, while uprooting their entire support system. The influence of our Board on the foundation and the governing side is significant. We have many influential community leaders represented on our Board. I invite you to go to www.nvdonor.org to see the composition of our Board. There is a great need in our State, and if we had found ourselves in a different time economically, this would be a different conversation. In the future, we hope to come back to this Committee.

SENATOR CANNIZZARO:

I am honored to hold the seat that Senator Copenig once held in the Nevada Senate. I remember thinking early on, "She is the best of us." She cared about the folks she represented, cared about her community and did so with such an open heart and open arms. She was a wonderful mentor to me, and we all miss her terribly. Thank you Mr. Musgrove and Mr. Ferreira for representing the Nevada Donor Network. I thank my colleague, Senator Spearman as she brought this resolution forth to honor my mentor and friend, Senator Copenig.

MR. MUSGROVE:

Our first call as we began this process was to contact Senator Copenig's sister. She is completely supportive of this legislation and wanted to be here to testify but was unable to do so. She wanted it known that the family is in absolute support of this resolution.

SENATOR PATRICIA SPEARMAN (Senatorial District No. 1):

I sponsored this bill because it is a monument to Senator Copenig's memory. We will see people in the future who will have benefitted from her organ donation and from others who are following in the same path of organ donation. One of my sisters has been waiting for a kidney for two years. I often say to some of my friends in church, "Heaven does not need your

organs, leave them all here on earth." I am glad to sponsor this bill in memory of Senator Copening.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

I support the resolution and had the privilege of knowing Senator Copening. She was a thoughtful and lovely person who looked out for the citizens of Nevada. She contributed greatly to what we do in the Legislature.

CHAIR OHRENSCHALL:

I worked with a constituent during the Interim who was substantially younger than the average transplant recipient. She fell ill and was hospitalized in northeastern Nevada. Her heart was slowly dying. She was transported by medevac to the University of Utah Hospital in Salt Lake City, where she waited and eventually received her transplant. She would have been unable to receive her heart transplant in Nevada.

KATIE RYAN (Dignity Health - St. Rose Dominican):

I am here today as a friend of Allison Copening. Losing her that day was traumatic and unexpected, but what was not unexpected was her last action on earth, which was giving away the gift of life to many who desperately needed it through organ donation. My father was a kidney transplant recipient, so I know firsthand what it is to receive that life-changing call and rush out of state to receive the organ. Thankfully, my family was prepared and able to make that journey. Passing this resolution will begin to assure that many more Nevadans have the ability to receive a transplant in the future.

TYRE GRAY (Nevada Mining Association):

Today, I testify both personally and professionally in support of S.C.R. 2. September 12, 2012, is a day I will never forget. At 2 p.m. on that day, my phone rang and I heard the words I had been waiting to hear for seven years. There is a kidney available for you. How soon can you get down to the University Medical Center? Being able to receive my kidney transplant in Nevada was a huge burden lifted off of my family's shoulders. The economic activity generated by having an organ transplant center in Nevada is sizeable. The savings experienced by the Nevada social safety net and Nevada employers, who must balance the cost of health care for their employees, will be substantial. I stand in support on behalf of the Nevada Mining Association, which offers employees employer-paid health insurance for the employee and

dependents. Personally, I am someone who owes my existence today to an unknown donor who gave me the gift of life.

CHAIR OHRENSCHALL:

We are going to close the hearing on S.C.R. 2. I am open to a motion.

SENATOR LANGE MOVED TO ADOPT S.C.R. 2.

SENATOR CANNIZZARO SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

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CHAIR OHRENSCHALL:

We have one item on work session, Senate Bill (S.B.) 82, which we heard on February 18. Senate Bill 82 revises the City Charter for the City of Sparks as it relates to when a candidate's name appears on a primary or general election ballot. Mr. Stewart will walk us through the work session document ([Exhibit C](#)).

SENATE BILL 82: Makes changes to various provisions of the Charter of the City of Sparks. (BDR S-489)

MICHAEL STEWART:

Senate Bill 82 amends the City Charter of the City of Sparks to clarify the manner in which municipal candidates are nominated for office. Specifically, it provides that if only one candidate has filed for nomination by the close of candidate filing, that candidate must be declared elected, and no election shall be held. If more than twice the number of candidates have filed for municipal office, each of those candidates must appear on the primary election ballot. Senate Bill 82 also provides that if not more than twice the number of candidates to be elected have filed for office, no primary election is held and those candidates must be placed on the general election ballot. For those candidates appearing on the primary election ballot, S.B. 82 clarifies that a candidate who receives the majority of the votes must be declared elected. If no candidate receives the majority of the votes cast, the names of those two candidates who received the most votes must be placed on the general

election ballot. This is what we know as the 50 plus 1 provision you have seen in other jurisdictions.

Finally, S.B. 82 clarifies that an elected official enters office at the first regular meeting of the City Council following the meeting at which the canvass of the election returns are made. There are no amendments offered for this measure. This bill was proposed by the Sparks Charter Committee, and many of the provisions relating to the nomination and appearance on primary and general election ballots have language that is mirrored in *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS).

CHAIR OHRENSCHALL:

This bill, sponsored by Senator Julia Ratti, brings the City Charter of the City of Sparks into conformity with NRS. Mr. Duncan is here from the City of Sparks to answer any questions. The hearing is closed on S.B. 82.

SENATOR LANGE MOVED TO DO PASS S.B. 82.

SENATOR CANNIZZARO SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

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CHAIR OHRENSCHALL:

The last item today before we go to public comment is Bill Draft Request (BDR) 17-512, a BDR we have on the agenda for a possible committee introduction. This BDR comes out the Sunset Subcommittee of the Legislative Commission. It authorizes the Legislative Commission to Study Governmental Purchasing.

BILL DRAFT REQUEST 17-512: Authorizes the Commission to study Governmental Purchasing to request the drafting of not more than two legislative measures for each legislative session. (Later introduced as [Senate Bill 176](#).)

At each Legislative Session, the Commission to Study Governmental Purchasing may request the drafting of not more than two legislative measures which relate to matters within the scope of that Commission. We will be

hearing more about the measure once it is referred back to our Committee and scheduled for a hearing. A vote or a motion in support of this bill draft introduction is not an indication of support of the substance of the bill, just support of it being introduced. We would need the Committee's approval to get the bill moving, process it and assign it a bill number before referring it to the appropriate committee to be heard. Would any member like to make a motion to introduce BDR 17-512?

SENATOR CANNIZZARO MOVED TO INTRODUCE BDR 17-512.

SENATOR LANGE SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

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CHAIR OHRENSCHALL:

I just received a message from Mr. Musgrove of the Nevada Organ Donor Network. The University Medical Center of Southern Nevada will be sending a letter in support of S.C.R. 2 ([Exhibit D](#)). That concludes our business. We are adjourned at 4:16 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Barbara Young,
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Senator James Ohrenschall, Chair

DATE: _____

EXHIBIT SUMMARY				
Bill	Exhibit Letter	Begins on Page	Witness / Entity	Description
	A	1		Agenda
S.C.R. 2	B	1	Joe Ferreira/ Nevada Donor Network	Economic and Social Benefits of Expanding Transplantation Services in Las Vegas, Nevada
S.B. 82	C	1	Michael Stewart	Work Session Document
S.C.R. 2	D	1	Mason Van Houweling/ University Medical Center of Southern Nevada	Letter in support