MINUTES OF THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Eighty-third Session
May 14, 2025

The Senate Committee on Finance was called to order by Chair Marilyn Dondero Loop at 8:20 a.m. on Wednesday, May 14, 2025, in Room 2135 of the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 6 of the Nevada Legislature Hearing Rooms, 7120 Amigo Street, Las Vegas, Nevada. Exhibit A is the agenda. Exhibit B is the attendance roster. All exhibits are available and on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau. Link to Executive Budget. Link to Budget Amendments.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Marilyn Dondero Loop, Chair
Senator Rochelle T. Nguyen, Vice Chair
Senator Nicole J. Cannizzaro
Senator Dina Neal
Senator Angela D. Taylor
Senator Carrie Ann Buck
Senator Robin L. Titus
Senator Jeff Stone

GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:

Senator Michelee Cruz-Crawford, Senatorial District No. 1
Senator James Ohrenschall, Senatorial District No. 21
Senator Julie Pazina, Senatorial District No. 12
Assemblymember Daniele Monroe-Moreno, Assembly District No. 1

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Wayne Thorley, Senate Fiscal Analyst
Cathy Crocket, Chief Principal Deputy Fiscal Analyst
Julie Waller, Principal Deputy Fiscal Analyst
Connie Summers, Committee Secretary
Jacob Anderson, Committee Secretary

OTHERS PRESENT:

Dawn Etcheverry, Nevada State Education Association
Susan Keema, Deputy Director, Nevada Association School Superintendents
Anna Binder, Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorder; Nevada Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities
Brad Keating, Clark County School District
Trevor Parrish, Vegas Chamber
Deven Aschoff, Touro University Nevada
Julie Ostrovsky
Erik Lovaas, Lovaas Center
Yesenia Gonzales, Azulblue United by Autism
Rebecca Raynoha
Steven Cohen
Mike Lee
Chelsea Bishop, Act4Kids Nevada
Michelle Scott-Lewing, President, Autism Coalition of Nevada
Eve Eriksson-Woodruff
Randy Haas
Tom Clark, Nevada Association of School Boards
Elyse Monroy-Marsala
Zachary Khan, Nevada Department of Education
Yoana Ontiveros, Touro University Nevada
Jan Crandy, Nevada Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders
Brighid Fronapfel, Nevada Board of Applied Behavioral Analysis
Gwen Johnson, Nevada Association for Behavioral Analysis
Wendy Knorr, Executive Director, Nevada Board of Applied Behavioral Analysis
Timothy Galluzi, Chief Information Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer, Office of the Governor
Brett D. Compston, Chief, Division of Emergency Management/Homeland Security, Office of the Military
Charles Donohue, Administrator and State Land Registrar, Division of State Lands, Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Devin Middlebrook, Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
Maddison Proctor, League to Save Lake Tahoe
Pamela Tsigdinos
David Lenzner, Administrator, Budget Division, Office of Finance, Office of the Governor
Jack Robb, Chief Innovation Officer, Office of the Governor

Joy Grimmer, Director, Nevada Department of Administration
Will Adler, Duck Valley Shoshone-Paiute Tribe
Nicole Flangas, Nevada Association Of School Boards
Alexander Marks, Nevada State Education Association
Marco Ovando, Shoshone-Paiute Tribe of the Duck Valley Reservation
Sean Sever, Deputy Administrator, Division of Research and Project Management, Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles
Alexis Motarex, Nevada Chapter, Associated General Contractors
Tiffany Greenameyer, Director, Office of Finance, Office of the Governor
A'Keia Sanders, Director, Office of Federal Assistance, Office of the Governor
Curtis Palmer, Deputy Director, Office of Finance, Office of the Governor
Annette Logan-Parker, Cure 4 The Kids Foundation
Damon Schilling, Intermountain Health
Phillip Clark, Senior Associate Dean, Administration and Finance, School of Medicine, University of Nevada, Reno
Douglas Collins
Meredith Hoppe
Caden Grogan, Saint Rose Dominican
Annie Vong, Nevada Primary Care Association
Patrick Kelley, Nevada Hospital Association
Alejandro Rodriguez, Nevada System of Higher Education
Chris Bosse, Renown Health
Regan Comis, University Medical Center of Southern Nevada
Cyrus Hojjaty
Areli Alarcon, Touro University Nevada
Dan Musgrove, Valley Health System of Hospitals
Connor Cain, Acadia Healthcare
Kate Martin, Professor of Family and Community Medicine, Kirk Kerkorian School of Medicine, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Spencer Thatcher
Caleb Jolley
Bridger Woods
Dooley Gegen
Samantha Barnes, Roseman University of Health Sciences
Jacqueline Nguyen, Nevada State Medical Association

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
We will now hear Senate Bill (S.B.) 277.

SENATOR MICHELEE CRUZ-CRAWFORD (Senatorial District No. 1):
Senate Bill 277 does two things. It enhances mental health base supports for students in public schools, and it streamlines the licensure process. I had a fiscal note added by Washoe County for about $15 million to hire a one-on-one social worker. This bill does not require the hiring, so they were able to remove that fiscal note.

SENATE BILL 277 (1st Reprint): Revises provisions relating to education. (BDR 34-786)

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
All the fiscal notes are removed on the bill, right?

SENATOR CRUZ-CRAWFORD:
That is correct.

SENATOR NEAL:
Clark County had listed that it was unclear on the use of the contractor and how it would be a limited scope of practice. Did you work that out with them? Clark County's fiscal note said that contractors have a limited scope of practice within schools, which can result in a lack of efficient response and student reentry planning. This was a concern for them.

SENATOR CRUZ-CRAWFORD:
From the conversations I had with Mr. Keating at Clark County School District (CCSD), they were looking at the implementation of first hiring at the school before utilizing a contractor. With the change to permissive language in the amendment (Exhibit C), I believe we cleared up that concern. I will circle back with him. We were waiting through a change in superintendency. Now that we have shifted, I will check. I believe it was taken care of, but I do not want to say that without being 100 percent sure.

SENATOR CANNIZZARO:
You said all the fiscal notes have been removed. You talked about Washoe County specifically. In the local government fiscal note pieces, as of March 2025, there were fiscal notes from some of the other school districts:

Churchill, Elko, Lyon, Pershing and White Pine. I do not know that we have gotten any confirmation from those school districts that the bill as amended removes those fiscal notes. Have you had any conversations with those school districts? Can you confirm that they believe the fiscal impacts would be mitigated with the amended version of the bill?

SENATOR CRUZ-CRAWFORD:
The amendment took them all out. I did not have personal conversations with them, but I can circle back with them. They were taken out with the population cap.

DAWN ETCHEVERRY (Nevada State Education Association):
The Nevada State Education Association (NSEA) supports S.B. 277 to require schools to employ a school social worker to the extent funds are available. Educators are committed to the success and wellbeing of students. Social workers play an essential role in addressing the social and emotional needs of students, serving as a bridge between students, family and the school community. The NSEA believes the addition of a school social worker is merited and asks for your support.

SUSAN KEEMA (Deputy Director, Nevada Association School Superintendents):
We support S.B. 277. Once the amendments were made and the language was made permissive, our superintendents were on board.

ANNA BINDER (Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorder; Nevada Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities):
I am calling in support of this bill. I am glad to hear that the fiscal note is removed and this is moving forward. It is long overdue for our students.

BRAD KEATING (Clark County School District):
Clark County School District is in support of this bill. We do not currently, nor did we ever, have a fiscal note on this bill. There is no fiscal note moving forward based on the amendments.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
We will now hear S.B. 174.

SENATE BILL 174 (1st Reprint): Revises provisions relating to pupils with disabilities. (BDR 34-53)

SENATOR JAMES OHRENSCHALL (Senatorial District No. 21):
Thank you for hearing S.B. 174. An amendment (Exhibit D) was sent to the committee. That amendment is the product of a discussion with representatives from the Nevada Department of Education (NDE). The bulk of that amendment deletes sections 7 and 8 of section 1.3 of the bill as amended here in the Senate, when it came out of the Senate Committee on Education. On the basis of those conversations, I believe that amendment would reduce the fiscal note that was submitted by NDE but would not eliminate it.

As to the remainder of what is in the fiscal note submitted by NDE, it is my belief and the belief of many proponents I have been working with on the bill, that a lot of these services are already needed to be provided pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. I have certainly not eliminated the fiscal note from NDE, but I believe this amendment reduces it.

As to the fiscal note from CCSD that had been put on the original, it lists zero fiscal [impact], but there is a long narrative after that listing potential areas of potential fiscal impact. A lot of that was addressed in the original amendment that was presented to the Senate Committee on Education.

SENATOR CANNIZZARO:
You said you thought there was a reduced fiscal note from NDE. Do you have an updated number on what that would be with this amendment?

SENATOR OHRENSCHALL:
I do not have an updated fiscal [note]. I believe that the amendment should reduce the fiscal note in the area of $200,000. That is based on the conversations from that meeting.

SENATOR CANNIZZARO:
Okay. That is helpful. I wanted to know if there had been a firm number, but we can follow up with NDE to get a sense of what that fiscal note was.

My other question was on the Clark County piece. It seemed like they had some concerns, but it looks like that was from February, so it was probably addressed with the amendments adopted in the original policy committee.

SENATOR OHRENSCHALL:
I certainly hope so.

SENATOR NEAL:
For the smaller districts like Washoe County School District (WCSD) and White Pine County School District (WPSD), did they take their [fiscal notes] off? They have zero, but then they have in the written comments that there will be costs for implementation of the bill.

SENATOR OHRENSCHALL:
I am not aware of any updated fiscal notes from either WCSD or WPSD. They were zero, but the comments talk about possible impacts that are hard to predict. The amendments have tried to delete the reporting requirement that we thought was a major cost burden.

I also believe that if children who need to have a provider there are able to, there will be more successful outcomes and some of these impacts may be reduced. I believe that might address some of those, but I am not aware of updated fiscal notes from WCSD or WPSD.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
That was my question too. I noticed that only CCSD answered with a fiscal at zero, so I was trying to figure out where the other school districts were in the mix.

TREVOR PARRISH (Vegas Chamber):
The Chamber is in support of S.B. 174 from the fiscal perspective and the changes it proposes to make public and charter schools more inclusive and accessible to students with disabilities.

DEVEN ASCHOFF (Touro University Nevada):
We are in strong support.

JULIE OSTROVSKY:
I am in strong support of S.B. 174. I had the honor of being a part of the meeting with the school districts. Staffing is still on there for getting a person to coordinate all the efforts of allowing these professionals to push in. I believe that is the only fiscal note we had left when we removed the reporting requirement.

The person who is pushing into the classroom, in agreement with the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team, the teacher or the administrators, is being paid for either by Medicaid, because that child is already getting services paid for, or insurance. There is not a cost to the school district for that professional to go into the classroom and work with the teachers and staff.

ERIK LOVAAS (Lovaas Center):
I have been providing services for children with autism for 30 years. Approximately 25 years ago, Clark County was mandated to pay for services due to violations [unintelligible statement] … those payments that contract with outside agencies like the Lovaas Center went on for about 15 years. During that time, we developed really solid relationships with the district, including a gentleman by the name of Scott Reynolds who then was the Director of Special Education in CCSD. He took a job in WCSD as the Assistant Superintendent of Schools and developed a pilot program to provide services like ours between WCSD and the community. That pilot program went on for about two years. Today, it is my understanding that WCSD allows outside providers into the schools. I would like to think that investment by Mr. Reynolds is the reason why that relationship is currently in WCSD.

We are in full support of this bill. It is forward thinking, and it is a great financial investment. We look forward to having a positive relationship again with the districts in Nevada.

YESENIA GONZALES (Azulblue United by Autism):
We have served the Las Vegas community for over ten years, and we are in strong support of S.B. 174. We believe that having applied behavior analysis (ABA) in our kids' schools would not only be beneficial for our kids, but also for the staff. You have a lot of data that is also very beneficial, especially when you have multidisciplinary teams. School psychologists can also benefit from this. Teachers can focus on teaching and not having to worry about the emotional everything that comes with a behavior that could be easily remedied by having a therapist onsite to support the student. You will have a student focusing on their academics and at the same time benefiting from the services. You will not have any Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) violations.

To be quite honest, when I hear there are Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) violations, it is not. It is not, as you heard. It is being paid by Medicaid. It is time that people start to focus on what is best for the children

and start helping them. It is very stressful and really sad when you hear about families having to make the choice between pulling their child to take them for therapy services and then have retaliation from CCSD when they receive these truancy letters. It is a very tough decision to make, and the child does not get their education. So, we strongly support this bill.

REBECCA RAYNOHA:
I am mother of a special needs child as well as a board-certified behavioral analyst (BCBA). I am so thankful for this long overdue bill. I think by colleague summarized the needs extraordinarily well. All I think about are the kids that I have had in my practice that have started with ABA, gone to school because they have an immense skill set that is ready for school, and are then pulled because of behaviors and have to return to a more restrictive setting like my setting.

One of my most recent clients, who is diagnosed with fetal alcohol syndrome, had his first day with us this month. I remember the call with his mom who was sobbing while she was explaining that the school kicked him out again because of behaviors. This time, a school administrator told the child if this happens again, they will be forced to call police. This was said to a seven-year-old.

My son also has these needs and has tried school several times. He has a dual diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder and global developmental delay, symptoms that strongly overlap with autism. Applied behavioral analysis gave my son his voice back. We have attempted to get him into school multiple times to be told the same thing repeatedly—we do not have the resources, we cannot help, and you cannot have your staff here, even though that is what he needed.

I want to shorten therapy for kids. I want them in the least restrictive setting. To do that, we must do it successfully and give them that blanket support. This should not be a sink or swim. That is not the most effective use of our money.

STEVEN COHEN:
In general, ditto. Last session, I wrote an amendment to A.B. No. 54 of the 82nd Session concerning therapeutic absences for things like ABA. It was enrolled, but then schools are either not adopting it at all, it is being enforced on a school-by-school basis, and there has been no guidance from NDE on the issue.

MIKE LEE:
We amended the bill to have section 1.3.3, which is the insurance requirements, the privacy laws and also to comply with school rules. In April, we discussed with CCSD some of its concerns. We added section 5, specifying that the school districts would be relieved for providing services that are provided by outside personnel, that there is no financial liability, and the school is not responsible for billing. We have engaged with the school districts and NDE to try to address any fiscal concern.

CHELSEA BISHOP (Act4Kids Nevada):
We are in strong support of S.B. 174. We care deeply about having more access to comprehensive health care for Nevada's families. We know that many families can benefit from these kinds of services.

I had a daughter who I would remove from school to take to therapies. It was not autism, but I know this applies to other areas as well. I know the effects it can have to choose between therapies and school. We are so grateful for those who are working on this bill, and we know it has a positive effect for Nevada's families.

MICHELLE SCOTT-LEWING (President, Autism Coalition of Nevada):
As a statewide coalition, we strongly support S.B. 174. We are very pleased to hear of some of the revisions on the fiscal notes and that agencies statewide are amenable to such revisions. That is wonderful.

Since I am occasionally located in Florida, I know that the bill in Florida has been very effective for therapists in the classroom.

EVE ERIKSSON-WOODRUFF:
I am a parent to Evelyn, a seven-year-old girl who is nonverbal with level three autism. I strongly support this bill because she is being excluded from public education due to her disability. I ditto all the comments before me. I urgently request your support for S.B. 174 so my daughter and other children like her can attend school and be part of her community.

RANDY HAAS:
I would like to provide support for S.B. 174. I have a son with autism who has come a long way with ABA. Without it, he would not be talking now, and he would not have skills now. It is extremely crucial. This is a very important bill

that needs to be passed. It needs to be taken very seriously that without this, these kids and young adults are in a world where they cannot communicate and live. It is critical that we pass this bill.

I am a registered nurse, and I can tell you that in nursing school, ABA was not taught to us. Society needs to understand and be educated about what we can do. Having registered behavioral technicians (RBT) in the school is essential for our kids to be productive and focused and to attend and learn. We need this more than life. Applied behavioral analysis has done so much to help my son. I hope you consider this bill to be passed.

MS. KEEMA:
I have a letter of opposition to S.B. 174 from the District Special Education Directors to Nevada lawmakers that they have asked me to read into the record.

> We respectfully submit the following to clarify critical legal and practical implications regarding proposed legislation that would allow or require schools to permit medically necessary ABA treatment/therapy during the school day.
>
> Under the IDEA, Nevada School districts are legally obligated to provide FAPE to students with disabilities. This includes instruction aligned with state content and performance standards, delivered through an IEP at no cost to families.
>
> It is important to emphasize: "medically necessary ABA therapy" is not considered special education or a related service under IDEA. Nor does it fulfill the requirement to provide instruction that meets state academic standards. The only medical services that local education authorities (LEA) are required to provide are for diagnostic or evaluation purposes as stated in 34 Code of Federal Regulations 300.34(a).
>
> Requiring or encouraging schools to allow non-IEP medical services during instructional time creates both educational disruption and legal liability. The school day is tightly structured to deliver academic content and IEP-driven supports. Permitting external providers to work with students during this time means

> sacrificing instruction in reading, math or special education services, potentially resulting in denying FAPE.
>
> Furthermore, allowing outside providers over whom school districts have no direct supervisory authority into educational settings exposes districts to significant legal risk. In the event of injury or misconduct, LEAs are likely to be named in legal action, regardless of indemnification agreements.
>
> Finally, noting [nothing] in IDEA mandates that schools provide "medically necessary" services unrelated to education. The bill's language risks confusing the legal distinction between medical treatment and educational services, placing undue burden and liability on schools for services.
>
> Special education directors agree with all areas identified in the superintendent's opposition to this bill as well. We urge careful reconsideration of any proposal that compels schools to accommodate medical ABA services during instructional hours, as it may conflict with federal law, compromise students' education access and expose districts to avoidable legal consequences.

I have a list of all the districts that have supported this. The only one we were not able to contact was WCSD. Sixteen out of the seventeen school districts supported this letter, and they worked together on it.

TOM CLARK (Nevada Association of School Boards):
We have been opposed to the legislation based on the policy discussion that was stated previously. Speaking to the fiscal note, we really do not know what the costs are going to be to have a third-party person come into the district, especially in our rural districts. From a security perspective, there are a lot of steps that need to be taken. The bill prescribes writing a plan and those issues will be addressed in that plan, but there could be costs associated with that.

If you have a district that has numerous students that need to have this type of intervention, while we totally support the concept of getting that student as many services as we possibly can, it could be a position where the district itself has to assign or hire somebody to implement that particular program. There would still be a fiscal cost to that. It is the background checks, ensuring the

security and just making sure that this third-party observer or practitioner is going to be a safe asset within our school districts.

SENATOR NEAL:
I am listening to the comments around the outside providers, the scope of the work and how there is no control over what the legal liability would be. What is the difference between [this and] the contractor position that was brought forward by Senator Cruz-Crawford in the other bill? She is having contractors come in as social workers. Is that not a third party where the districts are entering into a contractual relationship with a third-party contractor to do a thing in the school? What would be the difference if you took on the third-party behavioral specialist that came in? Would that not be further defined by a contractual relationship?

MR. CLARK:
I think the distinction is that the district would have a contract with that social worker in that particular bill. The way this bill is prescribed, there is no formal legal engagement between the district and third party that is coming in. All we are going to be able to do under the plan is to put in those steps to ensure the third-party individual is going to be safe within a school environment. If there are more than one, two or three, if the district feels it is necessary, they may want to have somebody in that classroom to observe and make sure the third-party person is following all the rules we put forward. The fiscal notes come in for the implementation of the plan. We are not in direct opposition to having folks come in. We just need to make sure under this piece of legislation that plan is so succinct that we make sure the students and the faculty are safe.

SENATOR NEAL:
It sounds like a simple amendment. If it is about the legal relationship between the party and inserting that as a mandated provision in the plan, why could you not work that out? Why is that being worked out in the Committee on Finance?

MR. CLARK:
We could have the conversation with the sponsor and Mr. Lee to see if we can solidify that language. I was trying to address just the fiscal note for this committee, but we can talk offline about it as well.

MS. KEEMA:
The Nevada Association of School Superintendents represent all 17 school districts. We are in opposition to S.B. 174, and we have a list of concerns. Overall, the bill, as it is currently written, is still in conflict with IDEA requirements, making the lines of accountability unclear, which results in legal and ethical concerns for districts.

For example, we need to address the FERPA. Involving external providers may lead to violations of students' confidentiality and breeches of data protection laws. Regarding FAPE, non-LEA providers could compromise a student's right to FAPE by interfering with IEP implementation and educational goals.

There are fiscal implications. Districts will need added fiscal resources for consulting fees with legal counsel to assess the impact of FAPE policy development, setting boundaries for both sides of the coin. Funding will be needed for: additional coordination time with outside providers and the IEP team; training for both parties on district policies, restraints and methodologies since oftentimes, outside providers' methodologies are different from those of the school districts; and the allocation for the cost of the physical space that might be needed to do this. All of this causes additional administrative oversight and burdens on schools.

Let's address Medicaid. The bill raises questions about how multiple service providers billing Medicaid will affect the school's Medicaid reimbursement supports. If you look at some of the exhibits [from prior hearings], there are concerns about that.

Regarding fiscal liability, there is a risk that outside providers may not be able to pay for services delivered in the educational environment, leaving districts liable. Not all families have equal, high-quality insurance, which creates equity issues.

On the medical treatments, we support the district special education directors' concerns on that topic, as well as potential Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act violations. The State has existing support for ABA services. The NDE already offers programs that allow families to access ABA services outside of school using existing financial support systems. A reasonable goal would be to work within the existing system to continue to bring high quality services to our students.

ELYSE MONROY-MARSALA:
I am in opposition to S.B. 174 because of the third-party language requirement. Unfortunately, with the inclusion of this language that allows for a third-party payer to be billed, this bill will only help some children. This bill will not help all children with autism or disabilities in Nevada.

My child is a fifth grader at a Title I school in Washoe County. He was covered through Public Employees Benefits Program insurance, which provides barely any coverage for services for autism. We had to get on Katie Beckett Eligibility Option Medicaid (KBEOM), which was an absolutely horrible process. I would love to come back and talk to this committee about investing in improving KBEOM access. I am glad we have KBEOM now so we can get him the support he needs, but I continue to be concerned about the inclusion of the third-party payer language in this bill. This will create disparities for children in public classrooms.

The amendments are not posted online, so I cannot see what the adjusted fiscal note is. Going off the fiscal note that is posted for $500,000, the State could invest $500,000 into doing a legislative audit to understand why school districts are not currently complying with IDEA requirements, which require schools to provide these services at no cost to families, or the State could invest $500,000 into making KBEOM accessible.

I am so disappointed that I have to be in continued opposition to this bill. Unfortunately, as well-intended as this policy is, it will only help some children. We need to make systemic change that will help all children. Thank you for hearing my exhausted parent concerns today. Please do not support this bill.

MR. KEATING:
We [CCSD] are opposed to this bill. Before anything else, I want to thank Senator Ohrenschall, Mike Lee and the stakeholders of this bill. We have worked tirelessly to try to get this to a place where everyone could support it moving forward. Unfortunately, there is just not a place that we are fully supportive of this bill.

The Majority Leader asked about CCSD's fiscal note from February. There are pieces that would come off of that fiscal note, but there are also pieces that would potentially be added. We are just unsure currently.

I want to focus on two fiscal things for the committee. The Medicaid piece, allowing external providers to bill Medicaid without a coordinated system prioritizing district claims would divert essential funds from public education, despite the District remaining responsible for IDEA compliance and FAPE. The law allows for a total of 40 hours per week of services to be billed to Medicaid. There would end up being issues between both the school district and the private provider in those areas, which would probably lead to a decrease in funds coming to the school district.

There is discussion of assistive technology in there that would be mandated and triggered if the parent or legal guardian requests it. That creates an unbounded cost exposure. There is no cap on the potential volume of scope of requested services, leaving districts vulnerable to overwhelming demand without additional funding.

For example, if all families on a caseload requested braille instruction, the district would need to hire approximately 90 to 100 teachers for the visually impaired. That would extend to production and equipment. Braille programs cost $18,000 at a minimum. The machines and equipment cost $6,000 to $10,000 each.

There are a lot of pieces in here that are difficult to fully explain and write a number on a piece of paper because there are so many different factors with the bill.

MS. BINDER:
The Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorder supports S.B. 174, and we have a letter forthcoming. The Nevada Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities opposes S.B. 174 for all of the reasons you have heard in testimony this morning. I echo the concerns Mr. Cohen raised in support that we need to have some consistency with that previous bill and the full implementation of it.

As we stand at 9:12 a.m. this morning, we still have many unaddressed concerns. We hope [the bill sponsor] will be able to resolve them before the work session. We do not like to be in opposition right now, but that is where we are.

ZACHARY KHAN (Nevada Department of Education):
The amendment Exhibit D proposed for S.B. 174 reduces the fiscal note for NDE, removing the request for a management analyst and approximately $100,000 in contracts. However, our fiscal note will still include one education program professional who will provide guidance and support to the dispute resolution process.

We anticipate reducing the fiscal note from approximately $609,000 over the next biennium to $289,000.

SENATOR OHRENSCHALL:
A lot of the comments in opposition were policy-based, not fiscally based. I appreciate all the stakeholders who have been working with me. We have tried to address a lot of their concerns with the amendment in the Senate Committee on Education. I think the bill, as it came out of the Committee on Education, gives a lot of flexibility to each district to develop their own policy. Section 1.3, subsection 3, paragraph (b), subparagraph (1), requires that any provider carry a policy for professional liability insurance, and adhere to any relevant state and federal privacy laws, including, without limitation, FERPA.

Regarding braille and services to the blind, it is my understanding that is already required under the IDEA under a free and appropriate public education.

I want to keep working with all the stakeholders. I appreciate NDE's comment that its fiscal note has been reduced from $609,000 to $289,000. I hope the committee will consider moving forward.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
We will now hear S.B. 380.

SENATE BILL 380 (1st Reprint): Revises provisions relating to autism spectrum disorders. (BDR 23-118)

SENATOR JAMES OHRENSCHALL (Senatorial District No. 21):
There is an amendment (Exhibit E) to S.B. 380. It changes the mandatory training for law enforcement officers that the bill originally envisioned to make it optional training. It allows police departments and law enforcement agencies to opt in if they choose, rather than it being mandatory. I believe that should address the majority of the fiscal notes from law enforcement agencies at state

and local levels. It does not address every fiscal note, but for law enforcement agencies, it should address those.

YOANA ONTIVEROS (Touro University Nevada):
We are in support of S.B. 380.

MS. OSTROVSKY:
I am a parent of an adult with autism. He is nonverbal and is not independent. He will live with me as long as I am alive. I am his voice, his caregiver, his protection, his person and his mom. I strongly support S.B. 380.

I brought a little prop (Exhibit F) you probably cannot see. This is important. It goes on my son's seatbelt. It says "Autism, nonverbal, do not leave unattended, may not respond to verbal commands. Emergency info inside." They can go in and get contact information for everybody else in my family if, God forbid, something happens to me.

Senate Bill 380 will protect children with autism. This bill gives peace officers the tools they need to identify and safely engage people who may be nonverbal—not who are trying to be nonresponsive—who are afraid—not running away from a peace officer—who need help but may be unable to ask. This bill suggest that peace officer training include tools on how to recognize autism and engage people with autism safely.

Section 4 of this bill is important. It allows RBTs who are background checked by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) for employment with any providers, have completed 40 hours of training and have applied for registration with the State of Nevada through the Nevada Board of Applied Behavioral Analysis (NBABA) to work under direct supervision of a licensed behavioral analyst who is professional and legally responsible for the performance of the applicant while the NBABA continues with the registration process. This supervisor is licensed, insured and liable for the RBT to work with people with autism while they are waiting for their state registration and additional background checks to be processed.

The Department of Public Safety (DPS) has immensely improved its system and is modernizing it. As of June 2025, state background checks that go through DPS are processed faster. The results can be reviewed online by authorized personnel. However, the NBABA staff of two, one of whom is authorized to

review the background check reports, still must process new registrations and all renewals.

The NBABA is about to embark on the first renewal since its inception, which can be between 1 and 2,000 renewals. The profession is losing talented, trained RBTs because of the length of time it takes for the State to complete a registration. Current statute allows for 120 days for the state registration process to be completed. Would you wait 1 to 3 months to get paid and begin work? That is what we are trying to eliminate here.

I know that NBABA has been reporting faster registration since session began, but that is not for everyone, and it is not typical. This bill will address unexpected delays. We must get our potential workforce working.

In my submitted document, we have provided the flow charts (Exhibit G) showing what happens when you apply and when your background checks happen. We still want two background checks. We want everything to happen to protect people with autism. For example, my son, who I do not want to put in jeopardy in any way, shape or form. We are not taking away anything the NBABA or the State are doing; we are just adding a workforce development option.

MS. GONZALES:
As the vice president of Azulblue United for Autism, as the mother of a son with autism and as an adult that has autism, I strongly support both portions of S.B. 380. As many possibly saw last month, unfortunately, there was a child that tragically died, Victor. He was shot nine times. If law enforcement had the proper training and the tools at hand, and if the officer had the training on how to deescalate the situation, that could have been prevented.

Not all officer interactions are bad. I have had the privilege of knowing amazing CCSD officers, and I have come to be friends with many of them. At times, some of them have has asked me if the nonprofit that I serve could train them. Unfortunately, we cannot do that because we do not have that training. We refer them to the Nevada Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities. We would love every interaction to be peaceful. However, when there are informal student removals, it is tragic to see a child being handcuffed and removed from school property. Many times, these children are scared, nonverbal and cannot

communicate. The individual, whether it is an officer or another staff member, does not know what they are dealing with.

If you have an officer with the proper training, you can have zero of those situations. I would hate for something like that to ever happen to my child. My child is in high school. On his backpack, he has a medical alert that says he has autism. That is so people are aware about what is going on, should my son ever freak out or have a moment.

We have heard many horror stories. I am going to bring up my director's son's last day at his high school. He was removed in handcuffs, and unfortunately, it was on the news. That officer, had he had the training, would have known that was not necessary because the child was 100 percent calm.

We want to not have any more of these interactions. For me as an adult, I would hate to ever have that sort of interaction. We strongly support both aspects [of the bill] because we need to stop this.

MS. RAYNOHA:
I ditto everything Ms. Gonzales just said about first responder training. I have worked with clients that are older and high intensity. I am always worried, if they ever encounter law enforcement, whether or not that encounter will be safe.

As a BCBA, I want to speak about the portion of this bill on RBTs processing through the State. I have directly observed the impact of our current system on RBTs that attempt to enter or stay in this field. When I last provided public comment in March 2025, I mentioned that we had a 1 in 5 success rate. Between March and May, that is at 33 percent at four weeks, but still standard at six.

Additionally, we have had an influx of people moving into the State. I had three out-of-state applicants that moved to Nevada. Upon providing the resources of how to become registered with the State, two of them decided to leave the field. One of them continues to intermittently touch base with us, primarily to see if we can hire her before she has cleared with the State, which would be a strain on our resources.

People cannot wait four to six weeks to be employed. They will leave. We are already seeing that we are not competitive with other states. We are driving people out of this field. Because of that, there are going to be less people to provide services, there will be longer wait lists, and we will be moving further away from early and intensive behavioral intervention. What this all ultimately means financially is that you are going to have to pay on the backend when these individuals get older.

MR. COHEN:
Ditto as previous. I just want to bring to the committee's attention that this training movement—I forget if it is Virginia or West Virginia—started with one family. That is all it takes to have a negative, preventable interaction with law enforcement to bring something to the policy committees and the Committee on Finance. Please invest whatever money is necessary.

MR. LOVAAS:
We support both components of this bill. I must be particular on the RBT portion. As an agency, we do a background check. We have been doing background checks for the last 30 years. We will not allow people in the field until they are completed.

I like that we have a board here. I think the way the law was written was a good idea [with a] bad execution. We are asking that there is an amendment to the bill so we can continue to do our background checks and forward those to the NBABA when completed and get the approval from the board.

Our hands are tied right now in hiring new people. It is not a house on fire. There are 47 other states operating successfully without a board. We ask that these amendments be made so we can continue to provide services for our kids.

JAN CRANDY (Nevada Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders):
I am in support S.B. 380. We have worked hard to build a community that will be able to provide the police training. We have a team already put together in Nevada that will offer this training. For the agencies that want to participate, we hope they will participate. That removes the fiscal note on section 4 specifically.

We are asking for the certified RBT, once they completed their first background check and received their certification number, that they be allowed to work.

This is after step one. The majority of states already allow this. Nevada is one of only four states that require the additional state registration. We are asking that, while the state registration process is going—they would have had to file and apply for their state registration, submit it for that background check—they are going to be doing two background checks—be able to work immediately after that first step one is done, like the majority of other states, while their registration is being completed. We are not asking the NBABA to do any additional work. They will be doing exactly what they are doing now, so that should remove their fiscal note. If you look at that section, that piece has been more clarified with this amendment Exhibit E that is on there now.

This can also be a business choice. This allows for companies to say, "I do not want my RBTs to start working until they complete state registration." Or, they can go, "There are unexpected delays. It is taking over a month. I want my RBTs to start working right after they finish step one." It allows for businesses to make the choice.

The licensing supervisor is responsible for the RBT. The company or the BCBA has to have liability insurance that covers the RBT. [Under] the umbrella that the national certification board has, they also have discipline over the RBTs once they have received their certification. The state has jurisdiction over the person who is licensed that is overseeing the RBT.

MS. SCOTT-LEWING:
Historically, the Autism Coalition of Nevada has provided law enforcement training in Nevada at various agencies, hospitals and first responder organizations. We are absolutely willing to continue that process and are willing provide the training at no cost to agencies that reach out and ask us for that help. We also have some wonderful private donors that are willing to provide charitable donations to help us continue with that training throughout Nevada.

I am a mother of two children with autism. In particular my son, Chase, who is 25 years old, is able to drive a car. That is something we thought he would never be able to do. He has the hallmarks of high-functioning autism, wearing the headsets, a lot of pacing and a lot of the things we understand with autism. One of the concerns that touches my heart is that he will ask me, because of the things he has heard in the media, "Mom, if I get pulled over, am I going to get shot?" "Mom, if I get pulled over for any reason when I am driving my car, are the police officers going to arrest me?" He has heard and seen enough

through the media that it is concerning to him. It must be concerning lots of other individuals with autism.

It is so important that we change the narrative, provide the training and start getting the message out there that law enforcement is trained. They do understand autism. We should put energy into making sure that message gets out. The only way to do that is through training statewide.

MS. ERIKSSON-WOODRUFF:
As a mother of a nonverbal autistic child, I support both components of this bill. In regards to the RBT part of this bill, this directly affects my family. Evelyn needs 30 hours of ABA every week. That is often not happening because of staffing issues. I would like to ditto the comments of the parents before me.

MS. BINDER:
I am in support of this. I just want you to hear [from me] as a mother of two children with autism. I am grateful for all of the investments that our law enforcement agencies have made. My son has not had encounters with law enforcement already. We live in Henderson, and I am so grateful for being able to call for a crisis intervention officer. On arrival, they are very well trained and able to complete the task at hand while we await ambulance services. I appreciate that and hope that is almost everyone's experience.

As a member of the Commission on Autism Spectrum disorder, we are in full support of this bill. The Nevada Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities has previously provided support testimony. I was just notified that the training is optional. If that is the way to get this done, then that is super great.

BRIGHID FRONAPFEL (Nevada Board of Applied Behavioral Analysis):
While I am in support of law enforcement training, unfortunately the majority of the NBABA and I are in opposition to a portion of S.B. 380, specifically section 4, subsection 2, related to the temporary status for RBTs while they await an approved state registration. The proposed regulatory changes are not necessary and do not consider the current licensure and registration data that has been supplied by NBABA.

Additionally, data that was presented in support of this bill in relation to NBABA and current processes is inaccurate. For example, we are not currently in a renewal season. It was just completed in December 2024.

I would like the opportunity to present accurate data on behalf of NBABA in relation to this legislation in place of inaccurate reports and assumptions. In relation to this specific committee, the bill does not contain a fiscal note for the financial impact it will have on NBABA and administrative staff in order to process and supervise another level of licenses and registration that are outside of our current process. It is concerning that the financial impact on NBABA has not been considered with this proposed legislation. I encourage the committee to remove this portion of S.B. 380.

GWEN JOHNSON (Nevada Association for Behavioral Analysis):
After considering the current amendments to S.B. 380 and the data provided by NBABA, we have made the determination to clarify our stance on S.B. 380. We support the bill's proposed additional training for peace officers regarding individuals with autism and other developmental disabilities. Education and awareness of the unique needs of this population are critically needed for our peace officers.

We stand in strong opposition to section 4, subsection 2 of S.B. 380. Our concern lies in the following. First, the proposed changes being done are in opposition to NBABA and outside of our licensure laws and regulations. Our board has the most direct knowledge and interactions with the data and concerns related to public safety. Their feedback should weigh heavily on decisions regarding changes to our rules and regulations.

Second, the most recent communications with DPS have indicated implementation of an electronic background check will likely streamline the overall process and speed of receiving background checks. This will essentially make the need for S.B. 380 section 4, subsection 2 moot.

Third, it is our understanding that, under the Fair Credit Reporting Act, in Nevada state law, sharing of background checks between entities is not allowed. Thus, the current proposed amendments Exhibit E requiring proof of background checks by individual employers may be a violation of employees' rights. If proof of only an attestation is currently required by the National Behavioral Analyst Certification Board (BACB), our State has already shared data

that there are inadequacies in these. Several companies are not completing background checks and waiting for the board's background clearance to serve as their attestation. Other companies have been falsely attesting or inadvertently running subpar background checks which are missing critical information for the individual's records. Either scenario places risk to the consumer's safety for a highly vulnerable population. Moving forward with S.B. 380 will weaken the consumer protections that were ensured in our original licensure laws and regulations.

Given the above concerns, NBABA is at a consensus that direct criminal background checks should remain under the jurisdiction of the board to ensure first-hand knowledge of compliance and accuracy. This allows for consumer protection to remain at the forefront of the individuals we serve and to preserve the integrity and ethics of our license board.

Mr. Lovaas stated that 47 states do not have boards. Most all of our states actually have boards. They just do not require the background check of the RBT that our board does. I keep hearing that we are losing RBTs. A lot of this has to do with individual companies' policies, lack of appropriate supervision and, frankly, sometimes our job is just hard to do. This is not a board issue. These are company policy issues.

WENDY KNORR (Executive Director, Nevada Board of Applied Behavioral Analysis):

I echo the concerns of Dr. Johnson and Dr. Fronapfel about section 4, subsection 2 of this bill. I want to reiterate that the delays in our application process have been exaggerated. I have been providing current data, which shows minimal delays related to the background requirements.

The addition of section 2 to this bill is unfortunate. The issues are not related to law enforcement training and really do contradict each other in a sense. We are increasing the safety of interactions with individuals on the spectrum to ensure their safety in the community, yet we are going to allow individuals to work directly with some of the youngest clients in very vulnerable settings, circumventing the requirements in place now designed for those protections. It seems counterintuitive to us.

In addition, the fiscal note has not been addressed. It will impact NBABA. While we are a small board of two, I want to highlight that we have been through

two renewal cycles, reviewing and approving more than 4,000 applications in a timely and efficient manner over the last four years that our board has been in existence.

None of this information about NBABA has been reviewed by us. There have been many inaccuracies about our application process. We have a nine step process. The longest portions of that are the BACB accreditation and the background clearance. We have been providing information that our reports are being turned around in less than 25 days at this point.

We have approved thousands of applications over the last four years, and the majority are successful. We invite employers or applicants that are struggling to contact us directly, and we can assist them.

All background clearances are not the same and are not interchangeable. We met with Senator Ohrenschall and DPS. I provided BACB subject matter information [from experts] who have studied requirements over the past decade and consistently reaffirmed that these checks are critical for consumer protection. Specific details and scope of information included in background check can vary depending on the type of background checks conducted and the state in which is performed. They do not interchange. They do not provide the same level of protection that we offer in statute now.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
We will now hear S.B. 12.

SENATE BILL 12: Revises provisions relating to the Office of the Chief Information Officer within the Office of the Governor. (BDR 19-280)

TIMOTHY GALLUZI (Chief Information Officer, Office of the Chief Information Officer, Office of the Governor):
We put our own fiscal note on S.B. 12 for the sake of transparency. The fiscal note was put on due to decision unit E-335 in budget account 721-1373.

ELECTED OFFICIALS

OCIO - Office of the CIO — Budget Page ELECTED-97 (Volume I)
Budget Account 721-1373

E-335 Government Support Services — Page ELECTED-100

All of our budgets at the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) have been closed. That decision unit was around the rebranding of the OCIO to the Governor's Technology Officer. The OCIO is the only agency in the State of Nevada Executive Branch that is named after its principal officer holder, i.e., the State Chief Information Officer, that is not elected by Nevadans. I feel that is an incredibly sacred distinction, and it should be held separate.

We have a nominal enhancement that was already approved in our budget closings. That was addressed in decision unit E-335.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
I am looking at the fiscal note. I find it interesting, with all due respect, that you put a fiscal note of $0 on your own bill.

MR. PARRISH:
The Vegas Chamber is in support from this fiscal perspective.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
We will now hear S.B. 39.

SENATE BILL 39 (1st Reprint): Revises provisions relating to emergency management. (BDR 36-269)

BRETT D. COMPSTON (Chief, Division of Emergency Management/Homeland Security, Office of the Military):
The fiscal note for S.B. 39 for a new loan officer position is no longer needed based on the action taken by the money committees on April 26, 2025, to provide funding for a contract position within the Division of Emergency Management budget contingent upon the approval of this bill. The Division of Emergency Management was not consulted on section 9.2 of the amendment.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
Would you tell me the amendment again?

MR. COMPSTON:
The amendment is section 9.2. It relates to contracting and prevailing wages.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
It went through the policy committees, so we see that it is already in the first reprint of the bill.

We will now hear S.B. 83.

SENATE BILL 83 (1st Reprint): Requires the issuance of bonds for environmental improvement projects in the Lake Tahoe Basin. (BDR S-376)

CHARLES DONOHUE (Administrator and State Land Registrar, Division of State Lands, Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources):
There are no fiscal notes. The amendment to reduce the request for general obligation bonds for the environmental improvement program at Lake Tahoe was initiated by the Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, reducing our request from $19 million to $10.5 million. That has been heard in the Conservation and Natural Resources Bond Programs through the Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

DEVIN MIDDLEBROOK (Tahoe Regional Planning Agency):
I just want to express our appreciation of the Nevada Division of State Lands and everyone with the State that works at Tahoe. We are supportive of the bond program and Nevada's continued investment that supports 1,700 jobs per year at Tahoe. For every $1 million invested, we get $1.6 million in economic activity.

MADDISON PROCTOR (League to Save Lake Tahoe):
The Environmental Improvement Program is a vital part of protecting the lake. We urge your support.

PAMELA TSIGDINOS:
I am a full-time Washoe/Tahoe resident and volunteer. Tahoe community residents have worked tirelessly to raise awareness about the need for an updated carrying capacity study and a comprehensive cumulative environmental impact review to address new threats to Lake Tahoe.

We are opposed to this bill given that the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) has lost its way. When it was formed 50 years ago, its central mission was environmental protection. If TRPA still had that mission, residents would enthusiastically support. However, the TRPA today has lost the public trust due

to its misguided focus on increasing tourism and attracting developers. As a result, the lake's health is more compromised than ever.

The *Tahoe Science Advisory Council Peer Review* called out deficiencies in the agency's data and lack of accounting for increasing wildfire activity, with, among other things, no mention of the nitrogen emissions [unintelligible statement] ... Excess nitrogen is a major source of water pollution. I would encourage you to put more audit and oversight into this agency.

[Unintelligible Statement.]

MR. DONOHUE:
I wanted to make it abundantly clear that these are General Obligation Bonds for the implementation of environmental improvement projects that are sponsored by the Nevada Tahoe Resource Team and the State of Nevada. None of these funds go to the TRPA.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
We will now hear S.B. 452.

SENATE BILL 452: Extends the date of reversion of certain previous appropriations made to the Office of Finance in the Office of the Governor. (BDR S-1152)

DAVID LENZNER (Administrator, Budget Division, Office of Finance, Office of the Governor):
The 2023 Legislature passed S.B. No. 456 of the 82nd Session that appropriated $5 million for training for state employees and $50 million for the costs of leases and furniture for state offices. Senate Bill 452 before you today requests to extend the expenditure and reversion dates from the end of FY 2024-2025 to the end of FY 2026-2027 in the upcoming biennium.

SENATOR NGUYEN:
During the 2023 legislative session, we approved a total of $55 million, including the $5 million for training and the costs of the leases and furniture. I have had the opportunity to look back at the funds that were expended and those that were not. I have some concerns about how the Nevada Department of Administration (NDA) determined what costs were eligible to be funded with that $55 million in General Fund appropriations.

JACK ROBB (Chief Innovation Officer, Office of the Governor):
[At the time of the 2023 legislative session,] I was in the middle of NDA. The way that we determined they were eligible costs is if they were related to a move of state staff into new locations, or a change in furniture patterns to accommodate more staff in existing locations.

SENATOR NGUYEN:
I am concerned. The $55 million was for the costs of leases and furniture to support employees returning to the office from working remotely. When I am looking at this, it looks like you also utilized those fees for overtime. Was that overtime in the move, late fees, penalties, computer equipment, software licensing and building improvements? It just seems like it was a very broad definition of leases and furniture. Was it the feeling of NDA that this was to be as broad as it possibly could be?

MR. ROBB:
After this bill passed, NDA did not have individuals ready to move at that point. From November 13 to today, we have moved 5,017 employees, with approximately 3,000 of those employees in the south and approximately 2,000 employees in the north.

When we move individuals into those locations, it is not just the furniture we need, it is not just the moving expense; we need to get the data, the electrical and things to make those areas function. We used it in a broader manner than just furniture. We needed to make that furniture and those spaces function. We have stayed well under the $50 million to move over 5,000 employees into better locations.

SENATOR NGUYEN:
When we talk about those better locations, I see that there was a determination to buy out three years of a lease. Was that because the location the employees were going to come back to work for was no longer big enough? What are the circumstances where we had existing leases, and we essentially bought ourselves out of those leases?

MR. ROBB:
That question pertains directly to the DPS building, Building 43, that we are trying to buy in this year's CIP. Building 43 was originally built for the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department and the FBI. It is a law enforcement

building. It was constructed by Thomas & Mack as a law enforcement building. It is a hardened building meant for law enforcement presence.

The Department of Public Safety was formerly housed at the Freeway and Arterial System of Transportation (FAST) Facility, which is owned by the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT). The Nevada Department of Transportation was looking to build a $72 million building on the Washington site next to the Grant Sawyer State Office Building. Looking into long-term plans to get ample room for NDOT to have their employees housed without having to build a $72 million building, we looked at moving into Building 43 where DPS is currently housed, to move out of the FAST Facility. This led us to not build a $72 million building on Washington to properly accommodate their staff. We saved that $72 million build. We moved DPS to Building 43, backfilled those NDOT individuals that were requiring the building to be built into spaces vacated by DPS.

The portion of DPS that the lease buyout pertains to was a building that was in a terrible neighborhood that their academy had to go to. We are looking at buying that lease out so Building 43 is collocated by 100 percent of the Southern Nevada DPS staff. It will accommodate them. It serves their purpose better, and it serves their needs better. If we waited for the timing of that lease expiring, we would not have the ability to move the NDOT people. It was a big shuffle of individuals to save money into the long term.

It is tens of millions of dollars we have saved by making these moves. Yes, it did cost us some money in a lease buyout, but looking at the overall cost savings, it was well worth that lease buyout.

SENATOR NGUYEN:
Did DPS ask to move into this more consolidated region because they did not want to be in a bad part of town?

MR. ROBB:
I have seen testimony in front of one of these committees that said we forced them to move. I can tell you when I gave Director Togliatti a tour of that building, he said, “This doesn’t make my day, this doesn’t make my week, it makes my year just to see this building.”

He was in full support of that move. Maybe some of his staff were not, but I can tell you Director Togliatti was ecstatic to see that building and definitely wanted his staff out of that building we are buying that lease out of. That has been mentioned to me multiple times by that director.

SENATOR NGUYEN:
We have heard some conflicting presentations and testimony regarding whether or not that was something that was requested by DPS. I appreciate that. I still have some concerns this was just a blank check to determine that everything fell under the cost of furniture and leases. Do you have a spending plan going forward? Is there a policy that is written? Or, are we just going to continue down the path where if we fit it into this very broad category, we are going to be able to use it that way?

MR. ROBB:
This was definitely not seen as a blank check. I had to sign off on those expenditures myself. This money is not housed at NDA where Joy Grimmer is Director. This money is housed at the Governor's Finance Office (GFO). It took the leadership of both the director of NDA and the director of the GFO to determine if it was an eligible cost to move forward.

SENATOR NGUYEN:
Do you have a spending plan going forward?

JOY GRIMMER (Director, Nevada Department of Administration):
We are projecting, at this point, that we will balance forward approximately $8 million. We still have projections out through the end of the fiscal year of $9 million. We will continue to provide modern furniture for locations that we have not been able to get to, like some of the rural DMV locations, etc.

MR. ROBB:
The rest of the spending, and the reason we are wanting to balance this forward, is to vacate some of those locations on the Southern Nevada Adult Mental Health Services Campus and move them to 1909, 1901 and 1801 Jones Street and other locations—Spencer Street. We are having to cover some of the leases for those buildings for the next two years because they were not within those agencies' budgets. Part of the reason we are wanting to balance those funds forward was to accommodate, specifically, some of those moves.

I can tell you, whether the Campus of Hope is located there or not, I know without a doubt those buildings, that we have asked to provide services to our public, have long outlived their useful life. We should not expect employees to show up to buildings like that, let alone provide services to people in need in those locations. We are moving them to better serve our public and provide a better location for employees to show up.

SENATOR NGUYEN:
I appreciate that. I am curious if there is any kind of written plan for those moves and what they are going to cost. We have these conversations about moving employees out of the area where the planned Campus for Hope project is going to be. We were assured it was not going to cost more money, and we were not going to have to do all these things, but it is costing money to make those moves. We are utilizing balance forward money to continue to make those moves. I know I would feel a lot more comfortable if I saw what that spending plan was for the money you asking to balance forward. It does not sound like that is anything that is necessarily in writing.

MR. ROBB:
It is definitely in writing. We have leases. We have furniture costs. We have data and electrical costs to get that furniture up and going. We definitely do have a breakdown by building of what those costs will be. We are currently getting estimates on moving costs and other associated costs with those relocations.

SENATOR NGUYEN:
Would you be able to provide this committee with that spending plan?

MR. ROBB:
Yes, without a doubt.

SENATOR NGUYEN:
I am looking at how there have been no expenditures to date for training, either in FY 2023-2024 or FY 2024-2025. Why has NDA not expended any money on training during the current biennium? If you intend to expend that $5 million in the 2025-2027 biennium, what are we going to do this year?

MR. ROBB:
We appreciate that money was put aside for training. It was a conscious decision made by me working with the former director of the GFO, the current director of the GFO, Bachera Washington, the Administrator of the Division of Human Resources Management and working with Director Grimmer. We looked at what we had in front of us. We looked at a vacancy rate approaching 25 percent that we were trying to decrease, and we were using human resources (HR) staff heavily to reduce our vacancy rate.

We are in the middle of the CORE.NV project, which has also taken down additional manpower resources. With the major changes in business function that are going to come as a result of the CORE.NV implementation, there was a business decision made not to provide training at this time because we were lacking available resources to get those trainings put together with the other projects we had going on, and we wanted to provide training in modern business practices once CORE.NV comes online. That is why we are asking to balance that forward and why we did not spend the money on training that might not have been applicable into the future.

SENATOR NGUYEN:
Do you know how many employees are projected to receive that training as CORE.NV is implemented?

MR. ROBB:
Part of the CORE.NV implementation plan is to provide training through CGI, the contractor. There are other trainings that, when the other modules and other functionalities of that system come online, we will have to use training dollars to maximize the full potential of that system. Who this will impact depends on whether it is a fiscal function or an HR function. Some of this will impact pretty much every employee of the State of Nevada.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
Is DPS the only one moving into that building? I understood that NDOT was moving into that building with DPS and DPS was not necessarily, one way or the other, with the move. In other words, DPS was fine where it was, and it was NDOT that needed to move.

MR. ROBB:
The Department of Public Safety definitely was not fine in the location where we are wanting to buy out the lease. Their director complained about that location from the day I took the director of NDA job. Without a doubt, they were not all right with that.

No, NDOT is not moving into Building 43. The Department of Public Safety alone is moving to Building 43. It is a sole occupancy building. It is a building that only law enforcement can reside in because of privacy issues and law enforcement type issues. It is not open to anybody other than law enforcement individuals to be in that location.

The Nevada Department of Transportation comes into play in their move out of the FAST Facility, which is Decatur Boulevard and Sunset Road. By DPS having a major footprint in the FAST Facility and them relocating to Building 43, that freed up NDOT to bring their employees back, to get them out of job trailers and into locations where they can be collocated so they are efficient and effective in what they are doing.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
I must have misunderstood. I had some conversations with some people, and I was under the impression that DPS was not necessarily one way or the other and that NDOT was going to be moving as well.

With that being said, would you please explain the consequence, if any, if we do not approve this extension of the reversion date of the funding?

MR. ROBB:
I see the $5 million as critical training going forward after CORE.NV comes online. It is going to help us modernize our business practices, get people on the same page moving forward and become more efficient in how we handle state business. It is a major shift in how we do things.

It would have a huge impact to the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services, specifically to the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS) and the Division of Public and Behavioral Health (DPBH), in their ability to pay rents because we are moving into those new locations. We would have other missed opportunities in our ability to move some other people. We need to move onto the campus into those buildings that we are purchasing in the CIP that was

approved the other night. We used that money to move those individuals from their current location into the campus because we do not use CIP-bonded money to move people.

SENATOR NEAL:
I want to dig into this training. You are saying that the $5 million would be for CORE.NV. In our joint subcommittees on General Government which I chair, the OCIO and some of the other budgets that we approved had training dollars, staff and other things associated with them. It is also my understanding that in the vendor contract for CORE. NV, there is also training set aside. When you look globally at all of the dollars and people that are being used for CORE.NV across agencies, why is there a need for this additional $5 million if it [training] is in the contract itself, and other groups have already decided we need to do this crossover with cost allocation and other monies? I distinctly remember reading and approving that just a few weeks ago. I am not connecting why this additional $5 million is needed when it seems to be embedded in other agencies' budgets for CORE.NV.

MR. ROBB:
You are absolutely correct that there is money built in OCIO. That is more for call center support, but there will be some training associated with the call center support. That is what the call center support does. The OCIO, the Office of Project Management and our contractor, CGI, have some training built in. This is a major shift in our business practices. Those training dollars are on how the system specifically works and how the users interface with that system. We are trying to change the way the State thinks and processes, not only through the CORE.NV system, but also how we conduct business, how we recruit staff, how we manage staff and other things associated with that.

I am glad you used the word global. It definitely is a global approach to changing our core functions, and our core business to be more modern and up to date on how we serve the citizens of the State of Nevada.

SENATOR NEAL:
The training that was listed in the budgets [presented before] the joint subcommittees on General Government was not all for call support. It was how to actually use the CORE.NV system. It was literally setting aside employees that needed to learn how to program and identify. It was not just about how to pick up the phone and answer questions around CORE.NV. It was a little deeper

than that. I will definitely find those documents. They were part of our last closing.

I want to dig into a comment that you made when Senator Nguyen was asking about the leases. You mentioned Campus for Hope and having to pay for leases for certain buildings that are being moved. I need to dig into that a little bit more. It was my understanding in our mini meetings—IFC, summer, Christmas and also this session—that some of those leases were also a crossover with county. There were county buildings that were owned and there was not just the State paying for the leases, but there was a memorandum of understanding or agreements that were created for some of those buildings. There was going to be a cooperative agreement for the county to pay a portion or for the State to pay a portion. I am trying to understand more of what you were saying, which buildings you were addressing and whether or not any of those buildings fit into that cooperative agreement where they were county-owned, and the county would still have some control over them.

MR. ROBB:
The county has a cooperative agreement with DCFS to provide child supportive services in-home type care for multiple reasons. They are on the campus, specifically in buildings 11, 12, 13 and 14. Only a few of those are occupied right now. They are owned by the State of Nevada. They are not owned by the county. They are used by the county because they are the ones that contract with the individuals who provide the care. The building is owned by the State, provided to the county as a building that they provide care in, and that funding, a lot of times, is funded through state grants. The county administers that care. The county pays a portion, and the State pays a portion.

When we talk about the roll forward of this return-to-work money that was set aside last time, that is in no place related to these relocations other than some general moving costs that we may have to absorb. The leases that I am talking about are for the replacement of Building 6161, which is the adult drop-in center. It is 100 percent staffed and manned by DPBH staff. They are moving to 1909.

There are Buildings 16, 7 and other buildings on the campus that are moving to Building 1909. Their staff provides counseling for children. They actually leave this location, go out into the community and provide support. It is 100 percent State of Nevada staff that will occupy 1901 South Jones Boulevard. I cannot

remember the street name, but 6060 on the street north off of Jones right by 95, that is a replacement for Youth Parole and Probation that is operated by DCFS also. We moved part of DPBH over to Spencer Street and some went to Decatur Boulevard. We have moved quite a few people off that campus to other locations. Those individuals are 100 percent state staff, not county.

SENATOR NEAL:
It would be interesting to get a map where we can see the buildings that you are talking about with a layered approach in terms of the money; whether or not there were CIP monies allocated to those buildings already, whether or not there was any kind of agency budget allocation and whether or not the leftover expenditure [was used] from S.B. 452 of the $21 million leftover. That way, we can get an understanding of whether or not that spending is appropriate or needed and whether or not we have dealt with it already. I think what is causing the concern for me is whether or not this is actually needed money in order to say it should not revert and you should be able to continue to spend it.

The original purpose was to deal with the remote work and the reversal of the remote work. Now, it seems to be extending upon other uses, but it appears that, for certain buildings, certain funds have already been allocated either for lease, training or furniture in other agency budgets. We really need to see that overlay to understand if this is extra and may not be needed.

We get into this [discussion about] Building 1661, Building 1909 and 6060 Jones, and it's like, alright. Map it out, show me the layer of money on top of those buildings. I think that would be helpful to understand where it is going and whether or not we are double spending or triple spending.

MR. ROBB:
I can assure you, we have worked directly with Director Whitley, Administrator Cody Phinney, Administrator Marla McDade-Williams and all their staff to make sure we are not double spending.

In part of your comments, you brought up CIP. We did have CIP dollars allocated for roofing, fencing, electrical and life safety on many of these buildings. We have cut over $7 million with the CIP projects that were planned to go forward in the next few years or immediately, some of them, on the buildings that we are currently vacating. The money we are asking to carryforward has already been realized in savings by moving out of these

buildings and not throwing good money after bad. We are spending a lot of money on buildings that we should not be spending money on, and I am trying to get out of that cycle.

I can assure you that this money is needed and required. It is not a double spend in any way.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
We will now hear Assembly Bill (A.B.) 355.

ASSEMBLY BILL 355 (1st Reprint): Revises provisions relating to education. (BDR 34-937)

ASSEMBLYMEMBER DANIELE MONROE-MORENO (Assembly District No. 1):
This is a cleanup bill from a measure that was passed during our last legislative session, A.B. No. 519 of the 82nd Session, which created the Fund to Assist Rural School Districts in Financing Capital Improvements for rural school districts and tribal schools. The existing law for the Fund to Assist Rural School Districts in Financing Capital Improvements provides that any money remaining in those funds at the end of the fiscal year and does not revert must be carried forward to the next fiscal year. Currently, the statute we have is silent on the revisions, so it does not revert. However, this would solidify the language to the current practice that is happening.

During the hearing in the Assembly, we accepted an amendment that created section 2.5 in the bill, which will allow the director of the GFO to provide additional grants from the Fund to Assist Rural School Districts in Financing Capital Improvements to a board of trustees of a school district of a county whose population is less than 100,000, specifically. These grants would be equal to grants, gifts and donations, as well as interest accrued, through the retention of funds received by the school district for CIPs and qualified tribal lands.

Assembly Bill 355 is pretty simple and straightforward. It is simply a clean up to align the language with the current practice.

WILL ADLER (Duck Valley Shoshone-Paiute Tribe):
Assembly Bill 355 is a technical cleanup for A.B. No. 519 of the 82nd Session, which was the school funding bill that helped with the funding of the Owyhee

school project out at Duck Valley. To be clear, we asked for the amendment in the Assembly for the additional section 2.5. With that, we believe the funds that were already given for the project could be utilized even better because some of the interest accrued on the original funding can now be matched for, explicitly, the building of schools on approved tribal grounds. This bill will do a lot to further these efforts and perfect a real school for the people of Duck Valley.

NICOLE FLANGAS (Nevada Association of School Boards):
We want to thank the sponsor for all her work from the last session and this session on rural school funding plans for CIPs. It is a desperate need, and we are grateful for any pathway forward. This is a commonsense solution.

ALEXANDER MARKS (Nevada State Education Association):
I am speaking in support of A.B. 355.

MS. KEEMA:
We are in support of A.B. 355.

MARCO OVANDO (Shoshone-Paiute Tribe of the Duck Valley Reservation):
We are strongly in support of A.B. 355. This bill will help us finish what we started under A.B. No. 519 of the 82nd Session in the promise to future generations of students and tribal members alike with the funding of the construction of the new Owyhee combined school in the Elko County School District.

This bill will help us match already fundraised funds and will fill that shortfall in costs. We encourage you to vote in favor of this bill for the future of Nevada's students.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
We will now hear S.B. 454.

SENATE BILL 454: Revises provisions governing the State Highway Fund. (BDR 35-1128)

SEAN SEVER (Deputy Administrator, Division of Research and Project Management, Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles):
Senate Bill 454 extends the sunset date of the Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles' (DMV) administrative cap on Highway Fund monies. We would like to request that the 27 percent cap available to the DMV be extended through the upcoming biennium, which is June 1, 2025, through June 30, 2027, to accommodate the cost of the DMV transformation effort. We are making good progress on our project and have released Rapid Registration and Turbo Titles to the public, which has resulted in more than 20,000 successful transactions to date. That is thousands of people not having to come into a DMV office, in addition to the many people that are already utilizing our online services.

The previous cap extension was set to sunset at the end of FY 2025-2026. With ongoing work on the project, we are requesting an additional fiscal year. The DMV will reevaluate the cap percentage when we present our budget for the FY 2028-2029 [2027-2029] biennium.

The Nevada Department of Transportation put a fiscal note on our bill. They have agreed to remove it.

ALEXIS MOTAREX (Nevada Chapter, Associated General Contractors):
We are here today to oppose S.B. 454. The increase from 22 percent to 27 percent was originally passed in 2015 to help offset the cost of upgrading the DMV's computer system and approved for four years. They have been asking for extensions ever since.

This project has been mismanaged from the beginning and has cost Nevada taxpayers tens of millions of dollars. The Highway Fund has an increasing deficit as vehicle miles traveled in the State continue to increase while funding decreases due to an antiquate funding mechanism that has not been adjusted since 1992. At the same time, we continue to see this request from the DMV to extend the sunset to continue to pay for an upgrade that is now not expected to be complete until 2029. This directly impacts the DMV's ability to perform its core function of planning, constructing, operating and maintaining over 5,000 miles of highway in this state, which provides for thousands of prevailing wage jobs for Nevadans every year.

We encourage you not to pass S.B. 454 and instead require the DMV to find efficiencies within their budget with the existing 22 percent allowance from the Highway Fund to finally finish this technology upgrade.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
We will now hear S.B. 455.

SENATE BILL 455: Reorganizes certain divisions within the Department of Motor Vehicles. (BDR 43-1161)

MR. SEVER:
Senate Bill 455 would change the name of our DMV Field Services and Central Service Division into a Customer Service Division. As we move through our DMV transformation effort, we need to reorganize our agency as we move to an online-first business model. We will still have offices open for people that prefer in-person transactions. However, we think it will be easier for Nevadans to do their DMV business online, which will free up capacity in our offices.

This request simply does some cleanup in line with the DMV's reorganization. Two divisions were merged into one, so a name change and an elimination of a division specified in statute is necessary. In addition, a name change for our Administrative Services Division is included to provide clarity and distinction between the DMV Administrative Services Division and NDA.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
We will now hear S.B. 456.

SENATE BILL 456: Revises provisions relating to the Office of Federal Assistance in the Office of the Governor. (BDR 18-1148)

TIFFANY GREENAMEYER (Director, Office of Finance, Office of the Governor):
Senate Bill 456 proposes to transfer the Office of Federal Assistance (OFA) in the Office of the Governor to the GFO. It also changes the executive director title to a deputy director title. This proposal will allow OFA to receive additional support to carry out the mission of the office.

SENATOR NEAL:
How will this change advance the financial position of the GFO understanding what federal policies will come down?

A'KEIA SANDERS (Director, Office of Federal Assistance, Office of the Governor):
Since I took over in August 2024, I have been working very closely with the GFO. To be honest, setting up the Office [of Federal Assistance] without GFO support, we would not have been able to do that successfully.

As you were talking about earlier with previous bills regarding return-to-work funds, we were one of those offices that served as a pilot program to work from home, so we did not have a set office in Northern Nevada. We were not budgeted for rent, furniture or any of those things. Bringing staff back into the office without the support of GFO and being able to navigate to really move this office forward ... I think it has been different renditions of directors that have not quite pushed it forward. I think we are in a really good space right now. The collaboration that we have with the GFO has been helpful to marry the programmatic pieces of grants with the fiscal part and make sure that we understand federal compliance as well as state regulations.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
We will now hear S.B. 462.

SENATE BILL 462: Revises provisions relating to state financial administration. (BDR 31-1156)

CURTIS PALMER (Deputy Director, Office of Finance, Office of the Governor):
Last session, A.B. No. 346 of the 82nd Session made some revisions to the state financial administration. Before you today is S.B. 462 which further refines and revises provisions related to the state financial administration. While some of the additions add clarity and further define language, I would like to touch on just four important changes.

The first change is in section 1, subsection 5. The definition of adjusted base budget changes from the amount appropriated or authorized to support ongoing expenditures in the second year of the current biennium to revenues received and expenditures made in the first year of the current biennium. This change will remove some of the ambiguity in working with forecasted or budgeted numbers as approved from the previous legislative session.

The second change is in section 1, subsection 5b 2. It stipulates that travel will be based on market rate in the second year of the current biennium. This

change will better home in on the cost of travel by using pricing from the year immediately preceding the start of a new biennium.

The third change is in section 3, subsection 3, which clarifies the calculation of the 26 percent calculation for the stabilization to the operation of state government.

The fourth change is in section 4, which changes the preparation of the statewide cost allocation from the Administrative Services Division of the NDA to the Budget Division of the GFO. This change brings the responsibility for statewide cost allocation squarely on the shoulders of the Budget Division.

There are other changes that make some clarification to the state financial administration.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
We will now hear S.B. 228.

SENATE BILL 228: Appropriates money to establish a Pediatric Stem Cell and Bone Marrow Transplant Program. (BDR S-124)

SENATOR JULIE PAZINA (Senatorial District No. 12):
Senate Bill 228 appropriates money to establish a pediatric stem cell and bone marrow transplant program. Currently, Nevada lacks an in-state pediatric stem cell and bone marrow transplant program. That means children with life threatening conditions such as leukemia and other blood disorders are required to travel out of state for critical care.

This situation places significant emotional, financial and logistical burdens on families, often resulting in delays in treatment and increased hardship. The absence of such specialized services in Nevada highlights a gap in the State's pediatric healthcare infrastructure. Establishing a local program will not only improve access to timely, high-quality care for Nevadans, but also strengthen the State's capacity to respond to complex pediatric health needs.

Regarding the fiscal impact, S.B. 228 proposes a significant investment in Nevada's pediatric healthcare infrastructure. It would appropriate funds to establish a pediatric stem cell and bone marrow transplant program within the State. The bill directs $7 million from the General Fund to the Alliance for

Childhood Diseases, operating as Cure for the Kids, for the construction and upgrading of necessary infrastructure, acquisition of equipment and supplies and facilitate the program's accreditation by the Foundation for the Accreditation of Cellular Therapy.

An additional $2.5 million is allocated specifically for the costs associated with conducting the first five bone marrow transplant operations, including pretransplant evaluations, donor searches, hospitalization, medication and follow up care, all of which are essential for receiving accreditation. Furthermore, the bill provides appropriations to cover the operational costs of the program during its initial two years: including $3.5 million in FY 2025-2026 and $3 million in FY 2026-2027. For all of you who were not math majors, that is $16 million in total.

ANNETTE LOGAN-PARKER (Cure 4 The Kids Foundation):
Senate Bill 228 would establish a pediatric bone marrow transplant program in Nevada. For two decades, I have worked to expand access to specialized pediatric care in Nevada. In 2024 alone, we treated 7,534 unique patients. Over the past five years, we have cared for patients from 31 different states. That reach reflects a national reputation for trusted expert care and highlights the significant unmet needs we are working to address.

Yet, when a child in Nevada needs a bone marrow transplant, they are still forced to travel out of state, often for months. That burden leads to lost wages, high out of pocket expenses and enormous emotional strain. It also comes at a much higher cost to Medicaid and commercial insurers who must negotiate single-case agreements with out of network institutions, often at an elevated rate and without continuity of care, as well as the costs of lodging and transportation and all of those things when someone has to go out of state.

We diagnose and stabilize these children here. Then, we send them away for treatment we should be able to provide locally. To better understand, we worked with Tripp Umbach, a nationally respected healthcare economics firm. Their full report (Exhibit H) is available for review and has been emailed to the members of this committee. Their findings are clear. Nevada Medicaid on average spends $7.1 million per year in out-of-state pediatric bone marrow transplant spending. A one-time investment of $16 million is expected to generate $24 million annually in local healthcare revenue, save $1.9 million annually in Medicaid costs and deliver $52.7 million in annual economic impact

to the State in the first fully operational year alone, representing a 229 percent return on investment.

The long-term value goes beyond the numbers. Senate Bill 228 will also create over 50 high paying jobs and support nearly 300 statewide. It will lay the foundation for Nevada's first pediatric subspecialty fellowship program in the specialty of hematology oncology and position Southern Nevada as a regional destination for advanced pediatric hematology oncology care.

We recognize the tough decisions before the committee this session. In that context, we believe that S.B. 228 represents a smart one-time investment that fills a longstanding gap in pediatric care and delivers strong economic returns. It redirects millions in exiting healthcare spending back into Nevada's economy.

SENATOR TITUS:
I support the concept. However, I have two questions. First, [the bill] talks about having the money spent by September 2026 and then 2027. Knowing that it takes time to develop these kinds of programs, especially residencies, fellowships, etc., do you feel the money can be spent and started by then?

MS. LOGAN-PARKER:
That is a concern of mine as well. I am anticipating that the program will take longer than two years. That is something that I have mentioned to Senator Pazina and hoped to address.

SENATOR TITUS:
We want something sustainable and to make sure that it gets started. We want to make sure that it not only gets started but that is succeeds. Success is critical here. My next question is about sustainability after it gets started. We lost a residency program in family practice in Elko because it was not sustainable after investments. Looking at the sustainability, I know from your testimony what it will ultimately save us giving back, but how do we keep this success?

MS. LOGAN-PARKER:
The economic impact report that Tripp Umbach has done, based on the information that we have provided and their research of the regional availability for pediatric bone marrow transplant and stem cell transplant, has indicated that we could anticipate 30 transplants annually once the program is fully

operational. We currently have 15 to 20 statewide and we are anticipating that, based on the region where we are located, we will receive additional referrals from parts of California, Arizona and Utah, particularly when it is challenging for them to get to the larger cities. Las Vegas is closer to them from a travel perspective.

We do believe that the program will be sustainable based on current reimbursement models that we have already recognized with Nevada Medicaid as well as the current reimbursement that the commercial payers are already paying out of state. We feel very confident that the program will be financial sustainable once it is up and running.

SENATOR TITUS:
We can see that it is sustainable. We just want to make sure the time it takes to get it started will be within the parameters that you have listed.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
Could you confirm where these children are in the queue? How many do we have waiting? How many do we need to assist in a year?

MS. LOGAN-PARKER:
We currently already send 15 to 20 bone marrow transplants out of state. They do not necessarily wait in the queue too long. It could take a couple of weeks for us to do all the coordination with the referring bone marrow transplant program. We try to get those kids going as quickly as possible, we just need to get them out of state. Currently, those patients travel to Los Angeles, Utah or Phoenix. Some of the commercial payers have relationships with other programs, such as MD Anderson Cancer Center, and they will send them there.

We have had many conversations with our commercial payer partners. Once we receive accreditation, everybody is very excited about making sure those patients stay in Nevada.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
When you say 15 to 20 patients, is that in a year? Is that in a month?

MS. LOGAN-PARKER:
It is in a year.

DAMON SCHILLING (Intermountain Health):
I am here to testify in support of S.B. 228. This bill is about more than funding; it is about hope. Senate Bill 228 provides the resources needed to build Nevada's first pediatric stem cell and bone marrow transplant program, a life-saving service that will finally allow families to stay strong together during the most difficult moments of their lives instead of being forced to leave the State.

Imagine being a parent and hearing the words, "Your child has cancer." Then, imagine being told that the treatment they need is hundreds of miles away. Senate Bill 228 is how we change that story. It is how we bring compassion, innovation and dignity into the care we provide for our kids.

At Intermountain Health, we are providing Nevada's first standalone children's hospital because we believe that every child, regardless of diagnosis, background or circumstance, deserves access to world class care close to home. Senate Bill 228 brings us one step closer to making that vision a reality. We urge your support.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
We will now hear S.B. 262.

SENATE BILL 262 (1st Reprint): Revises provisions relating to graduate medical education. (BDR 18-120)

SENATOR JULIE PAZINA (Senatorial District No. 12):
Nevada ranks last in the nation when it comes to the ratio of physicians to patients, with about 218 physicians per 100,000 people. Currently, Nevada has about 403 federally funded residency positions based off of a population formula from 1997. United States Senators Jacky Rosen and Catherine Cortez-Masto have made efforts and urged the United States Department of Health and Human Services to take the necessary steps to award Nevada more residency slots as recently as November 2024. Unfortunately, we are at a standstill.

In the meantime, an effort that could be made on the state level would be the passage and approval of S.B. 262.

Senate Bill 262 makes an appropriation of $4.5 million for FY 2025-2026 and $4.5 million for FY 2026-2027. Where does that money go? The average cost for one resident per year is between $180,000 and $200,000. That total cost depends on the class size and the duration. To give you an idea of how long residency programs last, if you are looking at primary care, internal medicine, family medicine or pediatrics, it is three years. For obstetrician gynecology, it is four years. For general surgery, it is five years. When you come into fellowships, it can be upwards of eight years. The $180,000 to $200,000 per resident goes quickly. That is why we are asking for the $9 million.

PHILLIP CLARK (Senior Associate Dean, Administration and Finance, School of Medicine, University of Nevada, Reno):
We are graduating 70 graduate students who are going on into residency. Unfortunately, they will not be doing their residencies in Nevada. We only have 35 slots, so the majority of them will be leaving the State. That is one of the challenges we are having with physician workforce in the current environment. We are looking forward to this support for this bill.

DOUGLAS COLLINS:
I am a second-year student at the School of Medicine at the University of Nevada, Reno. I am here in support of S.B. 262. Residency funding is critical for medical training, and it is critical for attracting and keeping physicians in our State.

As someone who wants to practice family medicine here in Northern Nevada, I want to make sure that I have the ability to train here and stay here. I want that same opportunity for those who seek to pursue other medical specialties, some of which we do not offer training programs for yet. I encourage you all to support this bill as keeping doctors in Nevada is a worthy investment.

MEREDITH HOPPE:
As a fifth generation Nevadan who has grown up in Winnemucca, Reno and Carson City, I have always hoped to practice primary care medicine here at home. Now, as a third-year medical student, I have been fortunate enough to experience high quality medical education locally in Nevada. Unfortunately, there simply are not enough graduate medical education (GME) positions in Nevada to train our medical students. Our existing residency programs have very limited capacity; for example, pediatrics, which is an essential primary care specialty. Those residency spots are limited to four.

It is well established that physicians are more likely to practice where they complete their residency. That is why expanding GME funding is about strengthening our state's health care as a whole. More residency positions will help us to retain our home-grown physicians, attract new talent from outside Nevada and increase access to underserved communities. This is an investment in the future of Nevada's health care.

CADEN GROGAN (Saint Rose Dominican):
Saint Rose Dominican supported this measure in the policy committee and would like to put our support on the record here.

ANNIE VONG (Nevada Primary Care Association):
The Nevada Primary Care Association is in strong support. We believe this is an important to step to keep medical school graduates within the State.

MR. PARRISH:
Graduate medical education was a top Southern Nevada Forum priority. We are supportive from the fiscal perspective.

PATRICK KELLEY (Nevada Hospital Association):
We are always in favor of increasing our healthcare workforce in this State. We definitely need more doctors and want the doctors who are training to stay and remain in the State.

ALEJANDRO RODRIGUEZ (Nevada System of Higher Education):
The Nevada System of Higher Education is in very strong support of this bill. It is one of our board's top priorities. We urge your support.

CHRIS BOSSE (Renown Health):
We are in significant support. I know my organization is working very closely with our affiliation partners to try to identify new programs that we can offer and expanding programs. This money would go a long way in support of those activities.

REGAN COMIS (University Medical Center of Southern Nevada):
We are in strong support.

CYRUS HOJJATY:
I support his bill. I will ditto. I have a relative in medical school, so it matters.

MR. SCHILLING:
We look forward to this program and look forward to bringing some new residencies with our children's hospital. We ditto everyone else's comments.

ARELI ALARCON (Touro University Nevada):
We are here in support of S.B. 262.

DAN MUSGROVE (Valley Health System of Hospitals):
I could not say it any better than those students. They want to stay here; we want to keep them.

CONNOR CAIN (Acadia Healthcare):
I say, "ditto."

KATE MARTIN (Professor of Family and Community Medicine, Kirk Kerkorian School of Medicine, University of Nevada, Las Vegas):
As someone deeply involved in medical education and healthcare delivery in Nevada, I am privileged to witness firsthand both the challenges and potential of our healthcare system. I am here today to speak in strong support of S.B. 262, which addresses a critical issue, the shortage of residency and fellowship programs in Nevada. This bill would allow for the expansion of these programs across a broad range of specialties and subspecialties. As a result, it will improve the ability of Nevada's healthcare system to train and retain the healthcare providers we so desperately need.

As a physician, I see the challenges that Nevadans face in accessing timely specialty care. With our State's physician shortage, patients often endure months-long waitlists for specialty appointments. Seventy percent of our population resides in areas designated as primary care health professional shortage areas, making access to care even more challenging.

While Nevada has made strides in expanding GME programs, we still rank forty-first for the number of residency and fellowship positions available. In fact, in 2023, only 47.2 percent of GME graduates remained in Nevada to begin clinical practice or continue training. Of those who left, nearly half left to pursue subspecialty training not available in this state.

The lack of key training programs in areas such as ophthalmology, dermatology and surgical oncology has led many of our residents to leave the State in search of additional training. For example, while we offer fellowship programs in primary care, sports medicine and cardiology, many other subspecialities are not represented, forcing our residents to seek opportunities elsewhere.

Senate Bill 262 presents a critical opportunity to address these disparities by expanding residency and fellowship programs in a wide variety of specialties. This will not only improve access to specialty care for Nevada residents but also increase the likelihood of retaining our homegrown talent. Students who have completed both medical school and GME in Nevada have an 80 percent statistical chance of staying within the State, but without key fellowship programs, we continue to see many residents leave for training elsewhere.

I urge your support for S.B. 262, which will help ensure Nevada's healthcare system has the capacity to meet the needs of its growing population and retain the physicians trained within our State.

SPENCER THATCHER:
I am a first year medical student at the Kirk Kerkorian School of Medicine at University of Nevada, Las Vegas. I am a big advocate of everything that has been said this morning. According to the American Association for Medical Colleges' 2021 Match report, which took data from 2010 to 2020, it was found that individuals who finished their residency in a specific state were 53 percent more likely to continue working and living in that state after residency. With that in consideration, it also means that every student that has to leave the State of Nevada to find a residency of their choice is only 47 percent more likely to return to Nevada to practice.

Within that report it was also stated that individuals who did both their medical education and their residency in the state that they reside in were anywhere from 73 to 78 percent more likely to stay in that state and work as a physician.

With these things in consideration, it was also mentioned by our sponsor that there are only 218 physicians for every 100,000 patients in the State of Nevada. According to the Clark County Medical Association, unfortunately, since 2021, we have had a 0.73 percent decrease in the provider population, despite the increasing population of residents [Nevadans] that need care. It is essential that we replenish our population in the State of Nevada.

CALEB JOLLEY:
I wanted to add my support to the other students and the other people who have spoken today in support of S.B. 262.

BRIDGER WOODS:
I offer my full support of S.B. 262. I would like to stay here in Nevada to complete my medical training. However, Nevada currently does not have a residency that I would like to pursue, which is in ophthalmology. Supporting this bill would help bring that residency here so I can continue to raise my family in this wonderful state.

DOOLEY GEGEN:
I wanted to echo what my classmates already said. Most of us have strong ties to Nevada and are, like me, born and raised in Nevada. We want to serve the people of Nevada, so we think it is a great investment to try to keep our future doctors here.

SAMANTHA BARNES (Roseman University of Health Sciences):
We are excited to admit our first class of 60 medical students this summer. We are here today in support of S.B. 262.

JACQUELINE NGUYEN (Nevada State Medical Association):
A longstanding priority for the Nevada State Medical Association (NSMA) has been the expansion of GME in Nevada. Our State is facing significant physician shortages, which are only compounded by an aging physician workforce, rising rates of burnout and the ongoing challenges physicians face in operating private practices. Expanding GME is critical to addressing these issues and ensuring that Nevada has well trained, sustainable healthcare workforce.

Expanding GME is not just an ideal; is a necessary solution for our physician workforce shortages. It requires our priority and our investment. The NSMA is proud to support S.B. 262.

CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
We will now be introducing a bill draft request (BDR).

WAYNE THORLEY (Senate Fiscal Analyst):
Bill draft request S-1219 is a one-shot General Fund appropriation included in the Governor's recommended budget.

BILL DRAFT REQUEST S-1219: Makes appropriations to the Department of Motor Vehicles for information technology system projects. (Later introduced as Senate Bill 496.)

SENATOR NGUYEN MOVED TO INTRODUCE BDR S-1219.

SENATOR TITUS SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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CHAIR DONDERO LOOP:
Seeing no public comment, this hearing is adjourned at 11:32 a.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Jacob Anderson,
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Senator Marilyn Dondero Loop, Chair

DATE:

EXHIBIT SUMMARY				
Bill	**Exhibit Letter**	**Introduced on Minute Report Page No.**	**Witness / Entity**	**Description**
	A	1		Agenda
	B	1		Attendance Roster
S.B. 277	C	4	Senator Michelee Cruz-Crawford	Conceptual Amendment
S.B. 174	D	6	Senator James Ohrenschall	Proposed Amendment
S.B. 380	E	17	Senator James Ohrenschall	Proposed Amendment
S.B. 380	F	18	Julie Ostrovsky	Seatbelt Prop
S.B. 380	G	19	Julie Ostrovsky	Registered Behavioral Technician Registration Flow Chart
S.B. 228	H	45	Annette Logan-Parker / Cure 4 The Kids Foundation	Summary of the Economic Impact of Developing a Pediatric Stem Cell/Bone Marrow Transplant Program in Las Vegas, NV Report