MINUTES OF THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON GROWTH AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Eighty-third Session
April 28, 2025

The Senate Committee on Growth and Infrastructure was called to order by Chair Rochelle T. Nguyen at 3:31 p.m. on Monday, April 28, 2025, in Room 2144 of the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 5 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.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Rochelle T. Nguyen, Chair
Senator Julie Pazina, Vice Chair
Senator Fabian Doñate
Senator Ira Hansen
Senator Carrie Ann Buck

GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:

Assemblymember Natha C. Anderson, Assembly District No. 30
Assemblymember Elaine H. Marzola, Assembly District No. 21

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Julianne King, Committee Policy Analyst
Michael Viets, Committee Counsel
Joseph Huene, Committee Secretary

OTHERS PRESENT:

Nicholas Callero, The Pew Charitable Trusts
Nova Simpson, Wildlife Staff Specialist, Nevada Department of Transportation
Mark Wooster, Chief Performance Analysis Engineer, Nevada Department of Transportation
Christi Cabrera-Georgeson, Deputy Director, Nevada Conservation League
Andrew MacKay, Great Basin Wildlife Conservancy; NV Franchised Auto Dealers Association

Paul Enos, CEO, Nevada Trucking Association
Kyle Davis, Coalition for Nevada's Wildlife
Laurel Saito, Nevada Water Strategy Director, The Nature Conservancy
Jennifer Srichandr, One APIA Nevada
Omar Saucedo, AT&T
John Abel, Las Vegas Police Protective Association
Trevor Parrish, Vegas Chamber
Jodi Stephens, Wireless Infrastructure Association c/o MultiState
Joseph Hill, Retail Association of Nevada
Jessica Ferrato, Lumen
Donna Laffey, Verizon c/o MultiState Associates LLC
Edith Duarte, Technology Network aka TechNet
Ellen Marquez
Dan Gordon, President, Nevada Police Union
Misty Grimmer, Cox Communications
Emily Osterberg, Henderson Chamber of Commerce
Patrick Rosvall, Nevada Small Providers of Last Resort
Garrett Weir, Commission General Counsel, Public Utilities Commission of Nevada
Amy Davey, Administrator and Highway Safety Director, Office of Traffic Safety, Nevada Department of Public Safety
Laura Knight, Chief Medical Examiner, Washoe County Regional Medical Examiner's Office
Evelyn Butler, Vice President, Technical Services, Solar Energy Industries Association
Jessica Ferrato, Solar Energy Industries Association
Grace Michaelson, Ferrari Reeder Public Affairs; Western Resource Advocates
Amanda Brazeau Nolting, Tesla
Brett Scolari, Pedal Point Recycling
Jennifer Carr, Administrator, Division of Environmental Protection, State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

CHAIR NGUYEN:
I am going to open the hearing on Assembly Bill (A.B.) 486.

ASSEMBLY BILL 486 (2nd Reprint): Makes various changes related to transportation. (BDR 35-678)

ASSEMBLYMEMBER NATHA C. ANDERSON (Assembly District No. 30):
Nic Callero of Pew Charitable Trusts, as well as Kyle Davis of Pinion are both joining me today to help present A.B. 486. If you take a look at it, it actually fits in three different areas. It used to fit with revenue, that is now out, but it does still work with natural resources as well as growth and infrastructure.

As we all know, the wildlife process has been incredibly successful in and around our State. I have a feeling you guys have already discussed the history of it, and I believe many on the committee have been both champions and also continue to bring that success. There are numerous crossings in Elko which include three overpasses. These have all been incredibly successful with hundreds of thousands of mule deer utilizing these crossings. In turn, the process has helped with reducing vehicle collisions and likely saving human lives, as well as time and money for those who travel these highways.

To replicate this success across our State, the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) has created a list of about 30 priorities to be able to continue to do this. Investments in these priorities will have an initial cost, but the return on investment matters. We also need to be realistic about the current environment.

The initial bill created an actual way to be able to fund that. But again, based upon the current environment and discussions, amendments had to be made. These priorities should be considered as new projects by NDOT, and that is exactly what this bill does. It asks when NDOT people are making these plans, to consider exactly what is happening with the wildlife crossings and how can they be used for us.

It is easy for us to think everyone will remember these items because we see the success right now. But what about the people that will be in these seats after us? Whether it is as a Legislator, the building across the campus or even in the transportation areas and in the departments. By putting this into our statute, we can make sure that this is still something to be considered when making these plans. That is exactly what we have decided to do in this.

If you take a look at section 1, subsection 2, paragraph (a), subparagraph (3), you'll notice that this is exactly what it is being asked to do. It will allow those who will be sitting in our seats later to make these decisions when making these plans.

This could also be explained with the new language proposed in section 1.3, subsection 2, paragraph (a,) subparagraph (2), which is found on page 3. I also want to make sure to make it clear that I wanted to thank Nova Simpson from the Nevada Department of Transportation. She is in the audience today and has been working hard on these projects, making sure that this is something at the forefront of discussions. Again, there are many things to consider when we are making plans and Ms. Simpson has always made sure that the wildlife crossings are part of it. I would like to hand it over to Mr. Callero on Zoom to provide further information on how the wildlife crossings have been successful.

NICHOLAS CALLERO (The Pew Charitable Trusts):
For those of you who may not be familiar with Pew, our U.S. conservation program collaborates with policymakers, tribes and other stakeholders. We advance commonsense solutions that address the impacts of a changing environment on people and nature. As well, the identification and conservation of wildlife migration corridors is a key component of that work.

I want to start by echoing the support expressed today for A.B. 486 by Assemblymember Anderson. I want to emphasize a few specific points and offer Pew's unique perspective here, which has been gained through our work across the entire Intermountain West on this issue. Momentum around addressing wildlife-vehicle collisions, by investing in wildlife crossings, is unmistakable across the West.

On that note, in a few short years, propelled by new science and a new federal grant program, several states across the nation have enacted bipartisan legislation investing millions of dollars in wildlife crossing infrastructure. For example, Utah recently appropriated $20 million to address wildlife vehicle collisions. New Mexico's Governor just signed a $50 million bill that will fund new wildlife crossing infrastructure. And last week, Montana passed a bill creating their first wildlife crossing account. They are on the cusp of passing a second bill, which could happen any day now, that would create the nation's first significant dedicated funding mechanism that feeds into that account on an annual basis.

Here in Nevada, we successfully established Nevada's Wildlife Crossing Account when A.B. No. 112 of the 82nd Session was passed. Passing this bill, A.B. 486, would help solidify this momentum and codify the implementation of

wildlife crossings as an agency priority, now and into the future, as Assemblymember Anderson alluded to.

Finally, I just want to emphasize a few stats that really drive home why this issue is so important for Nevada. I know many of you have probably heard these and may even have them memorized by now. But according to NDOT, more than 500 wildlife-vehicle collisions are reported each year costing the State nearly $20 million. There's an important caveat with that number in that wildlife-vehicle collisions are significantly under reported. It is actually estimated that fewer than 10 percent of animal-vehicle collisions are officially documented.

If you look at those two numbers I just cited, the 500 collisions and the $20 million, you can imagine that those numbers, in actuality, are significantly higher. These accidents do have a cost; NDOT partnered on research a few years ago. They found the average national cost per collision with mule deer, which are the majority of collisions in Nevada, is somewhere in the neighborhood of $20,000 per collision. Collisions with elk are in the neighborhood of $75,000 and with moose are $110,000.

Given these high costs, it's easy to deduce that properly placed wildlife crossings with associated fencing, will funnel animals across busy highways. This can quickly offset their initial expense by reducing the need for emergency response, property repairs and loss of wildlife.

In closing here, I want to drive home the fact that Nevada truly is a national leader on this issue. Nevada has a long history of investing in wildlife crossing infrastructure and has somewhere in the neighborhood of 50 to 60 animal crossings in place for both large and small animals. I believe this includes six overpasses; three on Interstate 80; two on U.S. [Route] 93 and one on Interstate 11. This bill will ensure that this leadership by the State continues into the future and will continue to make Nevada's roads safer for people and wildlife. I encourage the committee's support for A.B. 486.

SENATOR HANSEN:
A mutual friend that Kyle [Davis] and I have, Mel Belding, got a hold of me today about the situation in my district at Walker Lake, which has quite a herd of bighorn sheep. According to him, there's a slaughter going on there because of so many cars hitting them. They literally stay right around the city of Walker

Lake. While Mr. [Callero] from Pew mentioned mule deer, bighorn sheep are getting killed as we speak. This raised a question in my mind—how do you determine where these locations [will be]?

The total number of animals may be mule deer, but arguably the more valuable ones [are bighorn sheep], when you look at the revenue generated. I am a lifetime member of Nevada Bighorns Unlimited. There's a real concern because of the limited number to start with [of bighorn sheep]. Even though there may be less bighorns killed than mule deer, I am wondering how does NDOT, or whoever, make the determination as to where these locations will be?

ASSEMBLYMEMBER ANDERSON:
Thank you for bringing that up because this bill does not make any sort of distinction between the different types of animals. Because that is exactly it; different areas are going to have different migratory patterns. That stated, I do believe that is part of the discussion that NDOT has gone through. I have asked Ms. Simpson to come on up and be able to answer that for you with a little bit more in depth.

NOVA SIMPSON (Wildlife Staff Specialist, Nevada Department of Transportation):
We have just wrapped up a new prioritization effort, which we have priorly shared with the Assembly, and I would be happy to follow up and share that with you as well. Essentially, it looks at a variety of safety data, carcass data, collision data as well as habitat species. We look at species like the bighorn [sheep], providing them essentially a score for different layers. We then do a more complex geographic information system analysis. And that brings a total for every pixel on the map for the entirety of Nevada. Essentially, we came up with the top 30—based off those scores and how each pixel scored.

Then we went to the different districts. We had meetings over the last couple of weeks. We essentially asked for the specialist in the Department of Wildlife to select two projects per district. I can then focus on those districts by pursuing grants, because we do not have dedicated funding. As you are all aware, the funding for the State is tight and costs have substantially increased. We have a lot more to compete with now and fewer projects to do it with. So, moving forward, I am going to be pursuing those projects more diligently.

That does not mean that if they did not fall within those top two, we would not be doing anything. We would still take the opportunity when we have

overlapping projects or specific needs, such as with the desert tortoise or the bighorn sheep. This provides me more guidance as we all have our, what I like to call, "pet projects." We have that and pressure coming in almost daily on those kinds of needs. As that manager, it provides me with more guidance to pursue what the State looked at holistically as the biggest need as we work through that.

SENATOR HANSEN:
Good. I would like to get a copy of that if I could. Right now, if you had a magic wand and were going to build all these projects at the same time, what's your estimated cost at the moment?

MS. SIMPSON:
I did that a couple of weeks ago, when I had the top 30. For just the top 30, we are looking at about $1 billion.

SENATOR HANSEN:
Pew, [Mr. Callero] are you online, and are you going to grant us that billion dollars? I like you man [Mr. Callero], I want you to come more often. We need you in finance.

No, seriously, where is the money? Obviously, it is not going to come out of the General Fund. You guys got some ideas with big companies, like Pew or whoever, to help finance at least a few of them. When you do get the funding, how soon would you be doing these things?

MS. SIMPSON:
Yes, those things take time to plan. For example, I am looking at kicking off research at Spooner Summit this spring with the Tahoe Rim Trail Association and Pathway for Wildlife. We're going to need a couple of years of data to dive in and understand what is happening out there. Then we would need a couple more years to deal with the Nevada Emergency Preparedness Association and construction, assuming we had the funding today. We are looking at anywhere from four to five years out from the time that project is essentially instigated.

ASSEMBLYMEMBER ANDERSON:
I am also going to add that is what started the bill. It was an attempt to try to raise those funds. The initial bill, if you have had a chance to look at it, was to take the recycling fee that is currently part of whenever you buy a tire and

increase that. It has not been increased since the 1980s. Then, [we would] basically have that account be earmarked and build up for it because this is a significant investment. It is saving lives and that is what the plan was.

But again, based upon the political climate at this time, we are not able to necessarily get what we needed to do, and we had to be realistic. This is a way for us to continue to have this in the front of people's minds and as projects are being planned, to have this considered as part of it.

SENATOR HANSEN:
No, it is a good idea. And like what you are saying, you know, somebody's going to be warm in this chair besides me in the not-too-distant future. And if this is in statute, this program can continue, hopefully indefinitely. The nice thing about these wildlife crossings is once they are in place, it is like maintenance free.

It is a good long-term program. If we can get more money out of Pew, that'd be great. The tax thing, I am not so big on, but hey, if somebody's got some brilliant ideas on how we can raise some funds from all these nongovernmental organizations, I am all for it.

CHAIR NGUYEN:
I will remind Senator Hansen that we did make an investment and they were able to draw down many millions of dollars in federal funds. I do not know if you can give an update on what our investment was from last session, how much we were able to bring down and what those projects look like, if you know?

MS. SIMPSON:
Yes, so that account established $5 million for us to use as seed money for grants. We have applied for a total of six applications [grants]. We did receive one through the Wildlife Crossing Pilot Program. We have not formally received that; we are still in communications with federal highways. Our state investment is bringing in $16.8 million from that program. Fingers crossed—we hope to see that within the next year.

CHAIR NGUYEN:
Perfect, and thank you for being creative. I know that Senator Pazina misses her time on the Natural Resources [Committee], and this is giving her a little taste of it. I think she has some questions or comments to make as well.

SENATOR PAZINA:
This reminds me of the interim session where we brought A.B. No. 87 of the 82nd Session for the wildlife crossings. I am curious because part of the discussion then had to do with fencing around some of the projects. Is that something that has been looked at throughout the State with upcoming projects?

MS. SIMPSON:
Yes. You may be familiar with the Verdi area. We just finished a big fencing project there; I think it was about the end of 2023. That one was just fencing, where we tie into existing structures. We also have another one on the books for dump hills, along Interstate 80, for the exact same thing to utilize fencing to tie into existing structures. We do try to do that when it is feasible, to reduce the cost and maximize our current investments.

SENATOR PAZINA:
I noticed that looking at the requirement, in regard to analysis of proposals, that number moved to $50 million from $25 million. I was just curious why the change?

MARK WOOSTER (Chief Performance Analysis Engineer, Nevada Department of Transportation):
This change from $25 million to $50 million was intended to align with the Code of Federal Regulations. It has to do with the costs and benefits of proposed highway projects, analyzing the cost versus the benefits to evaluate each project.

Again, with inflation, it has increased prices for wildlife crossings—and everything else. Twenty-five million dollars is not as big of a project as it was decades ago when this limit was set in the *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS). This move was to align with the federal $50 million threshold for projects being evaluated with the cost-benefit analysis. We currently are not able to keep up with the number at the $25 million threshold.

SENATOR PAZINA:
Out of curiosity, how many projects do you think this would include going from $25 million to $50 million?

MR. WOOSTER:
It is about 30.

ASSEMBLYMEMBER ANDERSON:
About 30 but we will make sure to email that information to you and everybody on the committee.

CHRISTI CABRERA-GEORGESON (Deputy Director, Nevada Conservation League):
Nevada's iconic wildlife and open spaces make it a great place for both people and wildlife to call home. The Nevada Conservation League is proud to have worked on the issue of wildlife connectivity for many years now.

As you have heard, roads and highways that intersect with wildlife habitat create safety habits for both humans and wildlife. This also leads to degraded wildlife populations and has ripple effects on other species and their ecosystems. Wildlife crossings are shown to reduce collisions by as much as 90 percent while facilitating natural wildlife migrations and movements. This bill is another important step to ensure our state agencies continue to prioritize wildlife connectivity and wildlife crossings.

ANDREW MACKAY (Great Basin Wildlife Conservancy; NV Franchised Auto Dealers Association):
We enthusiastically support this bill. We supported the bill even with the proposed fee increase, but I know that is not on the table. I think Ms. Georgeson did a phenomenal job summarizing what the benefits of these wildlife crossings are; one is public safety. I think an important benefit, and why I am here with respect to Great Basin Wildlife Conservancies, is that it promotes the North American model of wildlife conservation. The first of ten goals is that wildlife is held in the public trust, and this does nothing but advance that goal. Anything that we can do to build more of these … NDOT and the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection do a phenomenal job with the resources they have. You are going to see [us at] the table supporting it.

PAUL ENOS (CEO, Nevada Trucking Association):
I am here today in support of A.B. 486. I want to say thank you to the sponsor and the proponents of this bill for coming out with this compromise. We do think that this is a way to get this noble endeavor into the permanent process at NDOT to consider these things when they do projects. Ultimately, our hope is when they are out there doing a project—if you can do it in a more cost-effective way than the billion-dollar number we are hearing about—when you are out there at the same time, maybe we can get more of these things done. So once again, we appreciate the sponsor of the bill and working with the proponents on this compromise.

KYLE DAVIS (Coalition for Nevada's Wildlife):
I am here on behalf of the Coalition for Nevada's Wildlife. We wanted to add our support. Mr. MacKay said just about everything that we would say.

LAUREL SAITO (Nevada Water Strategy Director, The Nature Conservancy):
The mission of The Nature Conservancy is to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends. In order to do this effectively, we recognize that preserving and enhancing connectivity of habitats and migration corridors is critical to maintaining the biodiversity of the State for generations to come.

At The Nature Conservancy, we believe the most durable solutions to conservation issues are ones that meet the needs of people and nature. Planning for the strategic construction of wildlife crossings on transportation corridors does just that. It meets the needs of migrating species while protecting humans and wildlife from accidents and unnecessary deaths.

Nevada is a leader in constructing wildlife crossings. Thousands of animals pass through the corridors that are along Interstate 80 and people traveling along this busy interstate highway are protected by these crossings. If passed, this bill will help to ensure that we include the needs of all travelers in our transportation plans.

JENNIFER SRICHANDR (One APIA Nevada):
We are a grassroots organization dedicated to organizing Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders in Nevada to advocate for issues that impact our communities. In our Silver State, we're fortunate to have a rich natural landscape that is home to incredible wildlife. It is inevitable that wildlife

will need to cross our roads. Without the right infrastructure in place to facilitate those crossings, collisions [may occur] on the road, which can cost lives.

The impact of wildlife collisions does not stop at the crash site. They have far-reaching consequences. These accidents not only put drivers and passengers at risk of severe injury, but they also cost millions of dollars each year in medical expenses, vehicle damage, emergency response and road repairs. Beyond the human toll, collisions with wildlife disrupt ecosystems by weakening animal populations. They can also cause public safety issues leading to road closures, traffic delays and secondary accidents.

Investing in wildlife crossings is proven to reduce these collisions, protect both human and animal lives and save substantial public funds over time. It is essential that we continue to increase ways to coexist with the natural world around us and supporting A.B. 486 is a crucial step in making that happen.

CHAIR NGUYEN:
I will close the hearing on A.B. 486, and we can move to A.B. 174.

ASSEMBLY BILL 174: Revises provisions relating to telecommunication providers. (BDR 58-128)

ASSEMBLYMEMBER ELAINE H. MARZOLA (Assembly District No. 21):
Assembly Bill 174 revises provisions relating to communication providers. Omar Saucedo, representing AT&T, is joining me today and is available to answer any technical questions the committee may have.

It takes a mix of providers and technologies to bring connectivity to all corners of the United States. Satellite advancement over recent years and its widespread reach over vast geographies make it the best solution for the most remote and its expensive-to-serve locations that rely on fiber or wireless service. Beyond satellites' standalone role, satellite technology can also help to extend the reach of mobile wireless services to areas where wireless providers or cell sites have not yet been developed or are otherwise infeasible.

Currently, Nevada law does not recognize satellite technology as a form of alternative voice service and only recognizes traditional wired and wireless services. The proposed changes to NRS 704.68886 will ensure Nevada is

prepared for a future that connects all Nevadans even in the most remote areas of our State.

OMAR SAUCEDO (AT&T):
As a brief overview, A.B. 174 is a telecommunication bill that is brought here today in an effort to continue to modernize the telecommunication law. The last time we amended provisions of NRS 704.68886, also known as a provider of last resort chapter, which only applies to competitive suppliers, was over a decade ago in 2013. At that time, several updates were made including removing antiquated provisions in law referring to the telegraph.

Over the past decade, the telecommunication marketplace has evolved. Once again, telecommunication providers have invested heavily in building out their wireless networks. As a result, today 97 percent of Americans own a cell phone. With high customer demand for connectivity and coverage, we're here today to recognize satellite technology as another viable form of telecommunication service in Nevada.

Simply put, A.B. 174 will help eliminate dead zones across our State and reflect the level of investment that many telecommunication providers are making to enhance coverage. The proposed changes in A.B. 174 will help ensure that all Nevadans are prepared for a future that provides reliable connectivity in all parts of our State—even in the most remote areas.

Before concluding my remarks, I would like to quickly walk through the provisions of the bill.

In section 1, subsection 2, paragraph (b), we are adding a reference to satellite technology as a form of viable "alternative voice service."

Also in section 1, subsection 15, paragraph (a), we are removing the exclusion of satellite technology in the definition of "alternative voice service."

We understand why satellite technology was originally excluded from the changes in law made in 2013 when the technology was in its infancy. But as you can tell by recent advertisements and most notably during the Super Bowl, we believe that satellite technology is now ready for prime time.

In closing, I am happy to say one day in the not-too-distant future, Nevadans will feel a greater peace of mind knowing that they have coverage in every corner of our great State, including our national parks, rural highways and other hard-to-reach locations.

CHAIR NGUYEN:
We received some opposition testimony [and a proposed amendment] (Exhibit C) from the Nevada Small Providers of Last Resort. In looking through the limited legislative history in the Assembly, it looks like this was not something brought up during the original presentation of this bill at any time during the Assembly hearings. I also do not see how this has impacted … it looks like they are trying to have an amendment on this bill as another legislative vehicle because this chapter is open. But again, it seems like they have some concerns. Do you see how the insertion of this satellite language would harm or impact these rural telephone companies?

MR. SAUCEDO:
We did speak to the rural telephone providers, and we had a conversation with them. Essentially, we explained to them that the section we are amending—and that we had a history of amending in 2013—only applies to competitive suppliers. Those competitive suppliers are AT&T, Lumen and Verizon. So the small-scale providers are under a different section of law. This bill is not really applicable to them. As we explained to them, we would have concerns about constraining the Public Utilities Commission of Nevada's (PUCN) jurisdiction over the calculation for the Nevada Universal Service Fund, especially because we view this as not being applicable to the Nevada Universal Service Fund.

CHAIR NGUYEN:
This may be a question for the PUCN. It seems passing this bill would allow continuous access for emergency services, for first responders to have a stronger and quicker response for disasters. It keeps us all connected, especially during what has become wildfire season, floods or any other kind of infrastructure failures.

I am not seeing why these rural telephone providers would be impacted. But do you see any reason why the satellite language would harm the deployment of any of these broadband services that we currently have with the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program, or any of these broadband

projects—that are working through the Office of Science, Innovation and Technology right now, in the rural communities?

MR. SAUCEDO:
We do not. During the Nevada BEAD process, there were many allocations made to providers to build out fiber, but it is not feasible; it is costly to build out fiber in every single location. It was determined that satellite, especially for these hard-to-reach locations, would be the best alternative. There's probably not a lot of wireless connectivity in some of these parts of the State. We've done our best over the years to build out wireless to make sure that rural areas are also connected. Fiber is another tool we are using to build out to make sure that folks have the most modern technology. But currently, satellite is going to be the best option for a lot of these rural communities.

We do not see the concern, and you are 100 percent correct regarding first responders; there are vast geographies that have coverage gaps. I am sure that a lot of you have traveled through rural highways, and you do not have connection in every single place. Essentially, what the satellite will do is help ensure that if a motorist is stranded out in the middle of nowhere or has an emergency, they will be able to make that call.

Also, if you are living far away from the most urban area, and you have a ranch, this is another tool that you'll be able to have. Currently, if you have another satellite provider, you might have a ground kit or some sort of infrastructure at your home so that you can make calls. But as soon as you leave your home, the satellite is going to play a role in making sure that you have continuous coverage and you can still make those calls.

ASSEMBLYMEMBER MARZOLA:
I want to make the record clear; Exhibit C includes an unfriendly amendment.

JOHN ABEL (Las Vegas Police Protective Association):
Obviously, we support this bill. It is important to us because law enforcement is to stay on the forefront of technological advances. We have large swaths of Nevada that do not have coverage. It is important because we still have law enforcement officers that are out there providing service and protecting citizens. So, for that, we support this bill.

TREVOR PARRISH (Vegas Chamber):
The Chamber is in support of A.B. 174 because removing the satellite service exemption from the alternative voice service definition will help provide a greater flexibility for resource allocation for telecom providers in Nevada. With the rapid development of new technology, A.B. 174 will be a helpful tool to provide a higher degree of service to all Nevadans.

JODI STEPHENS (Wireless Infrastructure Association c/o MultiState):
As a girl from rural Nevada born and raised in Hawthorne, we support this for the connectivity issue as well as making sure we have access to it during emergencies.

JOSEPH HILL (Retail Association of Nevada):
The Retail Association of Nevada is in strong support of A.B. 174 for retailers, especially those operating in rural or underserved areas. This bill could have significant implications. By recognizing satellite-based rural services as viable alternatives, A.B. 174 could encourage more competition and innovation in the telecommunications sector. This may lead to improved service quality and potentially lower costs for businesses that rely on reliable communications services for operations, customer engagement and security. In today's economy, reliable and modern telecommunications infrastructure is not a luxury, it is a necessity. Assembly Bill 174 moves us towards a regulatory environment that better reflects the speed of innovation and how business is conducted today. We strongly urge your support for Nevada's retailers and A.B. 174.

JESSICA FERRATO (Lumen):
I am here today on behalf of Lumen, in support of the bill. This brings a lot of connectivity to Nevada and is an important step moving in the right direction.

DONNA LAFFEY (Verizon c/o MultiState Associates LLC):
We're in support of A.B. 174. We think it is good policy that helps us to leverage existing technology to benefit consumers and expand public safety and we urge your support as well.

EDITH DUARTE (Technology Network aka TechNet):
We are in support of A.B. 174. For all the reasons mentioned already, we support this commonsense bill.

ELLEN MARQUEZ:
I am providing comments on my own behalf and not on behalf of my employer.

I am the proud parent of a young adult with Down syndrome, and we live in a rural area of Nevada. Emergency services must be accessible to everyone, regardless of where they live or how they communicate. When deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals cannot access timely communication support, critical needs go unmet, and during emergencies, this can have life-threatening consequences.

Assembly Bill 174 helps close these dangerous gaps by expanding access to satellite-based communication. This technology provides a vital opportunity to deliver by video remote American Sign Language (ASL) interpreting services across rural Nevada—ensuring that individuals who use ASL are not left without support during wildfires, emergency evacuations, medical emergencies, healthcare visits, court services or other critical interactions.

The passage of this bill means continuous access to emergency services for first responders and deaf and hard-of-hearing Nevadans alike. [It enables] rural hospitals, public safety agencies and government offices to connect with qualified ASL interpreters through reliable video services. Even during infrastructure failures, a stronger, more inclusive disaster response time across the State, where communication access is recognized as a right, not a privilege. Reliable communication and accessibility should not depend on geography. Assembly Bill 174 ensures that no one, including deaf and hard-of-hearing Nevadans, is left behind when it matters most.

DAN GORDON (President, Nevada Police Union):
I represent Nevada state police officers, game wardens and state park rangers. We support this bill wholeheartedly, because we work at all ends of the great State of Nevada and in many of the rural communities. Having better communication for our officers and first responders is imperative.

MISTY GRIMMER (Cox Communications):
We also are in support of this bill. I think the two previous speakers drew attention to how important it is to utilize every type of technology. Technologies in this field are changing like crazy so any methods for connectivity are things we should encourage.

EMILY OSTERBERG (Henderson Chamber of Commerce):
With over 2,000 members, the majority of whom are small businesses, the Henderson Chamber of Commerce recognizes that reliable and widespread connectivity is essential to driving economic growth, supporting innovation and ensuring all Nevadans have the opportunity to fully participate in today's digital economy. By updating NRS to recognize satellite as an alternative voice service, Nevada can ensure businesses, workers and entrepreneurs across the State have access to the tools they need no matter where they are located. For these reasons, we are in support of A.B. 174.

PATRICK ROSVALL (Nevada Small Providers of Last Resort):
I am representing the small providers, the Last Resort Group referenced earlier, who sent a letter of opposition, Exhibit C, this morning for A.B. 174. The companies in our group are Beehive Telephone Company, Lincoln County Telephone, Moapa Valley Telephone, E4 Connect and Rural Telephone Company. We are opposed to the bill because it will have unintended consequences. We understand the bill is targeting, in essence, Providers of Last Resort relief for larger companies—competitive suppliers like AT&T.

This bill, as written, will redefine satellite as an alternative voice provider or voice service, which will have ramifications beyond just the competitive supplier context. We know this because it came up in the context of a workshop in a proceeding addressing the Nevada Universal Service Fund (NUSF) in Docket No. 24-12030 before the PUCN. It came up in the context of a discussion about how to potentially reduce or eliminate support for rural telephone companies like our group. We do not think this is a theoretical concern. I also do not think this bill has any tangible benefits for public safety or improving connectivity. It allows for larger providers to lift Provider of Last Resort obligations. But in the process, it may have the consequence of stripping these rural telephone companies of $2 million that they are devoting to rural infrastructure.

I will explain a little bit further by saying that it is possible, based on this language, that the commission will use this language to say that every location where there is satellite—that location is no longer supportable by the NUSF. That's the exact implication from the workshop that I mentioned. The consequence of that will be negative effects on consumers in the form of reduced investment in fiber in these areas. It will not necessarily have a direct impact on BEAD, as discussed earlier or grant funds of that sort, but it could

have a direct impact on this $2 million that these companies are using to support operations in rural areas.

Satellite does have problems with latency. They've had historically high prices and 911 is an unproven record. If the idea is to substitute these companies out for satellite, that is not a good public policy choice. We would ask that this bill be rejected, not adopted unless our language is incorporated. I could read the language into the record if desired, but it is in our letter, Exhibit C. It does clarify that this will not have an impact on NUSF.

CHAIR NGUYEN:
I will say that we have all received the opposition letter with the proposed amendment, Exhibit C, that you have. I normally would not bring this up, but you had referenced it not only in your letter and email, but you also alluded to it today. It seems inappropriate that you are seeking this amendment given the fact that the PUCN has initiated this investigatory docket regarding the calculation of the NUSF for rural telephone companies. Is that more of the motivation that you do not like the way the Commission is currently not ruling in your favor or indicating that they aren't investigating the way they are going to distribute these funds moving forward?

MR. ROSVALL:
No, we are not trying to prescribe something the Commission would do. We're trying to make sure that this bill does not end up being the reason why the Commission goes in one direction or another. The Commission is going to hold that proceeding. They're going to do an investigation. If our language were incorporated into this bill, it would mean that this bill would not be usable as the basis to reach a conclusion that would cut funding. The Commission wants to reach that conclusion for some other reason; that is what the proceeding is for. We are concerned about this bill having that unintended consequence.

CHAIR NGUYEN:
I appreciate that concern. However, in my reading of the plain language of this section, it does not seem to preclude small telephone companies like the ones you represent from having that opportunity to explain to the PUCN why they should continue to receive those subsidies from NUSF for a landline service, even though there are competitors in your area offering perhaps more modern services without receiving those subsidies. Wouldn't you still be able to make that argument before the Commission?

MR. ROSVALL:
We are making that argument. It is a very compelling argument. But we do not think that this bill should be the basis for reaching an opposite conclusion. And the quote that we provided in our letter, Exhibit C, shows that the Commission was referencing this bill in the same exact discussion in which staff was suggesting significantly cutting or eliminating the funding.

It is not us that made that connection. The Commission made that connection and we just want to make sure that it is viewed objectively based on the record of that proceeding and not influenced by this bill.

CHAIR NGUYEN:
I think this bill, should it move forward, is just a modernization, it gives the Commission other things to consider when they are making those kinds of decisions. In speaking with the bill sponsor, have you had any conversations other than submitting this potential unfriendly amendment to the committee members with the bill sponsor prior to this week?

MR. ROSVALL:
Yes, we addressed that in our letter. The workshop I referenced was through an unintended consequence of this bill, when it came to light on March 25. We did not have enough time to express our concerns to the bill sponsor. We did talk to AT&T, as they noted. We also talked to the Commission. I think those conversations are ongoing. We wish that we could have engaged earlier. Nevertheless, the concerns are valid and so we raised them as soon as we possibly could.

CHAIR NGUYEN:
Well, I would remind you, I see that you have an address in California—we are a Legislature that only meets every other year for 120 days. It is typical that our bills move during that prescribed timeline, otherwise they will not move forward. Obviously, you are late to this game to have these kinds of conversations, but I would encourage you to reach out directly to the bill sponsor as this bill is progressing through.

GARRETT WEIR (Commission General Counsel, Public Utilities Commission of Nevada):
In the interest of efficiency, I will make myself available to answer any questions regarding the context or the effects of A.B. 174 or the language or the intent of the proposed amendment Exhibit C.

CHAIR NGUYEN:
I feel the fact that it is front and center referencing the opposition, some of the conversations that have happened during this investigatory docket, regarding NUSF. Do you have any concerns with this proposed amendment? This is regarding the calculation in the opposition letter of these funds being included and the definition of alternative voice services.

MR. WEIR:
Yes, the proposed amendment as written—we are concerned that it creates an implication that the Commission would somehow be restricted in its consideration of alternative voice services when reviewing potential disbursements from NUSF. We think the amendment is unnecessary. There was the reference to the discussion that occurred during the Commission investigation. To provide more context there, the presiding officer in that instance, Commissioner Brown, was actually explaining that the current statutes that are definitions are applicable to the Commission's review of NUSF in funding calculations.

As he was explaining, those definitions do not restrict the Commission in its consideration of satellite service. He was mentioning that only this Provider of Last Resort, obligation relief proposal that was the one discrete place where there is a current statutory restriction on the consideration of satellite service that is even being potentially revisited by the Legislature.

Right now, I can tell you definitively that the definition of alternative voice service does not apply. That's not the controlling definition for what the Commission can consider when looking at disbursements from the NUSF. There's another definition of alternative voice service in another unrelated section of the NRS. We do not refer to that either; that is not controlling in the NUSF proceedings. That is NRS 704.6881, subsection 4. Instead, the Commission uses the more generally applicable definition of telecommunication service, which includes all telecommunication, regardless of the equipment, facilities or technologies used. Right now, the Commission's discretion is clear

and we think it adds confusion, in our opinion, to introduce this language here in this section. Where it is a definition that is clearly in the plain language that is limited to this section that relates to a Provider of Last Resort relief. So yes, we have some concerns.

CHAIR NGUYEN:
It does not seem like this applies and it seems like this amendment is meant to curb the Commission's authority to do this after an investigatory docket was initiated against the distribution of these funds. I do not see how this even applies to these rural [companies] and limits or anything, not with the amendment. Is that your take on the way the bill exists and is presented today?

MR. WEIR:
I do not want to speculate on the intent of the proposed amendment. I think I understand the concern of the Commission relying on this or being persuasive to the Commission's assessment of alternative services for the purposes of the NUSF. Again, the NUSF, in statute, it named the fund to maintain the availability of telephone service. One of the core assessments that the Commission performs in those proceedings is whether there is available telephone service. It looks to that availability; how accessible and how affordable it is. Currently the Commission has discretion without regard to technology, and we think that the proposed amendment perhaps muddies the waters.

MR. SAUCEDO:
I wanted to thank you for the opportunity to present A.B. 174. I think it is important to distinguish that this bill is just aimed to recognize a modern connectivity option that is currently being deployed and is only becoming more competitive. I know that there was confusion and that is one of the reasons why we do not think that the amendment is germane because we are trying to make sure that the integrity of the statute, and what we are trying to do, remains in that fashion. We do not want to have any unintended consequences of what this does. Our bill is simple. It recognizes and modernizes telecommunication law as we currently have in Nevada.

CHAIR NGUYEN:
We'll close the hearing on A.B. 174 and open the hearing on A.B. 55.

ASSEMBLY BILL 55 (1st Reprint): Revises provisions relating to motor vehicle crashes. (BDR 43-250)

AMY DAVEY (Administrator and Highway Safety Director, Office of Traffic Safety, Nevada Department of Public Safety):
We brought a presentation with proposed revisions (Exhibit D contains copyrighted material. Original is available upon request from the Research Library.). I am joined at the table by my colleagues: Lacey Tisler, the Chief Traffic Safety Engineer from NDOT; my Public Information Officer, Anita Pepper.

On the phone we have Dr. Laura Knight who is the Chief Medical Examiner and Coroner for the Washoe County Regional Medical Examiner's Office. And, we may have Director Melanie Rouse from the Clark County Office of the Coroner/Medical Examiner.

We're going to provide an overview of the changes proposed in A.B. 55. There are two primary components to A.B. 55 which focus on improving motor vehicle crash data collection. Much of what is requested in A.B. 55 is already occurring in practice and the proposed language is meant to update NRS to describe current processes and align with required standards. We are requesting to include drug toxicology testing and reporting for car crash victims and to clarify the methods and timelines associated with filing crash reports, as well as to acknowledge the role of NDOT in the safety data partnership.

The *Nevada Revised Statutes* 484E describes how, when and to whom crash investigation reports must be made. *Nevada Revised Statutes* 484C deals entirely with driving under the influence of alcohol or a prohibited substance. The version that you have in front of you is an amended version which does not previously reference language in 484C regarding prohibited substances and that language has been changed in the version you have.

An overview of crash data is on slide 3 of Exhibit D through the U.S. Federal Highway Administration and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Nevada is the recipient of a large amount of federal funds intended to address transportation safety needs. Concurrent with the allocation of federal dollars are many types of requirements, including those that require state agencies such as the Department of Public Safety (DPS) and NDOT to track safety data, report crash data to the federal government through the fatality analysis reporting

system, set safety goals and build and execute plans and programs to improve safety on our roads.

In addition to federal reporting, crash and citation data is used by a myriad of partners such as Nevada's universities, hospitals, law enforcement, first responders, regional transportation commissions, local governments, nonprofit organizations and state agencies, such as Health and Human Services, NDOT, DMV, DPS and policymakers such as the Legislature. We constantly review, report and analyze safety data to build the best programs we can.

Adding language that specifies toxicological testing for drugs both supports existing practice and aligns our statutes with requirements to report impairing substances to the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) system. An analysis of a full year of records that we received on deceased victims shows that 90 percent of the reports that we already receive include testing results for impairing substances, in addition to alcohol. In one year, we show that 373 tests for alcohol were conducted and 366 of those tests included testing for drugs. Roughly 10 percent of reports that we receive do not include testing results. That is often due to a time lapse between the time of the car crash and the time the victim passes away. In other words, individuals who are in the hospital prior to death, renders additional testing by the coroner's office ineffectual. In a small amount of cases, we are unable to collect information from the public agency.

The amended version of A.B. 55 proposes changes to NRS 484C.170, which currently requires a coroner or other public official performing like duties to test deceased victims of car crashes for the presence and concentration of alcohol, to add testing for the presence and concentration of other substances. We originally used the term “prohibited substances” because this term is currently included in NRS, but we had conversations with the Washoe County Medical Examiner's office and the Clark County Coroner's Office. They requested broader terminology be used, which allows postmortem testing panels that they are currently using and provides flexibility to them in the testing. As drug trends change, this also allows them to maintain their current processes and would not result in increased testing costs to them.

Right now, the term prohibited substances in NRS 484C has seven types of drug categories; it appears somewhat outdated. It does not include drugs such as fentanyl, other opioids, benzodiazepines and other drugs which are often found in the testing of decedents. Additionally, contained within the amendment

is the removal of the eight-hour testing requirement and 30-hour reporting requirement, neither of which are current practice.

On slide 5 of Exhibit D, we have a sample of a coroner's report. This is a sample from the Clark County Coroner's Office and it depicts the results of toxicological testing for a car crash victim. The FAR reporting system contains codes for hundreds of substances and stipulates that we include all data available from the testing. On slide 6 of Exhibit D, sections 2 and 3 of A.B. 55, we suggest minor clarifying changes to align with current processes and describe certain distinctions. In section 2, subsection 1, we acknowledge that crash reports are received by the DPS through an electronic crash reporting system rather than paper forms. We clarify that crash reporting must begin within ten days after the date of the crash or after the date of the death of a person in the crash. This is called early notification, and it is a requirement of FAR reporting to the federal government. This also clarifies that the initial report of the crash need not wait until the full investigation is complete.

Section 2, subsection 2 identifies NDOT as a primary stakeholder and collaborator in the crash data system. This acknowledges the fundamental role of NDOT in providing support to the system and their assistance with updating the state's street maps, street files, the geolocation of crashes, analysis of safety data and NDOT's federal requirements to have access to this data. The Nevada Department of Transportation is the largest consumer of this data and a critical component of the system.

Sections 3 through 6 make minor conforming changes that recognize DPS uses an electronic crash reporting system where the crash report form template is maintained and accessed.

SENATOR PAZINA:
I noticed it removed the requirement that a blood sample be drawn within eight hours of the crash. And I understand that sometimes it can be hard to make that logistically happen. I was just curious if there was a period of time where the result might not be as accurate if it can't be taken within a certain amount of time to get it in.

LAURA KNIGHT (Chief Medical Examiner, Washoe County Regional Medical Examiner's Office):
The time frame in law of eight hours is not practical in some cases; it does not really have a basis in science. The Senator asked if there is a time frame after which testing would be less reliable—yes, but that is more in terms of days. Usually, testing samples are drawn within 24 hours. After a crash, there is some time required to transport a body from the rural areas of Nevada, for example, to my office, where we provide autopsy services for the rural counties in Nevada. The Clark County office also provides services for a couple of their adjacent counties. There may be a delay in transport time, but mostly that eight hours is not really based in science. As long as the specimen is drawn in a practical time frame, it is still fine for testing purposes. The body does not continue to metabolize or break down drugs. The liver, after death, does not continue to do that and so the sample will still be fine.

SENATOR PAZINA:
The sample would still be taken and I do not think the bill specified a new amount of time. But that sample would still be taken then, within a reasonable amount of time, in order to get the scientific data you needed?

MS. KNIGHT:
Yes, ma'am. I believe that the law specifies that that testing should be done and it is being done already and it is consistent with our practices to do that on any traffic victim and to report that data. Yes, we'll still do the testing and get the data reported and hopefully [use it] for prevention efforts.

SENATOR BUCK:
This is all new to me, what currently happens? Currently if a person dies, do you test the living person if there are two involved in a crash? And then, do you test the dead person also? Is that what happens?

MS. DAVEY:
Yes, we are talking about two different things. Live driver testing would be for the purpose of establishing some type of causative factor. That is not contemplated in this legislation, which is just specific to the collection of the deceased victim's [sample] in car crashes. This is, for many purposes, a federal reporting requirement. But it also helps improve our programs and outreach. This does not impact or touch living victim testing.

CHAIR NGUYEN:
With people who are potentially defendants or suspects in DUI-related accidents, are they contained in a different section of law? Would this have to do with someone, like a pedestrian death? If someone was killed by a driver and it was a pedestrian, would their blood be taken in a circumstance like that?

MS. DAVEY:
I believe yes. The practice is any deceased victim of a car crash is currently tested for both [alcohol and substances]. The statute only recognizes blood alcohol content in practice. The coroners are testing for both alcohol and other substances.

CHAIR NGUYEN:
The eight hours, is there anything that we need to be concerned about? Does anything happen to that blood at 10 hours or 12 hours or anything that makes the results unusable?

MS. KNIGHT:
There is a time frame beyond which specimens can be altered by the postmortem interval, or how long someone's been deceased. It is more in the time frame of days where we start to get those changes. The current practice is that we draw these samples as soon as it's practical. The eight-hour time limit would put us in the position, if we were really following that, of possibly having to draw specimens after extricating someone from a vehicle at the scene of death. And it is not the best practice in our field. It is also going to increase the time that that crash is still out there on the roadway, creating a hazard. I feel strongly that this would be better done in the controlled laboratory environment where I can draw a good sample. It is being done already within a reasonable time frame. I do not think that removing the eight hours from this harms anything, and I think it brings this into an alignment with what our practices are already doing throughout the State.

CHAIR NGUYEN:
At this time, we will close the hearing on A.B. 55, and I will open the hearing on A.B. 493.

ASSEMBLY BILL 493 (1st Reprint): Revises provisions relating to the collection, disposal and retirement of certain types of waste. (BDR 40-424)

EVELYN BUTLER (Vice President of Technical Services, Solar Energy Industries Association):
We are the national industry association and have represented companies and organizations for the last 50 years. That includes manufacturers, installers, independent power producers, third-party owners who need solar and many others who provide services for solar and energy storage, including recyclers. Today we operate the nation's only solar recycling partner program working with commercial recyclers to develop and deliver decommissioning and recycling services for our technology.

I am here to present A.B. 493, which addresses the collection, disposal and retirement of solar equipment at decommissioning. I would note that the original bill included recycling for batteries. The amendment accepted in the Assembly removed both portions of the bill. Sections 33, 37 and 38 pertain to solar. As we see the deployment of solar energy grow nationally, and within Nevada particularly, we see having utility-scale solar projects as a necessity to responsibly manage the equipment at decommissioning, favoring reuse and recycling.

At a high level, the bill seeks to improve the State's current decommissioning and end-of-life management of photovoltaic (PV) panels, particularly focusing on utility-scale solar projects and third-party-owned residential solar systems.

This bill will not impose requirements on individual homeowners who own their solar panels to create disposal plants. The bill revises the decommissioning plan requirements already in law for utility-scale solar projects. Now it is requiring a plan for the decommissioning of the site that includes reused or recycling percentage rate of the material recovery for any solar PV panel or photovoltaic panel. This will be recycled at the end of its useful life; the distributed system must be 90 percent or greater by weight. And there is a plan to return the land to a substantially similar state before the construction of the utility-scale project.

Owners of leased distributed-generation systems, or systems from which consumers directly purchase the electricity, will also be required to file disposal plans with the Division of Environmental Protection. They will have similar responsibilities outlined in their plans. That includes how they will decommission the system and how that will be conducted, including plans for reuse or recycling, and that they will have a similar percentage rate of the material

recovery of any solar PV panels. Any solar panels that will be recycled must also be 90 percent or greater by weight. Combined with the PV recycling and the decommissioning portions of the bill, it will help ensure sustainability and responsible management of solar development across the State.

CHAIR NGUYEN:
I know this bill has changed significantly since it was first introduced. So I appreciate you giving us that update on the amendments and the bill as we are seeing it here today.

SENATOR PAZINA:
This could be me not understanding, which believe me is entirely possible, but just to understand about the owner of the distributed generation system—so the owner of this is the one who's responsible for filing the plan as well as figuring out the removal of the system. Is that correct?

MS. BUTLER:
Yes, when we refer to owners of leased distributed generation systems, those are technically installers or owners who own many systems that they are leasing to a consumer. It is not the homeowner or the consumer who's directly purchasing a system. We've included a provision in the bill that states these requirements do not apply to those individual homeowners who outright own their solar panels. For instance, those companies that are doing mass leasing of systems to homeowners—they will be the ones responsible for ensuring that those systems are decommissioned and arrangements for recycling or reuse are made. No individual homeowner, who owns their solar system, will be affected by this bill.

CHAIR NGUYEN:
Can you tell us about the organization that you represent? It is a trade association, is that correct?

MS. BUTLER:
Yes, we are the national industry association. In addition to working closely with many different states and the solar and energy storage associations, we represent manufacturers, installers and independent power producers—those people who own the system and who build and construct them.

We are based in Washington D.C., but I personally am based in California, not too far away from Carson City. We certainly recognize that every state has the need for decommissioning and want to make sure that we are actively supporting the effort to introduce recycling and reuse as the preferred method for decommissioning.

JESSICA FERRATO (Solar Energy Industries Association):
Chair [Howard] Watts, this idea is his brainchild, and we were here to support and bring him information from across the country. What's currently happening on recycling as it pertains to solar? To Senator Pazina's question, this is intended to be for large-scale solar projects, not for the traditional rooftop solar at residences.

GRACE MICHAELSON (Ferrari Reeder Public Affairs; Western Resource Advocates):
Western Resource Advocates is a nonprofit conservation group that works for commonsense solutions that protect our land, air and water resources. Western Resource Advocates would like to voice our strong support for A.B. 493.

Assembly Bill 493 addresses critical environmental and public health concerns related to the disposal and recycling of distributed-generation systems in Nevada. It is important to ensure that the end-of-life management of these systems does not pose environmental risks to our State. This bill provides a comprehensive framework that ensures owners of distributed-generation systems submit a detailed disposal plan to the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection.

Furthermore, the bill's provisions for surplus asset-retirement plans and mandatory reporting by recycling facilities will enhance transparency and accountability, further setting a precedent for the responsible handling of renewable energy infrastructure. I urge the committee to support A.B. 493.

AMANDA BRAZEAU NOLTING (Tesla):
We are supportive of A.B. 493 in it’s current form which establishes rules for solar recycling. We want to thank Assemblymember Watts for his great work and engagement on this issue and work on getting the policy right.

MS. CABRERA-GEORGESON:
The growing adoption of solar systems represents a significant economic opportunity for our State to also lead in clean energy innovation. However, we

must also ensure that we handle end-of-life disposal and recycling of these materials in a way that maximizes resource recovery, minimizes environmental harm and protects public health. We urge the committee's support.

BRETT SCOLARI (Pedal Point Recycling):
Pedal Point Recycling in the City of Henderson is a commercial recycler. We appreciate the work that Assemblymember Watts put into this, and we are ready for business in this area. We appreciate it and urge your support.

JENNIFER CARR (Administrator, Division of Environmental Protection, State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources):
The Division of Environmental Protection (DEP) is neutral on A.B. 493 as it exists in reprint one. The DEP appreciates the bill's requirements to plan for the disposal of distributed or utility-scale energy-generating systems at the end of their useful life, promoting the potential for reuse or recycling. Our focus is the solar panels and associated battery storage facilities related to these green energy materials.

The DEP implements federal regulations related to solid and hazardous waste. When a solar panel is considered discarded, the item becomes a solid waste regulated under NRS 444 and is potentially also a hazardous waste regulated under NRS 459 depending on its components and manufacture.

Nevada is experiencing a shift in management of solid and hazardous waste from one of general disposal to one where recycling of these materials is a business venture. This bill provides a role for the Division in this process alongside the PUCN and others. We also appreciate the addition of reporting for recycling rates of these materials, which we'll use in the recycling report that is otherwise required by Nevada law.

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CHAIR NGUYEN:
With that we'll close the hearing on A.B. 493. That brings us to our last agenda item which is public comment. Hearing none, I will close public comment and adjourn this meeting today at 5:04 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Joseph Huene,
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Senator Rochelle T. Nguyen, Chair

DATE:

EXHIBIT SUMMARY				
Bill	**Exhibit Letter**	**Introduced on Minute Report Page No.**	**Witness / Entity**	**Description**
	A	1		Agenda
	B	1		Attendance Roster
A.B. 174	C	14	Nevada Small Providers of Last Resort	Opposition Letter
A.B. 55	D	23	Amy Davey / Department of Public Safety	Presentation