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**Assembly Committee on Government Affairs  
Public Comment on AB 428 – April 1, 2003**

Mr. Chair, members of the Committee:

I am Jim Slade from Gardnerville, and I am here today to testify in opposition to AB 428. I speak on my own behalf and as a member of the Sustainable Growth Initiative Committee. To some degree I also feel that I speak for the more than 5000 voters who signed our petition (a record in Douglas County), and the more than 8800 voters who voted in favor of our initiative last November when it passed.

If AB 427 implied that Assemblyman Hettrick is a shill for the development community, then AB 428 confirms it. This is shameless pandering to special interest groups to the detriment of the general public. This bill is an over-reaction to the success of the Sustainable Growth Initiative in Douglas County. The development community outspent us many times over in an attempt to defeat SGI. They had the support of the Douglas County Board of Commissioners and District Attorney. Yet the will of the people prevailed, and SGI passed. Now they have turned to state legislation as a way to try to prevent this type of initiative by our group or any similar grass-roots organization. This is unconscionable.

When Mr. Hettrick spoke at a recent meeting of the Douglas County Building Industry Association (DCBIA), he was introduced as follows:

“We’re going to talk a little bit about some legislation we’re working on with Mr. Hettrick here, to have some of these situations with ... the Sustainable Growth group got these initiatives on the board, making it harder, make them accountable to the Commissioners, on that route..”[sic]

Your guess is as good as mine as to what she was trying to say, but two things are clear:

- 1) the Building Industry Association worked on this legislation with Mr. Hettrick, &
- 2) the bill was a response to the Sustainable Growth Initiative

Mr. Hettrick in his comments to the DCBIA spoke about the significant additional burdens his proposed bill would place on initiatives such as SGI. Among other things he stated: “I am not a huge fan of initiative petitions.”

Fortunately for us, the right to initiative petition is guaranteed by Article 19 of the Nevada Constitution. This bill is a threat to that constitutional right. It is insulting to the democratic process, and a slap in the face of the majority of voters in Douglas County who supported SGI. Its intended effect is to discourage use of the initiative process on any matter related to a master plan, which is an extremely wide array of issues. It is a bill that would benefit a special interest group to the detriment of the majority of citizens of our state.

I strongly urge you not to support AB 428. Thank you.

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ASSEMBLY GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS  
DATE: 4/1/03 ROOM: 3143 EXHIBIT I  
SUBMITTED BY: Jim Slade