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## **Assembly Natural Resources, Agriculture and Mining**

**February 17, 2003**

### **Russ Fields, President, Nevada Mining Association**

- The Nevada Mining Association is an organization representing mining in Nevada. We have as our members the largest mining operators in the State, and smaller mining operations as well as individuals interested in mining. Suppliers of goods and services to the mining industry are also an important part of our Association.
- The mission of the Association is to create a favorable business environment for responsible mining in Nevada. We do this through three primary areas of focus: Government Affairs, Regulatory Affairs and Public Outreach. We organize the technical work of the association into our various committees – for example – Environmental, Mine Safety and Health, Human Resources, Taxation and Government Affairs.
- The Association has its roots in an organization formed in 1913 called the Nevada Mine Operators Association. It was formed to work on mine safety issues and provide for the purchase of needed materials at reduced bulk rates. The Association was established in more or less its current form in 1953.
- We have a small staff of 4 located in Reno. I report to a board of directors that meets every other month.

### **Mining in Nevada Overview**

- Nevada produces a wide array of mineral resources from gypsum and specialty clays to gold and silver. Mining was the State's first industry when the silver mines near Virginia City were active from the 1860's to around 1900.

- Today the most important mineral commodity produced in the state is gold. Gold production represents between 80 and 90 percent of the value of Nevada's mineral production on an annual basis.
- There are currently 19 major gold mines in Nevada. There are nine different companies that operate these mines. These companies are all members of our organization. The mines are located mostly in rural Northern Nevada. The economic impacts of mining are most significant in these areas.
- The production from these mines is approximately 8 million ounces on an annual basis. This represents about 75% of U.S. gold production and 10% of world gold production.
- Today there are about 9,000 people working directly in the mines with an estimated 33,000 indirect jobs providing goods and services to the industry. Of course, the majority of these jobs are in rural Nevada.

### In General

- Some BDR's and bills we're tracking involve water, wildlife, wilderness, public lands, reclamation bonding, and environmental issues – such as air quality.
- Many issues affecting the Nevada mining industry, of course, come before this committee. I appreciate very much the opportunity to give you this overview today.
- We would welcome the opportunity to assist the committee in any way, including mine tours if that would be useful to your deliberations.
- Questions??