

DISCLAIMER

Electronic versions of the exhibits in these minutes may not be complete.

This information is supplied as an informational service only and should not be relied upon as an official record.

Original exhibits are on file at the Legislative Counsel Bureau Research Library in Carson City.

Contact the Library at (775) 684-6827 or library@lcb.state.nv.us.

Exhibit G

**Talking Points
AB 286
Doug Bierman
On Behalf of Lander and Eureka County
And the City of Caliente
Senate Finance Committee
May 21, 2003**

1. We respectfully request your support of AB286.
2. The Lander and Eureka County/City of Caliente non-state members of PEBP have not been "dumped into" the system. Since the early 1900s they have been invited and/or ACTIVELY RECRUITED into the system and now are being callously driven out by exorbitant premiums. The currently proposed premiums for the remainder of 2003 through 2004 continue to increase the gap between the premiums of non-state employees and state employees and give little relief to the non-state retirees.
3. These non-state active members' premiums are subsidized by their local government entities, which in some cases also subsidize retirees. Some of these local government systems have had positive rate experiences over the past several years, but because of the segregation of their groups, they have seen their rates inflated unfairly.
4. When these non-state employees came into the system, they believed that they were joining a program that would provide them adequate health insurance coverage at affordable rates. For the first years of that period, it appeared that was the case as their rates were comparable to the rest of the system. They had no idea that they would be eventually be segregated into separate classes and their premiums determined on smaller group experiences within the same system. This practice is self-defeating and contrary to the group insurance philosophy.
5. Most of you are aware that many of the rural areas have not shared in the recent growth and economic prosperity of the urban areas in Nevada. To the contrary, many of these rural areas are experiencing economically depressed conditions with declining local government revenues along with diminishing tax rolls. They don't have access to the general fund for a "bail-out", but they certainly contribute their taxes to the general fund. Therefore, the local solution to the problem may not be solved by the current statutes concerning local government bargaining issues.
6. Health care costs in rural Nevada involve additional expenses through the distance that many of these people have to travel to obtain the necessary health care. A trip to the doctor may involve several hundred miles traveled and an overnight stay or more.

7. We respectfully urge this committee to do what is right and fair. Change the system for the opportunity of non-state employees who are legitimate members of the PEBP program to be treated as equal members with health coverage and premiums reflecting this policy. Please discontinue the discriminatory practices of the existing statute and allow all members to be aggregated within the same system. By statute this is a **PUBLIC EMPLOYEES BENEFIT PROGRAM**.
8. We encourage you to support the proposed long-term solution of these problems with an interim study of the **PUBLIC EMPLOYEES BENEFIT PROGRAM** and a short-term solution to the extremely high rates of insurance for the non-state **PUBLIC EMPLOYEES** of Nevada who have been promised more than the current system delivers.
9. Thank you for the opportunity to be heard and please support AB286.