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## TESTIMONY

**BILL: SB 49      Creates Statewide Program for Suicide Prevention  
within Department of Human Resources. (BDR 40-288)**

**NEVADA DIVISION OF MENTAL HEALTH AND  
DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES**

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Good morning. For the record, I am Carlos Brandenburg, Administrator of the Division of Mental Health and Developmental Services. I am here today to address SB 49. SB 49 requires the development of a Nevada State Suicide Prevention Plan and establishes a statewide suicide Prevention Program within the Director's Office of the Nevada Department of Human Resources. The purpose of the state plan/program is to reduce the number of attempted and completed suicides in Nevada. The state plan will address the risk factors related to suicide and identify populations most at risk and will be distributed statewide and made available to the public no later than January 03, 2005. During the course of this interim study, the subcommittee obtained extensive expert and public testimony concerning Nevada's high rate of suicide, which has been the highest rate of any state in the nation and establishes the need for effective suicide prevention programs.

Let me briefly present you with some data that can be found in the report of the Suicide Prevention Research Center. On page 1 you will see that Nevada's suicide rate per 100,000 population is 22.9 compared to the national average of 11.3. Page 2 shows you the states with the highest

suicide rates from 1995 to 2000; Nevada is number 1. Page 3 shows that suicide is the fifth leading cause of death in Nevada. The next page (4) shows that firearms are the leading cause of death. Page 5 gives you Nevada's suicide rates by race/ethnicity. Page 6 shows that most Nevadans who kill themselves are between the ages of 20 and 54. Page 7 shows that most Nevadans that kill themselves are males. Page 8 dispels the myth that most suicides are not from Nevada. You will note that 89% of completed suicides are residents of this state. Lastly on page 9 you will note that Las Vegas and other Clark County towns have most of Nevada's suicides.

SB 49 is the number one recommendation approved by the Interim Legislative Subcommittee to Study Suicide Prevention chaired by Senator Ann O'Connell. A fiscal note on SB 49 has been done by Mr. Mike Torvinen, at the Department of Human Resources, and it shows that \$142,910 is needed in FY 03 and \$172,160 in FY 04 for a biennial total of \$355,120. Let me now introduce Mary Liveratti, Deputy Director of the Department of Human Resources.