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April 7, 2003

Testimony in Support of SB419

Andrew Goodrich, Director
Air Quality Management Division
Washoe County District Health Department

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, Good afternoon; my name is Andrew Goodrich; I am the Director for the Air Quality Management Division of the Washoe County District Health Department.

I am here today to testify in favor of SB419.

The District has been receiving funds from the DMV Pollution Control Fund for over 10 years. As an air quality agency in Nevada, we are authorized by the NRS-Chapter 445B to receive one dollar for every I&M, or smog, certificate sold in the county. These funds account for over 15% of the entire air quality budget and support personnel and equipment to maintain and operate our ambient air quality monitoring network.

In addition to the one dollar, we are eligible to apply for monies accumulated in the Pollution Control Fund after all other requests and obligations have been met, also known as excess reserve monies. Historically this has averaged another one dollar per certification to the Washoe County district air quality agency. These monies are earmarked for air quality projects and have not been used to support staff positions. An example of projects include: incentives for alternative fuel use, support of the Truckee Meadows Clean Cities Coalition, required air quality research projects necessary for State Implementation Plans, and local air quality public education and outreach.

This system of dedicated and excess reserve funds has worked fairly well over the years; however, recently as state and county budgets have become financially lean, this money becomes more critical to the operation of the local air quality programs. In addition, as other state agencies increase their requests for monies from the Pollution Control Fund this leaves less excess reserve money for the air quality agencies and their programs.

Washoe and Clark Air Quality agencies have requested that the DMV increase the allocation of the dedicated funds to air quality agencies from one dollar per certificate to two dollars per certificate. ^{priority list for} ~~In turn the county agencies would be removed from the agencies listed in the statute~~ ^{disbursement of funds} ~~eligible to receive excess reserve funds.~~ These adjustments would not necessarily increase the amount of dedicated monies the counties are receiving from the fund, but rather ensure that the money was available.

In summary, the Washoe County District Health Department supports SB419 as a means to ensure funding is available for local air quality programs.