SENATE BILL NO. 474-COMMITTEE ON TAXATION

(ON BEHALF OF THE NEVADA LEAGUE OF CITIES AND MUNICIPALITIES)

MARCH 24, 2003

Referred to Committee on Taxation

SUMMARY—Revises limitation on total ad valorem tax levy. (BDR 32-340)

FISCAL NOTE: Effect on Local Government: No. Effect on the State: No.

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EXPLANATION – Matter in *bolded italics* is new: matter between brackets formitted material is material to be omitted

AN ACT relating to taxation; exempting ad valorem tax levies approved by the voters from the limitation on the total ad valorem tax levy for all public purposes under certain circumstances; clarifying the manner in which certain other limitations on ad valorem taxes are calculated; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. NRS 361.453 is hereby amended to read as follows: 361.453 1. Except as otherwise provided in this section and NRS 354.705, 354.723 and 450.760, the total ad valorem tax levy for all public purposes must not exceed \$3.64 on each \$100 of assessed valuation, or a lesser or greater amount fixed by the State Board of Examiners if the State Board of Examiners is directed by law to fix a lesser or greater amount for that fiscal year.

2. Any levy imposed by the Legislature for the repayment of bonded indebtedness or the operating expenses of the State of Nevada and any levy imposed by the board of county commissioners pursuant to *subsection 1 of* NRS 387.195 that is in excess of 50 cents on each \$100 of assessed valuation of taxable property within the county must not be included in calculating the



limitation set forth in subsection 1 on the total ad valorem tax levied within the boundaries of the county, city or unincorporated town. [, if, in a county whose population is 40,000 or less, or in a city or unincorporated town located within that county:

(a) The combined tax rate certified by the Nevada Tax Commission was at least \$3.50 on each \$100 of assessed valuation on June 25, 1998;

9 (b) The governing body of that county, city or unincorporated town proposes to its registered voters an additional levy ad valorem above the total ad valorem tax levy for all public purposes set forth in subsection 1;

12 — (c) The proposal specifies the amount of money to be derived, 13 the purpose for which it is to be expended and the duration of the 14 levy; and

 (d) The proposal is approved by a majority of the voters voting on the question at a general election or a special election called for that purpose.

3. The duration of the additional levy ad valorem levied pursuant to subsection 2 must not exceed 5 years. The governing body of the county, city or unincorporated town may discontinue the levy before it expires and may not thereafter reimpose it in whole or in part without following the procedure required for its original imposition set forth in subsection 2.

4. A special election may be held pursuant to subsection 2 only if the governing body of the county, city or unincorporated town determines, by a unanimous vote, that an emergency exists. The determination made by the governing body is conclusive unless it is shown that the governing body acted with fraud or a gross abuse of discretion. An action to challenge the determination made by the governing body must be commenced within 15 days after the governing body's determination is final. As used in this subsection, "emergency" means any unexpected occurrence or combination of occurrences which requires immediate action by the governing body of the county, city or unincorporated town to prevent or mitigate a substantial financial loss to the county, city or unincorporated town or to enable the governing body to provide an essential service to the residents of the county, city or unincorporated town.]

3. If the voters of a local government approve a levy of ad valorem taxes or approve a bond issuance or other debt that is to be repaid by the levy of ad valorem taxes, the amount of the levy of ad valorem taxes that results must not be included in calculating the limitation in subsection 1 on the total ad valorem tax levy for all public purposes if the ballot question contains a clear statement which sets forth the amount of the levy and explains that the levy will be exempt from the limitation set forth in subsection 1.



Sec. 2. NRS 361.4547 is hereby amended to read as follows:

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361.4547 [1.] After the approval of the final budgets for the various local governments as defined in NRS 354.474 and their submission to the Department, for examination and approval, the Nevada Tax Commission shall certify to the board of county commissioners of each of the several counties the combined tax rate necessary to produce the amount of revenue required by the approved budgets, and shall certify that combined rate, to each of the boards of county commissioners.

[2. If the voters of a school district approve an additional levy of taxes ad valorem pursuant to NRS 387.3285 or 387.3287 or the issuance of bonds or other debt to be repaid by a levy of taxes ad valorem throughout the district, and the Department finds for any fiscal year that the additional rate of tax required for this purpose, when added to the rates of taxes ad valorem authorized to be levied in the district by other local governments and the state for that fiscal year would cause the combined rate within the territory of any other local government to exceed the rate allowed by NRS 361.453, the Department shall determine:

— (a) The amounts by which the proposed levies for all of the other local governments whose rates affect the territory have increased from the previous year; and

— (b) The portion of the amount by which the combined rate would exceed the rate allowed by NRS 361.453 that is directly attributable to the additional levy approved by the voters for the school district.

3. If the Department determines that any portion of the amount by which the combined rate would exceed the rate allowed by NRS 361.453 is directly attributable to the additional levy approved by the voters for the school district, the school district shall:

(a) Reduce for the fiscal year the amount levied pursuant to NRS 387.3285 or 387.3287, or both, if the proceeds of the levy are not already committed for debt service, by the amount determined by the Department to be directly attributable to the school district;

(b) Transfer to the other local government whose rate overlaps in that territory an amount of money, determined by the Department to be directly attributable to the school district, to reduce the combined rate to the rate allowed; or

(c) Determine and implement a combination of the methods of reduction allowed by paragraphs (a) and (b) that will result in the reduction of the combined rate by the amount determined by the Department to be directly attributable to the school district.

4. If a school district determines that it will proceed pursuant to paragraph (b) or (c) of subsection 3, the Department shall calculate the transfers so as to minimize the total amount transferred, and



each local government to which a transfer is made shall correspondingly reduce its rate and file a revised budget within the time allowed by subsection 6 of NRS 361.455. The amounts transferred must be paid in installments, within 30 days after each installment of property taxes is due.]

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Sec. 3. NRS 361.455 is hereby amended to read as follows:

361.455 1. [Unless individual tax rates are reduced pursuant to NRS 361.4547, immediately] Immediately upon adoption of the final budgets, if the combined tax rate exceeds the limit imposed by NRS 361.453, the chairman of the board of county commissioners in each county concerned shall call a meeting of the governing boards of each of the local governments within the county for the purpose of establishing a combined tax rate that conforms to the statutory limit. The chairman shall convene the meeting no later than June 13 of each year.

- 2. The governing boards of the local governments shall meet in public session and the county clerk shall keep appropriate records, pursuant to regulations of the Department, of all proceedings. The costs of taking and preparing the record of the proceedings, including the costs of transcribing and summarizing tape recordings, must be borne by the county and participating incorporated cities in proportion to the final tax rate as certified by the Department. The chairman of the board of county commissioners or his designee shall preside at the meeting. The governing boards shall explore areas of mutual concern so as to agree upon a combined tax rate that does not exceed the statutory limit.
- 3. The governing boards shall determine final decisions by a unanimous vote of all entities present and qualified to vote, as defined in this subsection. No ballot may be cast on behalf of any governing board unless a majority of the individual board is present. A majority vote of all members of each governing board is necessary to determine the ballot cast for that entity. All ballots must be cast not later than the day following the day the meeting is convened. The district attorney is the legal adviser for such proceedings.
- 4. The county clerk shall immediately thereafter advise the Department of the results of the ballots cast and the tax rates set for local governments concerned. If the ballots for the entities present at the meeting in the county are not unanimous, the county clerk shall transmit all records of the proceedings to the Department within 5 days after the meeting.
- 5. If a unanimous vote is not obtained and the combined rate in any county together with the established state tax rate exceeds the statutory limit, the Department shall examine the record of the discussions and the budgets of all local governments concerned. On



June 25 or, if June 25 falls on a Saturday or Sunday, on the Monday next following, the Nevada Tax Commission shall meet to set the tax rates for the next succeeding year for all local governments so examined. In setting the tax rates for the next succeeding year the Nevada Tax Commission shall not reduce that portion of the proposed tax rate of the county school district for the operation and maintenance of public schools.

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- 6. Any local government affected by a rate adjustment, made in accordance with the provisions of this section, which necessitates a budget revision shall file a copy of its revised budget by July 30 next after the approval and certification of the rate by the Nevada Tax Commission.
- 7. A copy of the certificate of the Nevada Tax Commission sent to the board of county commissioners must be forwarded to the county auditor.

Sec. 4. NRS 354.598 is hereby amended to read as follows:

354.598 1. At the time and place advertised for public hearing, or at any time and place to which the public hearing is from time to time adjourned, the governing body shall hold a public hearing on the tentative budget, at which time interested persons must be given an opportunity to be heard.

2. At the public hearing, the governing body shall indicate changes, if any, to be made in the tentative budget, and shall adopt a final budget by the favorable votes of a majority of all members of the governing body. Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, the final budget must be adopted on or before June 1 of each year. The final budgets of school districts must be adopted on or before June 8 of each year and must be accompanied by copies of the written report and written procedure prepared pursuant to subsection 3 of NRS 385.351. Should the governing body fail to adopt a final budget that complies with the requirements of law and the regulations of the Committee on Local Government Finance on or before the required date, the budget adopted and used for certification of the combined ad valorem tax rate by the Department of Taxation for the current year, adjusted as to content and rate in such a manner as the Department of Taxation may consider necessary, automatically becomes the budget for the ensuing fiscal year. When a budget has been so adopted by default, the governing body may not reconsider the budget without the express approval of the Department of Taxation. If the default budget creates a combined ad valorem tax rate in excess of the limit imposed by NRS 361.453, the Nevada Tax Commission shall adjust the budget as provided in NRS [361.4547 or] 361.455.

3. The final budget must be certified by a majority of all members of the governing body and a copy of it, together with an



affidavit of proof of publication of the notice of the public hearing, must be transmitted to the Nevada Tax Commission. If a tentative budget is adopted by default as provided in subsection 2, the clerk of the governing body shall certify the budget and transmit to the Nevada Tax Commission a copy of the budget, together with an affidavit of proof of the notice of the public hearing, if that notice was published. Certified copies of the final budget must be distributed as determined by the Department of Taxation.

- 4. Upon the adoption of the final budget or the amendment of the budget in accordance with NRS 354.598005, the several amounts stated in it as proposed expenditures are appropriated for the purposes indicated in the budget.
- 5. No governing body may adopt any budget which appropriates for any fund any amount in excess of the budget resources of that fund.
- 6. If a local government makes a change in its final budget which increases the combined ad valorem tax rate, the local government shall submit the amended final budget to the county auditor within 15 days after making the change.
 - **Sec. 5.** NRS 354.705 is hereby amended to read as follows:
- 354.705 1. As soon as practicable after the Department takes over the management of a local government, the Executive Director shall:
- (a) Determine the total amount of expenditures necessary to allow the local government to perform the basic functions for which it was created;
- (b) Determine the amount of revenue reasonably expected to be available to the local government; and
- (c) Consider any alternative sources of revenue available to the local government.
- 2. If the Executive Director determines that the available revenue is not sufficient to provide for the payment of required debt service and operating expenses, he may submit his findings to the Committee who shall review the determinations made by the Executive Director. If the Committee determines that additional revenue is needed, it shall prepare a recommendation to the Nevada Tax Commission as to which one or more of the following additional taxes or charges should be imposed by the local government:
- (a) The levy of a property tax up to a rate which, when combined with all other overlapping rates levied in the State, including, without limitation, those levies that are excluded from the calculation of the limitation on the total ad valorem tax levy for all public purposes set forth in NRS 361.453, does not exceed \$4.50 on each \$100 of assessed valuation.



(b) An additional tax on transient lodging at a rate not to exceed 1 percent of the gross receipts from the rental of transient lodging within the boundaries of the local government upon all persons in the business of providing lodging. Any such tax must be collected and administered in the same manner as all other taxes on transient lodging are collected by or for the local government.

- (c) Additional service charges appropriate to the local government.
- (d) If the local government is a county or has boundaries that are conterminous with the boundaries of the county:
- (1) An additional tax on the gross receipts from the sale or use of tangible personal property not to exceed one quarter of 1 percent throughout the county. The ordinance imposing any such tax must include provisions in substance which comply with the requirements of subsections 2 to 5, inclusive, of NRS 377A.030.
- (2) An additional governmental services tax of not more than 1 cent on each \$1 of valuation of the vehicle for the privilege of operating upon the public streets, roads and highways of the county on each vehicle based in the county except those vehicles exempt from the governmental services tax imposed pursuant to chapter 371 of NRS or a vehicle subject to NRS 706.011 to 706.861, inclusive, which is engaged in interstate or intercounty operations. As used in this subparagraph, "based" has the meaning ascribed to it in NRS 482.011.
- 3. Upon receipt of the plan from the Committee, a panel consisting of three members of the Nevada Tax Commission appointed by the Nevada Tax Commission and three members of the Committee appointed by the Committee shall hold a public hearing at a location within the boundaries of the local government in which the severe financial emergency exists after giving public notice of the hearing at least 10 days before the date on which the hearing will be held. In addition to the public notice, the panel shall give notice to the governing body of each local government whose jurisdiction overlaps with the jurisdiction of the local government in which the severe financial emergency exists.
- 4. After the public hearing conducted pursuant to subsection 3, the Nevada Tax Commission may adopt the plan as submitted or adopt a revised plan. Any plan adopted pursuant to this section must include the duration for which any new or increased taxes or charges may be collected which must not exceed 5 years.
- 5. Upon adoption of the plan by the Nevada Tax Commission, the local government in which the severe financial emergency exists shall impose or cause to be imposed the additional taxes and charges included in the plan for the duration stated in the plan or until the



severe financial emergency has been determined by the Nevada Tax Commission to have ceased to exist.

- 6. The allowed revenue from taxes ad valorem determined pursuant to NRS 354.59811 does not apply to any additional property tax levied pursuant to this section.
- 7. If a plan fails to satisfy the expenses of the local government to the extent expected, the Committee shall report such failure to:
 - (a) The county for consideration of absorption of services; or
- (b) If the local government is a county, to the next regular session of the Legislature.
 - **Sec. 6.** NRS 354.723 is hereby amended to read as follows:
- 354.723 1. If the Executive Director determines that a severe financial emergency which exists in a local government under management by the Department is unlikely to cease to exist within 3 years, he shall determine:
- (a) The amount any tax or mandatory assessment levied by the local government must be raised to ensure a balanced budget for the local government; and
- (b) The manner in which the services provided by the local government must be limited to ensure a balanced budget for the local government,
- and submit his findings to the Committee.

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- 2. The Committee shall review the findings submitted by the Executive Director pursuant to subsection 1. If the Committee determines that the severe financial emergency which exists in the local government is unlikely to cease to exist within 3 years and that the findings made by the Executive Director are appropriate, the Committee shall submit its recommendation to the Nevada Tax Commission. If the Committee determines that the financial emergency is likely to cease to exist within 3 years, that decision is not subject to review by the Nevada Tax Commission.
- 3. The Nevada Tax Commission shall schedule a public hearing within 30 days after the Committee submits its recommendation. The Nevada Tax Commission shall provide public notice of the hearing at least 10 days before the date on which the hearing will be held. The Executive Director shall provide copies of all documents relevant to the recommendation of the Committee to the governing body of the local government in severe financial emergency.
- 4. If, after the public hearing, the Nevada Tax Commission determines that the recommendation of the Committee is appropriate, a question must be submitted to the electors of the local government at the next primary or general municipal election or primary or general state election, as applicable, asking whether the local government should be disincorporated or dissolved. If the



electors of the local government do not approve the disincorporation or dissolution of the local government:

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- (a) The maximum ad valorem tax levied within the local government, if any, must be raised to \$5 on each \$100 of assessed valuation;
- (b) Any other taxes or mandatory assessments levied in the local government, notwithstanding any limitation on those taxes or assessments provided by statute, must be raised in an amount the Nevada Tax Commission determines is necessary to ensure a balanced budget for the local government; and
- (c) The services provided by the local government must be limited in a manner the Nevada Tax Commission determines is necessary to ensure a balanced budget for the local government.

In calculating the rate of tax required by paragraph (a), those levies that are excluded from the calculation of the limitation on the total ad valorem tax levy for all public purposes set forth in NRS 361.453 must be included.

- 5. If the electors of the local government approve the disincorporation or dissolution of a local government that is:
- (a) Created by another local government, it must be disincorporated or dissolved:
 - (1) Pursuant to the applicable provisions of law; or
- (2) If there are no specific provisions of law providing for the disincorporation or dissolution of the local government, by the entity that created the local government. If, at the time of the disincorporation or dissolution of the local government pursuant to this paragraph, there are any outstanding loans or bonded indebtedness of the local government, including, without limitation, loans made to the local government by the county in which the local government is located, the taxes for the payment of the bonds or other indebtedness must continue to be levied and collected in the same manner as if the local government had not been disincorporated or dissolved until all outstanding indebtedness is repaid, but for all other purposes the local government shall be deemed disincorporated or dissolved at the time that the entity which created the local government disincorporates or dissolves the local government. Any other liabilities and any remaining assets shall revert to the entity that created the local government which is being disincorporated or dissolved.
- (b) Created by a special or local act of the Legislature, it may only be disincorporated or dissolved by the Legislature. The Executive Director shall submit notification of the vote approving the disincorporation or dissolution of the local government to the Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau for transmittal to the



Legislature. At the first opportunity, the Legislature shall consider the question of whether the special or local act will be repealed.

- (c) Created in any other manner, it must be disincorporated or dissolved:
 - (1) Pursuant to the applicable provisions of law; or

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- (2) If there are no specific provisions of law providing for the disincorporation or dissolution of the local government, by the governing body of that local government. If, at the time of the disincorporation or dissolution of the local government pursuant to this paragraph, there are any outstanding loans or bonded indebtedness of the local government, including, without limitation, loans made to the local government by the county or counties in which the local government is located, the taxes for the payment of the bonds or other indebtedness must continue to be levied and collected in the same manner as if the local government had not been disincorporated or dissolved until all outstanding indebtedness is repaid, but for all other purposes the local government shall be deemed disincorporated or dissolved at the time that the governing body of the local government disincorporates or dissolves the local government. Except as otherwise provided in this subparagraph, any other liabilities and any remaining assets of the local government shall revert to the board of county commissioners of the county in which the local government is located. If the local government is located in more than one county, the governing body of the local government shall apportion the remaining liabilities and assets among the boards of county commissioners of the counties in which the local government is located.
- 6. Within 10 days after the Nevada Tax Commission makes a determination pursuant to subsection 4, the Executive Director shall notify:
 - (a) The city clerk, if the local government is a city; or
 - (b) The county clerk in all other cases,
- and provide the clerk with the amount any tax or mandatory assessment levied by the local government must be raised and a description of the manner in which the services provided by the local government must be limited to ensure a balanced budget for the local government.
- 7. After the Executive Director notifies the city clerk or the county clerk, as applicable, pursuant to subsection 6, the clerk shall cause to be published in a newspaper of general circulation that is printed in the local government a notice of the election once in each calendar week for 2 successive calendar weeks by two weekly insertions a week apart, the first publication to be not more than 30 days nor less than 22 days next preceding the date of the election. If no newspaper is printed in the local government, publication of the



notice of election must be made in a newspaper printed in this state and having a general circulation in the local government.

- 8. The notice required pursuant to subsection 7 must contain the following information:
- (a) That the Nevada Tax Commission has determined that the severe financial emergency which exists in the local government is unlikely to cease to exist within 3 years;
- (b) That the question of whether the local government should be disincorporated or dissolved will be submitted to the electors of the local government at the next primary or general municipal election or the next primary or general state election, as applicable; and
- (c) That if the electors do not approve the disincorporation or dissolution:
- (1) The maximum ad valorem tax levied within the local government, if any, will be raised to \$5 on each \$100 of assessed valuation;
- (2) Any taxes or mandatory assessment levied in the local government will be raised to ensure a balanced budget for the local government and the amount by which those taxes or mandatory assessments will be raised; and
- (3) The services the local government provides will be limited to ensure a balanced budget for the local government and the manner in which those services will be limited.
- 9. If any provisions providing generally for the disincorporation or dissolution of the local government require that the question of disincorporating or dissolving be published or submitted to a vote of the electors of the local government, the publication required by subsection 3 and the election required by subsection 4 satisfy those requirements. If:
- (a) There is any other conflict between the provisions of this section and any provisions providing generally for the disincorporation or dissolution of a local government; or
- (b) The provisions providing generally for the disincorporation or dissolution of a local government provide additional rights to protest the disincorporation or dissolution of a local government not provided by this section,
- the provisions of this section control a disincorporation or dissolution pursuant to this section and any person wishing to protest such a disincorporation or dissolution must proceed in accordance with the provisions of this section.
- 10. As used in this section, "local government" does not include a county, a school district or any agency or department of a county or city which prepares a budget separate from that of the parent political subdivision.



Sec. 7. NRS 450.760 is hereby amended to read as follows: 450.760 In a county whose population is less than 400,000:

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1. If, after a hearing, the board of county commissioners determines that the dissolution of a hospital district is necessary, the board shall by resolution provide for the dissolution of the hospital district. On and after the filing of the resolution with the county recorder, the hospital district shall be deemed dissolved.

2. Before dissolving a hospital district pursuant to subsection 1, the board of county commissioners shall determine whether the proceeds from the taxes currently being levied in the district, if any, for the operation of the hospital and the repayment of debt are sufficient to repay any outstanding obligations of the hospital district within a reasonable period after the dissolution of the district. If there are no taxes currently being levied for the hospital district or the taxes being levied are not sufficient to repay the outstanding obligations of the hospital district within a reasonable period after the dissolution of the district, before dissolving the district pursuant to subsection 1 the board of county commissioners may levy a property tax on all of the taxable property in the district that is sufficient, when combined with any revenue from taxes currently being levied in the district, to repay the outstanding obligations of the hospital district within a reasonable period after the dissolution of the district. The allowed revenue from taxes ad valorem determined pursuant to NRS 354.59811 does not apply to any additional property tax levied pursuant to this subsection. If the hospital district is being managed by the Department of Taxation pursuant to NRS 354.685 to 354.725, inclusive, at the time of dissolution, the rate levied pursuant to this subsection must not be included in the total ad valorem tax levy for the purposes of the application of the limitation in NRS 361.453, but the rate levied, when combined with all other overlapping rates levied in the State, including, without limitation, those levies that are excluded from the calculation of the limitation on the total ad valorem tax levy for all public purposes set forth in NRS 361.453, must not exceed \$4.50 on each \$100 of assessed valuation. The board of county commissioners shall discontinue any rate levied pursuant to this subsection on a date that will ensure that no taxes are collected for this purpose after the outstanding obligations of the hospital district have been paid in full.

3. If, at the time of the dissolution of the hospital district, there are any outstanding loans, bonded indebtedness or other obligations of the hospital district, including, without limitation, unpaid obligations to organizations such as the public employees' retirement system, unpaid salaries or unpaid loans made to the hospital district by the county, the taxes being levied in the district



at the time of dissolution must continue to be levied and collected in the same manner as if the hospital district had not been dissolved until all outstanding obligations of the district have been paid in full, but for all other purposes the hospital district shall be deemed dissolved from the time the resolution is filed pursuant to subsection 1.

- 4. If the hospital district is being managed by the Department of Taxation pursuant to NRS 354.685 to 354.725, inclusive, at the time of dissolution, the management ceases upon dissolution, but the board of county commissioners shall continue to make such financial reports to the Department of Taxation as the Department deems necessary until all outstanding obligations of the hospital district have been paid in full.
- 5. The property of the dissolved hospital district may be retained by the board of county commissioners for use as a hospital or disposed of in any manner the board deems appropriate. Any proceeds of the sale or other transfer of the property of the dissolved hospital district and any proceeds from taxes which had been levied and received by the hospital district before dissolution, whether levied for operating purposes or for the repayment of debt, must be used by the board of county commissioners to repay any indebtedness of the hospital district.
- **Sec. 8.** If, before July 1, 2003, the governing body of a county, city or unincorporated town has levied an additional ad valorem tax pursuant to the provisions of subsection 2 of NRS 361.453 and that levy does not expire or is not discontinued before July 1, 2003, that levy must be included in the calculation of the limitation set forth in subsection 1 of NRS 361.453 until it expires.
 - **Sec. 9.** This act becomes effective on July 1, 2003.

