

**MINUTES OF THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE OPERATIONS AND ELECTIONS**

**Seventy-ninth Session  
May 1, 2017**

The Senate Committee on Legislative Operations and Elections was called to order by Chair Nicole J. Cannizzaro at 3:49 p.m. on Monday, May 1, 2017, in Room 2144 of the Legislative Building, Carson City, Nevada. [Exhibit A](#) is the Agenda. [Exhibit B](#) is the Attendance Roster. All exhibits are available and on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Senator Nicole J. Cannizzaro, Chair  
Senator Tick Segerblom, Vice Chair  
Senator Kelvin Atkinson  
Senator James A. Settelmeyer  
Senator Heidi S. Gansert

**GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:**

Senator Joyce Woodhouse, Senatorial District No. 5  
Assemblyman Chris Brooks, Assembly District No. 10  
Assemblyman Steve Yeager, Assembly District No. 9

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Michael Stewart, Policy Analyst  
Kevin Powers, Counsel  
Rick Combs, Director  
Jan Brase, Committee Secretary

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Priscilla Maloney, American Federation of State, County and Municipal  
Employees Retiree Chapter Local 4041  
Kyle Davis, League to Save Lake Tahoe  
Chris Nielsen, General Counsel, Public Employees' Retirement System  
Lynn Chapman, Vice President, Nevada Eagle Forum  
Janine Hansen, Nevada Families for Freedom  
John Wagner, Independent American Party

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CHAIR CANNIZZARO:

I will open the hearing on Assembly Concurrent Resolution (A.C.R.) 9.

**ASSEMBLY CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 9 (1st Reprint)**: Directs the Legislative Commission to conduct an interim study concerning treating certain traffic and related violations as civil infractions. (BDR R-1064)

ASSEMBLYMAN STEVE YEAGER (Assembly District No. 9):

Assembly Concurrent Resolution 9 directs the Legislative Commission to conduct an Interim study concerning the treatment of certain traffic and related violations as civil infractions. The questions of whether and how to move minor traffic offenses from criminal to civil courts has been considered for more than 30 years in the United States. In 1973, Congress asked the U.S. Department of Transportation to study administrative adjudication of traffic infractions. In 1976, the American Bar Association recommended a similar study.

Twenty-two states since 1970 have reclassified as noncriminal most minor traffic offenses because of the evolving viewpoints on the severity of the punishment versus the severity of the offense and because the costs do not outweigh the benefits of existing systems.

Typically, offenses remaining in criminal statute are reckless driving, driving under the influence, driving with a suspended license, failure to obey a police officer, excessive speeding and racing, among others. A study under A.C.R. 9 would likely propose maintaining these offenses as criminal infractions in Nevada.

Assembly Bill No. 248 of the 77th Session would have converted criminal traffic infractions to civil offenses. Thirty-nine Assembly members and 18 Senators signed the bill as cosponsors. The bill was amended to direct a study of the issue and was approved by the Assembly. However, it was not heard on the Senate Floor.

Assembly Bill No. 281 of the 78th Session was another attempt to form a study on criminal traffic offenses. Again, there was wide-ranging support, but the bill was not approved.

Assembly Concurrent Resolution 9 would require the Legislative Commission to appoint six members to study the issue in the Interim. The membership would

consist of three Senators and three Assemblymen; two of the members must be from counties outside Clark County. One representative would be from outside both Clark and Washoe Counties. All parts of the State should be represented.

There are some complications to the issue. Where does the revenue go? Who would prosecute offenders?

Neighboring states of Arizona, California, Colorado, Oregon, Utah and Idaho all view minor traffic infractions as a civil matter. Nevada is the exception, and an Interim study may produce a consensus bill for consideration in the 80th Legislative Session.

SENATOR SEGERBLOM:

How do you address the cities and courts concerned about loss of revenue? There would be no legal process for collecting fines.

ASSEMBLYMAN YEAGER:

This is a concern. The proposed study could examine options.

SENATOR SEGERBLOM:

Would you be amenable to expanding the study to consider the fee structure and fines? Some courts may depend on these fines as a major source of revenue though they can be an undue burden on low-income citizens.

ASSEMBLYMAN YEAGER:

Yes. I would note that most of the administrative assessment fees are legislatively enacted. Not all fee collections go to the courts; some are collected in the General Fund. The study would focus on converting infractions from criminal to civil and a review of fees and fines.

CHAIR CANNIZZARO:

Who prosecutes civil infractions in other jurisdictions?

ASSEMBLYMAN YEAGER:

I do not have an answer at this point. This would be a topic for the study. We would invite representatives of neighboring states to provide guidance and share their experiences.

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CHAIR CANNIZZARO:

I will close the hearing on A.C.R. 9.

VICE CHAIR SEGERBLOM:

I will open the hearing on Senate Bill (S.B.) 507.

**SENATE BILL 507**: Revises the Interim committee structure of the Legislature.  
(BDR 17-1126)

SENATOR NICOLE J. CANNIZZARO (Senatorial District No. 6):

Senate Bill 507 revises the way the Nevada Legislature structures its Interim activities. The concept of this measure dates back to the 2009-2010 Legislative Interim and was a recommendation of the Interim Committee to Consult with the Director which unanimously supported A.B. No. 578 of the 76th Session. This bill revisits the prior measure and addresses a concern about appointments to Joint Interim Standing Committees.

Senate Bill 507 is important because legislative leaders from both political parties have indicated a need for a better way to organize the Interim study process and its structure. One of the issues over the years has been the number of Legislators appointed to Interim studies without knowledge of the topics studied. Another issue is the number of bill draft requests (BDR) submitted by Interim Committees and heard by Session Standing Committees without members who served on those Interim Committees. Those members during Session have, often, not had the benefit of hearing important testimony on issues during the Interim period.

As early as the 1970s, the Legislature recognized the concerns with our current structure and the lack of continuity between the Interim and regular Session. Recognizing these concerns, the Committee to Consult with the Director studied this issue and adopted recommendations to create a new Interim Committee structure based on the existing Session Standing Committee structure. The new Interim Committee structure is established under the provisions of S.B. 507.

This measure applies to certain policy committees during the Interim staffed by the Legislative Counsel Bureau. The proposal does not include the Interim Finance Committee (IFC), the Economic Forum, the Legislative Commission or any statutory subcommittees affiliated with those Committees. Section 6 of S.B. 507 proposes, with the exceptions noted earlier, to create several Joint

Interim Standing Committees that parallel the jurisdiction of the Session Standing Committees. Section 8 of S.B. 507 proposes that topics would be established through legislation or topics within the jurisdiction of the Session Standing Committees would be assigned to those Committees to handle as a whole or through subcommittees during the Interim.

Each Joint Interim Standing Committee would be required to report on all their Interim activities and deliberations. Section 8 also specifies that the Legislative Commission will review the budget and work plan of each of these entities. In some cases, such as the Legislative Committee on Health Care and the Legislative Committee on Education, there are numerous references in the *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS) relating to their statutory duties and the manner in which they receive reports. Senate Bill 507 reassigns these duties to the Joint Interim Standing Committees. The details begin in section 13 and are mostly related to the Joint Interim Standing Committees on Education, Government Affairs, Health Care and Judiciary.

Joint Interim Standing Committees would consist of eight members and five alternate members, five Assembly members with three alternates and three Senate members with two alternates. Of the five Assembly members, three would be appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly and two would be appointed by the Minority Leader of the Assembly. The three alternate Assembly members would be appointed by the Speaker and one would be appointed by the Minority Leader.

Of the three Senate members, two would be appointed by the Senate Majority Leader and one would be appointed by the Senate Minority Leader. One Senate alternate member is appointed by the Senate Majority Leader and one is appointed by the Senate Minority Leader.

Section 7 of S.B. 507 addresses quorums and voting. Five members of a Joint Interim Standing Committee constitute a quorum. Any recommended legislation must be approved by a majority of the Senate members and by a majority of the Assembly members. Other actions can be taken by a majority of those present.

The BDR allocations for the Joint Interim Standing Committees are set forth in section 4 of the bill. Each Joint Interim Standing Committee is allocated ten BDRs to carry forward to the following Legislative Session. Section 53 of S.B. 507 includes transitory language to capture any other bills or resolutions

under consideration if it assigns a power or duty to an Interim Standing Committee abolished by this bill. Specifically, the bill allows the Legislative Counsel, in revising the NRS, to assign the power or duty or require the document or information to be submitted to the appropriate Joint Interim Committee with jurisdiction over the topic area.

The measure directs the Legislative Commission to set the work plan for each of the Joint Interim Standing Committees. As noted in section 53, if the subject matter of a legislative study or investigation falls within the jurisdiction of more than one Joint Interim Standing Committee, the Legislative Commission shall assign the study or investigation based upon the budgets and work programs approved by the Legislative Commission. If S.B. 507 is approved, the Legislative Commission would direct when the Joint Interim Committees could begin their work and decide upon the work of each committee based on jurisdiction.

Senate Bill 507 does not repeal NRS 218E.200, but the statute is amended in section 11. The Legislative Commission retains broad authority to establish other subcommittees and investigate various matters as needed. The Legislative Commission would continue to have authority to direct other studies that may be outside the scope or purview of Joint Interim Standing Committees or may need special legislative attention.

The bill may require a technical amendment in sections 30 through 33 which assigns matters relating to the Joint Interim Standing Committee on Government Affairs. Our Fiscal staff noted the matters related to the Interim Retirement and Benefits Committee are handled by the Interim Finance Committee. I propose those matters continue to be considered by the IFC.

Senate Bill 507 proposes to allow the Legislature to operate in the Interim in much the same way it does during regular Sessions. Our Standing Committees consider topics within their purview. Members would have heard testimony during the Interim and would be prepared to continue the work during regular Session.

SENATOR GANSERT:

Is there a limit to the number of times a Joint Interim Standing Committee can meet?

SENATOR CANNIZZARO:

Senate Bill 507 does not address this issue. It should be clarified and worked into the bill.

SENATOR GANSERT:

Can you address possible changes to the Legislative Committee for the Review and Oversight of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) and the Marlette Lake Water System?

SENATOR CANNIZZARO:

Some Interim Committees have specialized jurisdictions. The TRPA has agreements with California and surrounding areas relating to Lake Tahoe. I have indicated my willingness review these special interest Interim Committees. The purpose of S.B. 507 is not to abolish existing Interim Committees. The purpose is to streamline the way we operate during the Interim.

SENATOR SETTELMAYER:

How would S.B. 507 impact the number of BDRs submitted by Interim Committees?

SENATOR CANNIZZARO:

The number of allotted BDRs would remain, essentially, unchanged. The amount of time required to review and discuss issues addressed in the BDRs will be reduced if members of Session Standing Committees have heard testimony in the Interim.

SENATOR SETTELMAYER:

Can Senate and Assembly leadership structure membership of Interim Committees to accomplish the goals of S.B. 507 without broad organizational changes?

SENATOR CANNIZZARO:

Legislative leadership will assign members to Joint Interim Standing Committees under S.B. 507.

VICE CHAIR SEGERBLOM:

The Oregon legislature meets as interim committees every three months and the legislators have an opportunity to discuss issues on an ongoing basis. When the

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legislative session begins, legislators can hit the ground running. In Nevada, we spend the first month of Session getting organized.

RICK COMBS (Director):

Regarding the question of restrictions on the number of meetings held by Joint Interim Standing Committees, in my understanding of S.B. 507, the Legislative Commission would establish budgets for each Committee at the beginning of the Interim. The budget approval process would include planning for the number of scheduled meetings.

VICE CHAIR SEGERBLOM:

Do you have adequate staff for a new organization of Interim Committees?

MR. COMBS:

Senate Bill 507, as written, would eliminate 13 Committees. Nine Committees would be formed. If the total number of meetings does not exceed current levels, our staffing would be adequate. Adjustments may be needed once the system is in place.

PRISCILLA MALONEY (American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Retiree Chapter Local 4041):

We are interested in S.B. 507 because the Interim Retirement and Benefits Committee (IRBC) is subject to the proposed changes. Generally, we support the policy objectives of S.B. 507. However, the jurisdiction of the IRBC falls under the IFC, and there may be some changes to the bill. As written, section 55 of S.B. 507 repeals the statute which creates the IRBC, NRS 218E.420.

University of Nevada, Reno, professor Dr. Kent Ervin, representing the Nevada Faculty Alliance, asked that I express the Alliance's concern with the repeal of 218E.420, especially subsection 1, paragraph (a) and paragraph (b) of the statute. The language in these sections outlines a quasi-mission statement which should be preserved.

SENATOR SEGERBLOM:

This is a work in progress.

KYLE DAVIS (League to Save Lake Tahoe):

We oppose S.B. 507 as written, though we agree with a majority of the bill. We are concerned about section 52 of S.B. 507 which removes the Legislative



Committee for the Review and Oversight of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency and Marlette Lake Water System. This Committee has been effective in fostering collaboration across the border with California and in bringing matters of regional importance to the Nevada Legislature. The sponsor is working with us on the issue.

CHRIS NIELSEN (General Counsel, Public Employees' Retirement System):  
We are neutral to S.B. 507. The IRBC was created in response to a study of the growing and complex public pension fund. We ask the Committee to reconsider folding the IRBC into a more general Interim Standing Committee.

SENATOR CANNIZZARO:  
The Interim Retirement and Benefits Committee will continue to operate without changes and will not be affected by S.B. 507.

VICE CHAIR SEGERBLOM:  
I will close the hearing on S.B. 507.

CHAIR CANNIZZARO:  
I will open the hearing on A.B. 452.

**ASSEMBLY BILL 452**: Directs the Legislative Committee on Energy to conduct an Interim study concerning energy choice. (BDR S-1113)

ASSEMBLYMAN CHRIS BROOKS (Assembly District No. 10):  
Assembly Bill 452 is requested by the Assembly Committee on Commerce and Labor. It directs the Legislative Committee on Energy to conduct an Interim study concerning energy choice. Statute creates the Legislative Committee on Energy and directs the Committee to take a variety of actions with respect to matters related to energy policy in Nevada.

Assembly Bill 452 requires the Committee's study to include consideration of any issue policy requirement identified in ballot Question No. 3 of the 2016 general election. Question No. 3 asked that Article 1 of the Nevada Constitution be amended to require the Legislature to provide for the establishment of an open, competitive retail electric energy market that prohibits the granting of monopolies and exclusive franchises for the generation of electricity. Question No. 3 is also known as the Energy Choice Initiative.

The study must also include a review of the work of the Governor's Committee on Energy, established by Governor Brian Sandoval after the voters' approval of the Energy Choice Initiative. The bill requires the Legislative Committee on Energy to submit a report of its findings and any recommendations for legislation to the Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau on or before February 1, 2019.

Assembly Bill 452 passed out of the Assembly Subcommittee on Energy and was recommended do pass. It passed out of the Assembly Commerce and Labor Committee unanimously, and it passed out of the Assembly Chamber on a vote of 41 to 1.

SENATOR SETTELMAYER:

Should the Governor's Committee on Energy wait for the results of your study?

ASSEMBLYMAN BROOKS:

The Governor's study will be designed to make recommendations to the Legislature for possible legislation. The Legislative Committee on Energy, under A.B. 452, would review those recommendations and consider them. Additionally, the Legislative Committee on Energy would make independent recommendations. The studies would be complementary rather than duplicative.

CHAIR CANNIZZARO:

I will close A.B. 452 and open Senate Joint Resolution (S.J.R.) 11.

**SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 11**: Proposes to amend the Nevada Constitution to revise provisions relating to the State Legislature. (BDR C-1082)

SENATOR JOYCE WOODHOUSE (Senatorial District No. 5):

Senate Joint Resolution 11 provides, on a limited basis, for annual regular Sessions of the Nevada Legislature. The subject of this resolution is one that has been considered a number of times in the past, but I think you will agree that now is definitely the time to bring this important issue back to the Senate.

Senator Tick Segerblom, Senatorial District No. 3, introduced the most recent annual Session resolution, which was approved in 2013 and approved by this Committee again in 2015. Senator Segerblom will also provide some comments and additional context on this important and timely resolution.

Senate Joint Resolution 11 proposes to amend the Nevada Constitution to provide for annual regular Legislative Sessions, limited in odd-numbered years to not more than 90 legislative days within 120 calendar days and in even-numbered years to not more than 30 legislative days within 45 calendar days. The resolution defines legislative day to mean any calendar day on which either House of the Legislature is in Session or any Legislative Committee holds a meeting during a Session. Today, the Nevada Legislature meets every other year for 120 days. This resolution calls for the same number of days of legislative business; it simply provides that these legislative days occur every year rather than every other year.

The even-numbered year Sessions would commence on the first Monday in March, and the Governor would be required to submit any proposed appropriations or proposed revisions to the *Executive Budget* not later than 14 calendar days before the commencement of each regular Session held in these even-numbered years.

The resolution also proposes to remove the current constitutional provisions that limit payment of legislator salaries to the first 60 days of a regular Session and the first 20 days of a Special Session, and proposes instead that Legislators be compensated at regular intervals as set by law. Finally, the measure proposes to remove the restriction of \$60 per Session for office expenses, such as postage and stationery, and to appropriate funds for actual expenses that members may incur for each Legislative Session. As you know, if S.J.R. 11 passes in identical form this Session and again in 2019, it will go to the voters for their consideration at the 2020 general election.

As Senator Segerblom will review, this idea has been considered by the Legislature many times in the past, but the last time it was actually presented to the voters was in 1970, 47 years ago. In fact, during the Seventy-fifth Legislative Session, I proposed a similar measure. A lot has changed since 1970 and the voters deserve another opportunity to weigh in on this critical issue.

The passage of S.J.R. 11 will create a more responsive and accountable Legislature for all Nevadans, while at the same time maintaining a citizen Legislature and provide for limitations on the overgrowth of government. Annual Sessions with strict limitations on length will provide our State with increased financial stability in a complex and rapidly changing global economy.

Despite our tradition of biennial Sessions, it is time for a change. While this tradition made sense in simpler times when our population was much smaller and our finances were less complex, it no longer addresses the needs of a rapidly growing state with a multibillion-dollar budget operating in a global marketplace. Our State simply cannot adequately address rapidly changing conditions, a complex budget and policy matters by meeting every other year. In the past 15 years alone, our General Fund has more than doubled. At the same time, our responsibilities as Legislators have increased significantly.

By instituting the limited-length annual Sessions proposed by S.J.R. 11, we will reduce the need for Special Sessions. Since the Legislature was limited to 120 days beginning with the Seventieth Legislative Session, we have been called into Special Session 14 times. I certainly understand the concern about the burden that annual Sessions might place on our citizen Legislators; however, I submit that the continuity of set, short and limited annual Sessions will be less burdensome than multiple and spontaneous Special Sessions of unknown duration.

The Legislature will also be better able to address the complex budgetary concerns of the State with the annual Sessions proposed in S.J.R. 11. With the passage of this resolution, I believe our legislative system will improve in many ways. The Legislature will be able to conduct annual budgetary and policy reviews and act more quickly in response to changing conditions. Annual Sessions will help to produce more accurate revenue and spending forecasts. The annual system will allow for greater stability in State agencies and among our local governments, thereby helping to produce better long-term planning. The Legislature will be better able to attend to Nevada's demanding tax structure ensuring a more stable revenue stream. Annual Sessions allow the Legislature to exercise better control over federal funds and respond more effectively to the changing economic climate. More frequent meetings may raise the status and impact of the Legislature, which will allow for better oversight of Executive Branch activities. We will become a more efficient and effective Body by meeting annually. The Legislature will no longer lose critical institutional memory and expertise from Session to Session, as Legislators will spend less time getting up to speed and more time addressing the needs of our State. Annual Sessions will reduce the need to rely on the Interim Finance Committee and Legislative Commission as often as we do. We will be able to better focus our Interim activities and Interim Committee meetings to ensure they meet the

needs of the Legislature. We should be able to provide better continuity between our Session Standing Committees and our Interim Committees.

According to our research, only three other states, Montana, North Dakota and Texas, have a legislative session structure similar to Nevada. I have provided a chart from *The Book of the States 2016* ([Exhibit C](#)), showing the provisions for each of the states. The National Conference of State Legislatures also has excellent research on this subject.

It is time for the Nevada Legislature to join the vast majority of states and meet our responsibilities to our constituents on an annual basis.

Senate Joint Resolution No. 11 sets forth a system that will allow us to do so effectively and efficiently with no additional legislative days on the calendar, all while maintaining our important citizen Legislature.

SENATOR TICK SEGERBLOM (Senatorial District No. 3):

Senate Joint Resolution 11 does not create annual Sessions. It authorizes voters to decide if Nevada's Legislature should meet in annual Sessions. This bill, if passed in the Seventy-ninth Legislative Session, would need to pass in the Eightieth Legislative Session and would go on the ballot in 2020. The first annual Session would take place in 2022.

This matter has not been voted on since 1970. Nevada is not the same State it was 50 years ago. As outlined in the Nevada Constitution, the Legislature is the first of the three branches of government. Over time, the Legislature's role has diminished, and it is time to assert our position in the governmental process. When the Legislature adjourns in June of every odd-numbered year, there is a sense that we can be ignored for two years until we return.

Senate Joint Resolution 11 represents a chance for overriding vetoes and opportunities for passing legislation that do not meet Session deadlines. The bill also addresses Legislators' compensation. We are paid \$150 for the first 60 days of Session, and we are not compensated for the last 60 days. Legislators need to be proud of all the work we do and be willing to stand up for ourselves. This is a full-time job. In Arizona and Oregon, legislators are paid \$2,000 a month whether or not the legislature is in Session.

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Senate Joint Resolution 11 does not directly address compensation, but voters will be able to decide. This legislation will give voters the opportunity to modernize our system.

Three states, Kentucky, Oregon and Arkansas, have moved from biennial to annual sessions. The changes have been well received. I have submitted my written testimony ([Exhibit D](#)).

SENATOR SETTELMAYER:

I disagree when you say we have not changed the structure of the Legislature in 50 years. Legislators can call for a Special Session. This is an option if we want to address the Governor's vetoes between Sessions.

SENATOR SEGERBLOM:

Voters approved the measure allowing Legislators to call Special Sessions. This is an example of the voters' interest in changing the legislative system.

SENATOR SETTELMAYER:

The business community would be faced with the possibility of changes to statute every year.

SENATOR SEGERBLOM:

Business owners would not want to be told they had to build a budget only once every two years. They would be assured the Legislature could address needed changes in statute on a timely basis.

SENATOR GANSERT:

Senate Joint Resolution 11 does not propose details on Legislators' compensation. Voters would be concerned about the specifics.

SENATOR WOODHOUSE:

In drafting S.J.R. 11, Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB) Legal Division staff told us that language is not included in a resolution. Legislation following the approval by the voters of S.J.R. 11 would be discussed to clarify Legislators' compensation.

The goal is to give the voters an opportunity to consider the idea of annual Sessions and to express opinions. We have proposed 90-day Sessions within 120 days and 30-day Sessions within 45 days. Legislative days will not be

calendar days. During the longer periods, the Legislature could recess and allow LCB staff, especially Fiscal, Research and Legal, to support the process without having to work extremely long hours.

SENATOR GANSERT:

The Legislature would address the budget during the longer Session. Is that correct? Would we still have a biennial budget?

SENATOR WOODHOUSE:

Yes. The budget process would not be changed and would be considered in odd-numbered years. The Session held in even-numbered years would focus on emerging issues both fiscal and policy.

SENATOR GANSERT:

During the recent recession, we used some flexible language in Medicaid policy allowing for moving funds to needed areas. Is this a process we can work with?

SENATOR WOODHOUSE:

I do not have an answer. I proposed annual Sessions in 2009 without success. During the recession, it was obvious that the Governor, State agencies and the Legislature could have worked together and effectively address pressing issues during annual Sessions in a more timely manner.

SENATOR SETTELMAYER:

Would passage of the process proposed by S.J.R. 11 lead to dissolving the Interim Finance Committee?

SENATOR WOODHOUSE:

No. The IFC and the Legislative Commission would continue to meet, but not as often.

LYNN CHAPMAN (Vice President, Nevada Eagle Forum):

I have talked with many people who do not approve of annual Legislative Sessions. They are concerned about increasing taxes.

Former Illinois State Senator Donald L. Totten wrote an article titled, "Should Legislators Serve Full-Time?" In part, he said:

As the legislature becomes more full-time oriented, it creates new programs, expands old ones and manufactures solutions to problems which sometimes do not even exist.

As legislative service becomes more of a full-time occupation, there is an inevitable tendency for government to grow larger and more expansive in its efforts to justify its existence. With each of the new programs created, two new interest groups are created, both of which are dependent on the actions of the legislature for their existence. These two groups are the beneficiaries of the new programs and the bureaucracies created to administer them. Their voices then exert additional pressure on the legislative body for their perpetual existence and expansion.

In those states which have retained the citizen-legislator concept, the pressure has not been as great to increase the functions of state government, and their rate of increase in the cost of state government has not accelerated nearly as fast as that of states whose legislative bodies meet more frequently.

We need look no further than to our Potomac Fraternity, the federal Congress, for how the full-time legislator has become insulated from the American citizen.

We need look no further than to our own state: since the advent of annual sessions just eight years ago, we have doubled state spending.

These are some of the issues of concern to Nevadans I speak to.

JANINE HANSEN (Nevada Families for Freedom):

We support reasonable compensation for Nevada's Legislators. We want less government, not more. Senate Joint Resolution 11 would make it more difficult for citizen Legislators and citizen lobbyists to participate. Finding housing for four months in Carson City is difficult. Most people probably have to pay for six months. If the Legislature were in session for 45 days, it would be a challenge to find a place to stay.



We may not need annual sessions if we reduced the number of bills considered. The work of the Legislative Counsel Bureau would be reduced, and we could avoid duplication.

In the even-numbered years, the beginning of the 45-day Session would conflict with candidate filing deadlines and with fund-raising restrictions. A candidate who is serving in the Legislature could not accept contributions from the end of January through the middle of May. Nevada's primary is held in the second week of June.

The assertion that S.J.R. 11 does not provide for additional legislative days is misleading. The Legislature is in Session for 120 calendar days. Under S.J.R. 11, the Legislature would be in Session for a total of 165 calendar days.

We oppose annual Legislative Sessions. We understand the issue will be brought to the voters, but the process starts here. Annual Sessions will increase the size, the scope and the cost of government.

JOHN WAGNER (Independent American Party):

We oppose S.J.R. 11, but support increased compensation for Legislators. Legislators and their families should also have health care coverage during Session.

Mark Twain said that when the legislature is in session, our liberty is not safe. Nevada's Legislators are open and accessible, but our Interim Committees could do more to close the gaps between Sessions and reduce the number of bill draft requests.

SENATOR WOODHOUSE:

I would be open to amendments that may improve S.J.R. 11.

SENATOR SEGERBLOM:

I agree.

CHAIR CANNIZZARO:

I will close the hearing on S.J.R. 11.

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CHAIR CANNIZZARO:  
I will adjourn the meeting at 5:05 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

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Jan Brase,  
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

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Senator Nicole J. Cannizzaro, Chair

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

EXHIBIT SUMMARY				
Bill	Exhibit / # of pages		Witness / Entity	Description
	A	1		Agenda
	B	2		Attendance Roster
S.J.R. 11	C	4	Senator Joyce Woodhouse	<i>The Book of the States 2016,</i> Legislative Sessions
S.J.R. 11	D	5	Senator Tick Segerblom	Written Testimony