

Senate Bill No. 14–Committee on Government Affairs

CHAPTER.....

AN ACT relating to governmental administration; authorizing the Governor to remove certain gubernatorial appointees to boards, commissions or similar bodies under certain circumstances; authorizing the Governor to remove appeals officers under certain circumstances; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

Legislative Counsel’s Digest:

Existing law authorizes the Governor to remove from their positions gubernatorial appointees to certain boards, commissions and similar bodies, such as the Board of Examiners for Long-Term Care Administrators, the State Board of Pharmacy and the State Board of Landscape Architecture, among others. (NRS 623A.080, 639.030, 654.080) The Governor is not explicitly authorized to remove gubernatorial appointees to other boards, such as the State Board of Professional Engineers and Land Surveyors, the Nevada Funeral and Cemetery Services Board and the Certified Court Reporters’ Board of Nevada, among others. (NRS 625.100, 642.020, 656.040) **Section 1** of this bill: (1) declares any gubernatorial appointee to any board, commission or similar body to be a civil officer of this State; and (2) authorizes the Governor to remove such an appointee for malfeasance or nonfeasance in the performance of his or her duties unless a specific statute requires other removal procedures. **Section 1** requires that the Governor give the appointee 45 days’ notice of the removal unless the Governor determines that circumstances require the immediate removal of the appointee.

Existing law requires the Governor to appoint one or more appeals officers to conduct hearings and appeals in contested cases involving industrial insurance benefits for injuries or death. Appeals officers must be licensed attorneys and are appointed for 2-year terms. (NRS 616C.340) **Section 2** of this bill: (1) declares an appeals officer to be a civil officer of this State; and (2) authorizes the Governor to remove an appeals officer prior to the expiration of his or her term for malfeasance or nonfeasance in the performance of his or her duties or if his or her license to practice law is revoked or suspended. **Section 2** requires that the Governor give the appeals officer 45 days’ notice of the removal unless the Governor determines that circumstances require the immediate removal of the appeals officer.

EXPLANATION – Matter in *bolded italics* is new; matter between brackets ~~omitted material~~ is material to be omitted.

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

Section 1. Chapter 232A of NRS is hereby amended by adding thereto a new section to read as follows:

1. Each member of a board, commission or similar body appointed by the Governor is deemed to be a civil officer of this State for the purposes of Section 4 of Article 7 of the Nevada Constitution.



2. *Except as otherwise provided by a specific statute, the Governor may remove any member of a board, commission or similar body appointed by the Governor for malfeasance or nonfeasance in the performance of his or her duties. The Governor shall provide the member 45 days' notice of the removal unless the Governor determines that circumstances warrant immediate removal.*

3. *The provisions of this section which deem the holders of certain positions to be civil officers of this State:*

(a) *Are intended to supplement all other provisions of statute or case law which make the holders of certain positions be civil officers of this State; and*

(b) *Must not be construed to make the holder of any position not described in this section not be a civil officer of this State.*

Sec. 2. NRS 616C.340 is hereby amended to read as follows:

616C.340 1. The Governor shall appoint one or more appeals officers to conduct hearings and appeals as required pursuant to chapters 616A to 617, inclusive, of NRS. *Each appeals officer appointed by the Governor is deemed to be a civil officer of this State for the purposes of Section 4 of Article 7 of the Nevada Constitution.* Each appeals officer shall hold office for 2 years after the date of his or her appointment and until the successor of the appeals officer is appointed and has qualified. Each appeals officer is entitled to receive an annual salary in an amount provided by law and is in the unclassified service of the State.

2. Each appeals officer must be an attorney who has been licensed to practice law before all the courts of this State for at least 2 years. Except as otherwise provided in NRS 7.065, an appeals officer shall not engage in the private practice of law.

3. If an appeals officer determines that he or she has a personal interest or a conflict of interest, directly or indirectly, in any case which is before him or her, the appeals officer shall disqualify himself or herself from hearing the case.

4. The Governor may appoint one or more special appeals officers to conduct hearings and appeals as required pursuant to chapters 616A to 617, inclusive, of NRS. *Each special appeals officer appointed by the Governor is deemed to be a civil officer of this State for the purposes of Section 4 of Article 7 of the Nevada Constitution.* The Governor shall not appoint an attorney who represents persons in actions related to claims for compensation to serve as a special appeals officer.

5. A special appeals officer appointed pursuant to subsection 4 is vested with the same powers as a regular appeals officer. A



special appeals officer may hear any case in which a regular appeals officer has a conflict, or any case assigned to the special appeals officer by the senior appeals officer to assist with a backlog of cases. A special appeals officer is entitled to be paid at an hourly rate, as determined by the Department of Administration.

6. *The Governor may remove any appeals officer or special appeals officer for malfeasance or nonfeasance in the performance of his or her duties. The Governor may remove any appeals officer whose license to practice law has become void or has been revoked or suspended. The Governor shall provide the appeals officer or special appeals officer 45 days' notice of the removal unless the Governor determines that circumstances warrant immediate removal.*

7. The decision of an appeals officer is the final and binding administrative decision on a claim for compensation under chapters 616A to 616D, inclusive, or chapter 617 of NRS, and the whole record consists of all evidence taken at the hearing before the appeals officer and any findings of fact and conclusions of law based thereon.

8. *The provisions of this section which deem the holders of certain positions to be civil officers of this State:*

(a) Are intended to supplement all other provisions of statute or case law which make the holders of certain positions be civil officers of this State; and

(b) Must not be construed to make the holder of any position not described in this section not be a civil officer of this State.

Sec. 3. The amendatory provisions of this act apply to any person who has been appointed to office before, on or after the effective date of this act.

Sec. 4. This act becomes effective upon passage and approval.

