



# State of Nevada Veterans Virtual Legislative Summit

January 19, 2021

# Agenda

- Welcome
- A Look-Back at State of Nevada Veteran's Legislation
- Roles and Responsibilities
  - Legislators and the Legislative Council Bureau (LCB)
  - Nevada Department of Veterans Services (NDVS)
  - United Veterans Legislative Council (UVLC)
- The 2020 Veterans Legislative Symposia Results
- Commission and Committee Recommendations
- NDVS Bills and Budget
- Other Veteran and Military Legislation
- How to Participate in the Legislative Process as an Unpaid Lobbyist
- The 2021 State of Nevada Legislative Calendar

# Recent History of Veterans Legislation

1. There has been a marked increase in successful veterans legislation since 2011:

Year	Session	Symposia Issues Identified	Legislation Considered	Legislation Passed	% Passed
2011	76	Unknown	11	6	55%
2013	77	8	15	10	67%
2015	78	55	32	21	66%
2017	79	37	29	26	89%
2019	80	53	31	20	65%
2021	81	46	TBD	TBD	TBD

2. **Examples of legislation passed in since 2011 include:**

- Waiver of registration fees for Purple Heart Veterans
- \$50 Million for the construction of the Northern Nevada Veterans Home
- Survivors' Tax Exemption on sales taxes for families of NV National Guard Members Killed in Action
- Tax deduction for employers who hire unemployed veterans
- \$500,000 for the Adopt a Vet Dental Program
- Creation of the Nevada National Guard Youth Challenge Program
- Designation of Interstate Highway No. 11 in Nevada as the Purple Heart Highway
- Mandatory interviews for certain veterans applying for State of Nevada jobs
- Foreclosure of residential loan, etc. prohibited when deployed
- Expanded suicide prevention training for law enforcement, medical professionals, family members of veterans and members of the military

# The Role of the Legislator— *and How to Effectively Engage Them*

- Senator Hardy
- Senator Spearman
- Federal Congressional Delegation Representatives
- Mr. Cesar Melgarejo, LCB Senior Policy Analyst





*Connecting People to Policy*

**THE NEVADA LEGISLATURE**

JANUARY 19, 2021

# OVERVIEW

- The Legislative Process
- Tips for Advocating Your Issues
- Tips for Testifying Before Legislative Committees
- Resources for Tracking Legislation

## LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

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- Committee chair schedules bills:
  - Agendas are posted
  - All meetings are public
  - Most meetings are videoconferenced from Carson City to Las Vegas and the public is encouraged to participate
- Sponsor's responsibilities include:
  - Presenting the bill (sometimes with the help of interested constituents or bill proponents)
  - Identifying and notifying speakers
  - Keeping the committee chair informed

## ACTION IN THE HOUSE OF ORIGIN

- Committee Hearings

# LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

## COMMITTEE HEARINGS – COMMON COMMITTEE ACTIONS

- Do Pass
- Amend and Do Pass
- Do Adopt
- Rerefer (with or without recommendation)
- Indefinitely Postpone (IP)
- No Action



# LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

## RESOLUTION OF HOUSE DIFFERENCES (IF NECESSARY)

- If the bill has no amendments in the second house, it goes to the Governor.
- If the bill is amended by second house:
  - Does the first house “Concur” with the second house’s amendment? If so, the bill goes to the Governor.
  - If the first house does not concur (does not agree with) the second house amendment, does the second house “Recede” in its amendment? If so, the bill goes to the Governor.
  - If the second house does not recede, the bill is assigned to a conference committee.

# LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

## ROLE OF THE GOVERNOR

- Sign the bill
  - Within 5 days if Legislature in session (excluding the day of receipt and Sundays)
  - Within 10 days if Legislature has adjourned (excluding the day of receipt and Sundays)
- Veto the bill
- Not sign the bill within the period allowed (effectively allowing the bill to go into law without his signature)

# LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

If Governor vetoes the bill when the Legislature is still in session:

- Return the bill to the House of Origin
- 2/3 vote of both houses to override

If Governor vetoes the bill when the Legislature is no longer in session:

- Return the bill to the following Session

NOTE: The Legislature can choose whether or not it considers a vetoed bill to override or sustain the veto.

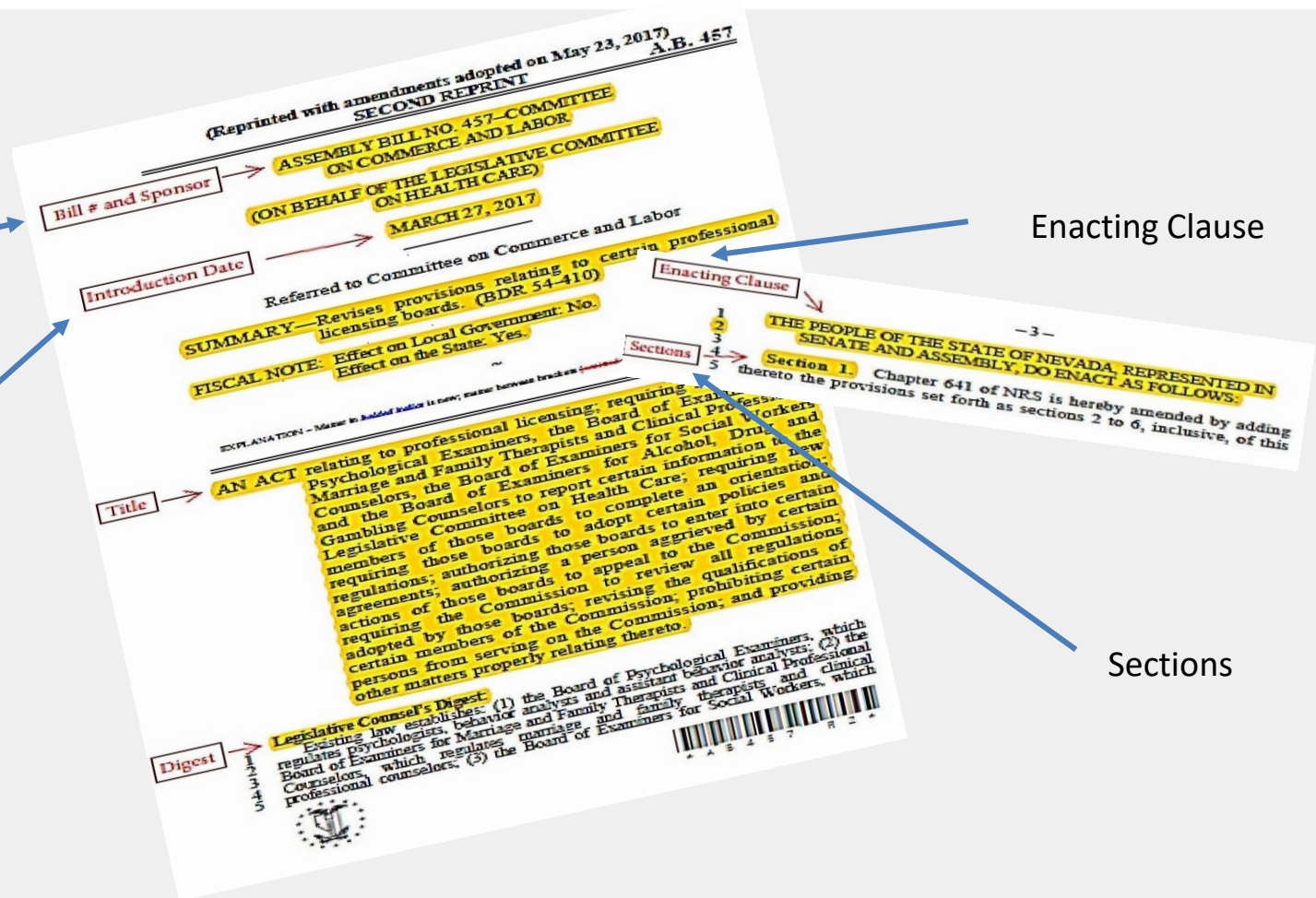
# BILL COMPONENTS

Bill No. and Sponsor

Introduction Date

Enacting Clause

Sections



# READING A BILL

- **Section headings (black)**

Identify new *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS) provision being added or existing NRS provision being amended.

- ***Italicized and bolded language (blue)***

New wording to be added to NRS.

- **~~Bracketed and crossed out language (red)~~**

Proposed for deletion from NRS.

## EFFECTIVE DATES

- Bills without a specific effective date become law on October 1 after the session.
- Bills effective on “passage and approval” become law when signed by the governor.
- Bills may be made effective on July 1 of a certain year (to coincide with the start of a fiscal year) or January 1 — or any other date desired.



## ADVOCATING YOUR ISSUES

Do:

- Choose a legislator(s) who you think will support your position
- Explain the positive aspects and benefits of your suggested legislation
- Explain what the opposition might be
- Prepare the legislator
- Get to know your legislator

## ADVOCATING YOUR ISSUES

Do:

- Be calm, controlled, and prepared
- Think your position through and weigh all sides of the issue
- Know what you want to accomplish and how to accomplish it
- Present your position in a non-threatening, professional manner



# ADVOCATING YOUR ISSUES

Do Not:

- Make demands or threaten legislators
- Picket, wave signs, or hold loud rallies
- Use civil disobedience
- Lecture and talk down to legislators
- Be flamboyant

# TESTIFYING



## WAYS TO STAY INFORMED AND INVOLVED

- Sign up for Bill Tracking
- Search the bill draft request (BDR) list
- Listen to or watch hearings online
- Check Website for updates
- Track legislative documents using “NELIS”
- Get to know legislators and legislative staff

# WAYS TO STAY INFORMED AND INVOLVED

- Attend hearings or floor sessions
- Sign up as a presenter at a hearing
- Submit comments in writing
- Talk to the legislators

# BILL TRACKING

## Nevada Electronic Legislative Information System (NELIS)

Information always available:

Bills – Reports – Bill Actions and Status

## Personalized Legislative Tracking (PLT)

- Subscription to BDRs, Bills, and Budgets
- Notifications of Hearings and Status (*not a free option*)
- Various Subscription Levels

Email: [publications@lcb.state.nv.us](mailto:publications@lcb.state.nv.us)

Phone: (775) 684-6835

# CONTACT

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Senior Policy Analyst

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## Constituent Services

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[csu@lcb.state.nv.us](mailto:csu@lcb.state.nv.us)



## Research Library

(775) 684-6827

[library@lcb.state.nv.us](mailto:library@lcb.state.nv.us)



# Nevada Department of Veterans Services (NDVS)

- For decades NDVS has conducted veteran's legislative forums to help coordinate the activities of veterans service organizations participating in the legislative process. The authority for these activities resides in NRS 417.090 1(d): The Director shall coordinate activities of veterans' organizations.
- Veterans Legislative forums NDVS conducts or supports include: Veterans Legislative Symposia, Veterans Legislative Summits, and Veterans and Military Day at the Legislature.
- NDVS can advocate for bills and budgets approved by the Governor during a legislative session. For other Bill Draft Requests and budgets, NDVS provides information on the affect and fiscal impact, rather than "lobbying" in support of non-Executive Branch proposals.

# United Veterans Legislative Council (UVLC)

- Created to present a formidable unified voice for Veterans, Military, and our families, to find, identify, and lobby for legislative action
- Operates under a Constitution and Roberts Rules of Order
- Consists of every veteran organization in Nevada, and membership is free to all Veterans; UVLC Leadership is elected among its members every 2 years.
- Partner with NDVS to identify issues, and help resolve them through our organizations
- NOT registered as a non-profit with the Secretary of State, or IRS, and NO treasury
- We are absolutely non-partisan. As such, all political parties respect our perspective and generally support our viewpoint. **We talk issues, not politics**

Our track record displays this very proudly. Every Veterans Organization in Nevada is represented, so as we lobby, we can proudly state for the record how many Veterans we represent. At present count that is an estimated 250,000. That does not count the Military, or any of our families, or Veteran Advocates, so the number is exponentially much larger, nearing 500,000.

Objectively our job is to be a resource for lawmakers and provide guidance needed to make sound decisions regarding Veterans issues



# 2020 Legislative Symposia Themes

- **THEME 1:** Improve outreach and information programs to increase awareness of, and connection to, veterans benefits and services.
- **THEME 2:** Honor and recognize veteran's service by reducing certain state fees, tuition, and taxes.
- **THEME 3:** Support and expand veteran mental and medical health care programs, especially those associated with suicide prevention.
- **THEME 4:** Provide needed support to families and caregivers.



# Commission & Committee Recommendations

## The Nevada Veterans Services Commission

- 1:** Pursue activities in support of reducing suicide among veterans
- 2:** Fund and modernize the Southern Nevada State Veterans Home
- 3:** Reduce or eliminate business license fees for veteran owned businesses
- 4:** Construct and operate veterans Adult Day Health Care facilities
- 5:** Allow student veterans at non-state colleges to use veterans' services centers at Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) locations
- 6:** Create an Outreach Director position in Northern Nevada
- 7:** Pursue options to improve support to caregivers of Nevada's veterans
- 8:** Nevada State agencies should support veteran personal data input into the Nevada Veterans Information System (VIS)
- 9:** Continue to pursue water-wise options at State Veterans Cemeteries
- 10:** Create a State Transition Assistance Program (TAP)

# Commission & Committee Recommendations

## The Interagency Council on Veterans Affairs

- 1:** Require state agencies to post information regarding Veterans programs, events, and services on Nevada VetNet
- 2:** Encourage NNG to establish a data sharing agreement with Nevada Division of Public and Behavioral Health (DPBH) so they might conduct an analysis of suicide ideology among National Guard members
- 3:** Support and promote military culture and veteran awareness training to medical providers and service providers; when eligible this training should be awarded continuing education credits by licensing boards
- 4:** Create a public service announcement about resources available for veterans, specifically, focusing on resources for veterans who may have mental health issues
- 5:** Increase awareness on the Standardized Care of SMVF for Public and Private Providers as provided by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
- 6:** Locate, and publicize locations, of all NV Military and Veteran Memorials
- 7:** Create a State Transition Assistance Program (TAP)

# Commission & Committee Recommendations

## The Nevada Women Veterans Advisory Committee

- 1:** Make the recognition of Women's Military History Month a permanent annual recognition
- 2:** Fund travel for the WVAC members for one in-person committee meeting and for one member to attend a national conference
- 3:** Require the Secretary of State to waive annual fees for state business license for newly created Veteran-owned businesses
- 4:** Create a Nevada Transition Assistance Program for servicemembers leaving military service
- 5:** Make NDVS Northern Nevada Outreach Director a full-time state position
- 6:** Create Military Spouse Employment and Reciprocity Programs
- 7:** Perform a study to create scatter gardens at NV State Veteran Cemeteries
- 8:** Eliminate the cost for spousal burials at the Nevada State Veteran Cemeteries
- 9:** Support continuation of Military Sexual Trauma Training

# Commission & Committee Recommendations

## Legislative Committee on Senior Citizens, Veterans and Adults with Special Needs - 1

1. Require a private employer of fewer than 50 employees who provides sick leave benefits to allow the employees to use such accrued leave, in accordance with company policy, for absences due to illness, injury, medical appointment, or other medical need of a member of the employee's immediate family. **(BDR 53–379)**
2. Create a Vulnerable Adult Protection Order to protect vulnerable adults against abuse, neglect, and exploitation. **(BDR 3–380)**
3. Appropriate State General Funds in the amount of \$250,000 in each fiscal year of the 2021–2023 Biennium to support the Adopt a Vet Dental Program. **(BDR S–381)**
4. Prohibit tuition charges from being assessed against a veteran, a spouse, or the dependent of a veteran who is using benefits under the federal Post-9/11 Veterans' Educational Assistance program who became eligible for such benefits on or after January 1, 2013.
5. Tuition charges must not be assessed against all students who are using benefits under the Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance Program.

# Commission & Committee Recommendations

## **Legislative Committee on Senior Citizens, Veterans and Adults with Special Needs - 2**

6. Create an enrollment preference for applicants of a nursing and teaching program at a university, state college, or community college within the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) who are veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces.
7. Require NSHE to develop a database to continue to track data, as required by AB 76 (2015). The report required by AB 76, expired on July 1, 2020. **(BDR 34–382)**
8. Require occupational and professional licensing boards to collect data regarding the number of military spouses that apply for, are issued, or are denied a license, certificate, registration, permit, or other similar authorization.
9. Require occupational and professional licensing boards to post on their website the options available to active members or veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces, as well as their spouses or surviving spouses, for obtaining a license, certificate, registration, permit, or other similar authorization issued by the board.
10. Require occupational / professional licensing boards—that are not already required to do so—to collect not more than one-half of the fee set forth for the issuance of a license to a spouse of an active service member.

# Commission & Committee Recommendations

## **Legislative Committee on Senior Citizens, Veterans and Adults with Special Needs - 3**

- 11.** Replace the term “may” with “shall” in sections concerning endorsement and reciprocity of a license, certificate, registration, permit, or other similar authorization.
- 12.** Require—if not already required to do so—occupational/professional licensing boards to issue a license by endorsement or reciprocity to active members or veterans, as well as their spouses or surviving spouses, who hold a valid and unrestricted license to practice a profession in D.C or any state or territory of the
- 13.** Waive the requirement for fingerprint-based criminal background checks active members or veterans, or their spouses or surviving spouses.
- 14.** Require all occupational/professional licensing boards to issue a provisional license immediately after submission of an application by active members/veterans, as well as their spouses or surviving spouses, who hold a valid and unrestricted license in another jurisdiction. **(BDR 54–383)**

# NDVS Agency Bills and Budget

- **AB 22:** Requires the establishment and maintenance of a transition assistance program for veterans and servicemen and servicewomen
- **AB 76:** Authorizes the NDVS Director to establish and operate programs to provide adult day health care to veterans in certain circumstances
- **AB 77:** Revise the duties of the NDVS Director; changes the terms of members of certain advisory public bodies relating to veterans





# Assembly Bill 22

## NV Transition Assistance Program (TAP)



- Changes NRS 417 (Veterans Services) to establish and maintain a State of Nevada TAP program to assist veterans and servicemembers transition to life as civilians
- The TAP program must provide information and resources specific to this State concerning:
  - ✓ Programs of higher education and benefits for higher education
  - ✓ Employment and vocational training
  - ✓ Starting and maintaining a small business
  - ✓ Services related to health care, mental health, & sexual trauma
  - ✓ Programs and services related to housing
  - ✓ Any other benefits available to veterans and servicemembers to assist them in transitioning to life as civilians

# Assembly Bill 76

## Adult Day Health Care/Veterans Homes

- Changes NRS 417 (Veterans Services) to authorize the NDVS Director to establish and operate programs to provide adult day health care to veterans in certain circumstances, these programs to include;
  - ✓ Medical services;
  - ✓ Rehabilitation;
  - ✓ Therapeutic activities;
  - ✓ Socialization; and
  - ✓ Nutrition
- Eliminate obsolete requirements concerning the location of veteran's homes



# Assembly Bill 77

## Duties and Terms



- Changes NRS 417 (Veterans Services) to revise the duties of the NDVS Director; changing the terms of members of certain advisory public bodies relating to veterans
- **New Duties:**
  - Assist veterans experiencing homelessness by connecting veterans to housing and other support organizations
  - Create, coordinate, and support veterans suicide prevention programs and resources
- **Term Changes:**
  - Increase the length of a term for an ICVA member from 2 to 3 years
  - Increase the length of a term for a VSC member from 2 to 3 years
  - Increase the length of a term for a member of the Advisory Committee for a Veterans Cemetery from 2 to 3 years
  - Decrease the length of a term for a WVAC member from 4 to 3 years

# Director's Update on Budget Priorities

- Southern Nevada Veterans Home Modernization
- Northern Nevada Veterans Home operating costs
- Veterans Home Life Safety Equipment, to include Chiller Replacement and temperature controls
- Cemetery Expansion Capital Improvements
- Deferred Maintenance and Equipment Purchases



# UVLC Report on Legislative BDRs in Progress-1

- The Legislative Council Bureau (LCB) per the director, provides a means to catalog, record, and research issues presented by Lawmakers, Government branches (Governor, Legislature, Supreme Court), and their Agencies among others by making a “Bill Draft Request”, or BDR. Each BDR is assigned a number, title, and discloses who filed the request. There is no language disclosed until the BDR is assigned a Bill number; usually just before the start of the Session.
- We have categorized 117 out of the 884 BDR’s we’re tracking so far, but that number will drop dramatically once we know the content of the Bill. Based on experience, historically we expect to be focused on about 35-40 Bills this Session.
- From contacts around the Legislature among lawmakers, LCB staff, and Capitol Police no one seems to know how the session is going to be managed. It may be 100% virtual! Everyone’s crystal ball is hazy, so far.

# UVLC Report on Legislative BDRs in Progress-2

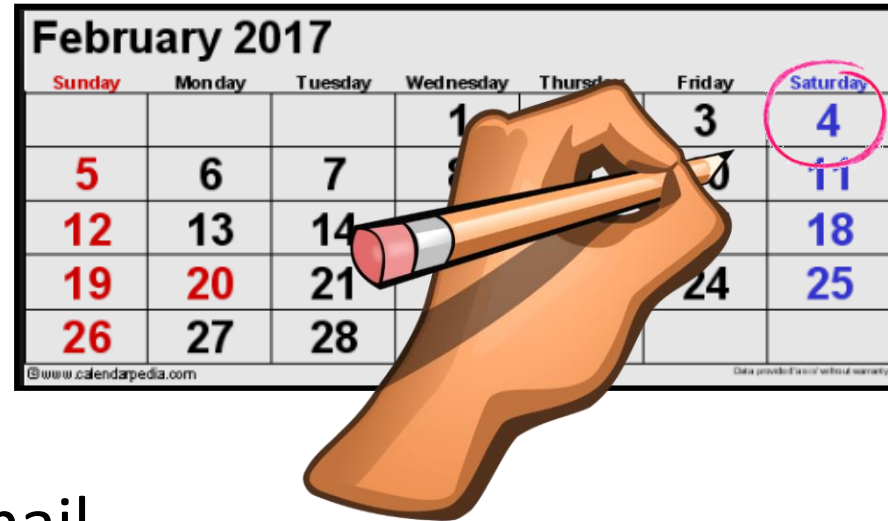
- These are the kinds of issues the UVLC are initially tracking:

1: VETERANS (23)	7: DMV-Plates (5)
2: HOMELESS (8)	8: SOS (2)
3: LICENSE/TAP (15)	9: ANIMALS (14)
4: CARE-GIVERS (5)	10: GUNS (5)
5: RAFFLES (8)	11: CANNIBIS (5)
6: VTC (26)	12: OTHER (2)

- Updates to the tracked legislative issues will entirely depend upon when the LCB/Assembly & Senate leadership choose to assign Bill numbers, necessary to provide us the language to know if it is a Veterans issue.

# The Legislative Session

- Begins February 1, 2021
- 120 Days Long
- Online Bill Tracking (NELIS)
- Sign Up For Updates Via Email
- Veterans and Military Day At The Legislature on March 17, 2021 (VAMDAL)



***Let your voice be heard—  
Share Your Opinion on Legislative Bills!***

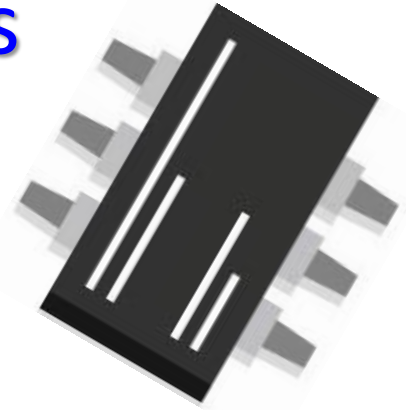
# Signing up for Bill Tracking

- The **N**evada **E**lectronic **L**egislative **I**nformation **S**ystem (NELIS) is a free public tool that provides content of bills and committee meeting information. It allows you to subscribe to BDRs, bills, and budgets that are of interest to you.
- Once registered, you will receive immediate notifications of hearings, a daily status notification, and have access to tailored, exportable reports for the subscriptions you have chosen to track.
- To create an account:
  - Go to <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/81st2021>
  - Click "Personalized Legislative Tracking" on the upper right side of the screen
  - Click on "PLT Home" and follow the instructions to create your account





# Digital Lobbyist - Resources



- **How to get all of the details about the Legislative Session:**
  - ✓ Nevada State Legislature <http://www.leg.state.nv.us/>
  - ✓ Nevada Electronic Legislative Information System (NELIS) <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/81st2021>
  - ✓ Personalized Legislative Tracking (PLT) <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/81st2021/Plt>
  - ✓ Nevada Legislature Portal <http://www.nevadalegislature.com/>
  - ✓ Nevada State Website/Government/Legislature <http://nv.gov/government/legislative/>
  - ✓ Governor's Website <http://gov.nv.gov/>
  - ✓ Nevada Department of Veterans Services (NDVS) <http://www.veterans.nv.gov/>
  - ✓ Nevada Supreme Court <http://nvcourts.gov/>
- **Why this is important:** Learning to navigate the Legislature Websites will provide any and all legislative information desired
- **Bottom Line:** Knowing Legislative branch activity is not enough. Get to know the Executive and Judicial branches as well for a fully rounded foundation. All can derail your hard-fought work with the “stroke of a pen.”

# Online Commenting – Online Lobbying – Online Polling

## 79TH (2017) SESSION OF THE NEVADA LEGISLATURE

SHARE YOUR OPINION WITH YOUR LEGISLATORS

[Reports](#) | [View Comments](#) | [Submit Another Opinion](#)

The Opinion Poll portion of this site contains constituent opinions for the 79th (2017) Session of the Nevada Legislature. Feel free to view constituent opinions by clicking on the links above.

Throughout a legislative session, legislators review these opinions to gain perspective on how constituents in their districts feel about legislation. Constituent names, addresses and other personal information are NOT made public, but are available to legislators so that they will know who is submitting the comment and are able to contact the constituent if they so desire. Only opinion totals and comments are made publicly available on this site.

Thank you for participating in your government.

Bill Information and Opinion	
Please share your thoughts.	
Select Bill	Select a bill ▼ <b>Legend: * indicates the bill was introduced in the 78th (2015) Session.</b>
Or type the bill name here	<input type="text"/> then click on the button <input type="button" value="Get Bill Information"/> Example: AB362
Your View	For <input type="radio"/> Against <input type="radio"/>
Any Comments? Not required. Maximum 2000 characters.	<input type="text"/>

In order to accurately determine the legislative district in which you reside, we ask that you please provide your physical address; however, your phone number and email address are NOT required.

Constituent Information	
Confidential information will not be made public.	
Name	Title: <input type="text"/> Other/None ▼ First: <input type="text"/> Last: <input type="text"/>
Physical Address	<input type="text"/>
City, State, Zip	<input type="text"/> Nevada ▼ Zip: <input type="text"/>
Phone	<input type="text"/>
Email	<input type="text"/>
Remember Me <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="button" value="Submit"/> <i>You must select a bill from the dropdown list or click on the Get button before you can submit your opinion.</i>

This is where numbers REALLY matter. The highest number of prevailing comments (yes or no) have the greatest influence. <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/Opinions/81st2021/A/>

# HOW TO... Non-Paid [Military] Veteran Lobbyist

1. Register online at <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Lobbyist/81st2021>
2. Create a no cost online account
3. Review reporting requirements and penalties
4. List organization(s) represented
5. Provide proof of Veteran Status (DD214, NVDL w/Veteran symbol, etc.) to Lobby Registrar for no-cost registration
6. Get photo for badge
7. Complete required Lobby training
8. Complete Monthly Expense online reporting required

## To register to represent UVLC:

United Veterans Legislative Council [UVLC]

P.O. Box 1147, Yerington, NV 89447-1147

775-354-9300

## WHY REGISTER ?

- No Cost
- Affords easy access to lawmakers and to most of the building
- Demonstrates the depth of involvement of Veterans in the legislative process
- Numbers matter when viewed by the lawmakers, and committee chairpersons

# Become a UVLC Member!

**Attend the UVLC meetings  
(See locations in your packet)**



- Represent your Veterans Organization(s)
- Identify Veterans issues & develop solutions
- Participate in the legislative process
- Help with language research
- Learn lobbying skills
- Attend Legislative hearings
- Visit with lawmakers and the leadership
- Provide testimony before committees



# Important Contact Information

## **Tony Yarbrough**

Secretary/Past Chair, UVLC

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## **Terri Hendry** (Effective January 25, 2021)

NDVS, Communications Director

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Email: [hendryt@veterans.nv.gov](mailto:hendryt@veterans.nv.gov)

# Conclusion

Your participation matters!

