



PRESS RELEASE

Reno Sparks Chamber of Commerce Testifies 12 Times during Early Weeks of Legislature

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For Immediate Release - Reno, NV (3-18-2009) – The Reno Sparks Chamber of Commerce, northern Nevada’s largest business organization, has testified 12 times during the early weeks of the Legislative session. A summary follows below.

“With the economy in recession and unemployment surging, it’s imperative that legislators adopt policies that encourage a robust private-sector economy,” said Doug Kurkul, Chamber CEO. “The Reno Sparks Chamber will continue to aggressively advocate pro-business public policies.”

- Mergers and Acquisitions. The Chamber testified against AB 95 on Feb. 4 before the Assembly Commerce and Labor Committee, arguing that the bill would give the Attorney General’s office excessive power.
- Rainy Day Fund. On Feb. 23, the Chamber testified in favor of AB 165, Speaker Buckley’s bill to require funding of the Rainy Day Fund, before the Assembly Ways & Means Committee.
- Public Employee Benefits Reform. Jack Eastwick (Expert System Consultants), Dave Allen (Moana Nursery) and Tray Abney (Chamber) testified on the need for reforms to address unfunded liabilities in the area of public employee benefits, before on the Senate Government Affairs Committee on Feb. 25.
- Staffing Requirements. The Chamber testified on Feb. 26 against AB 138 before the Assembly Transportation Committee. The bill would specify staffing requirements on a particular industry (in this case, railroads).

- Long-Term Budget Reforms. On March 5, the Chamber urged the Joint Senate and Assembly Tax Committees to pursue long-term spending reforms before asking the business community, in the face of a deep recession and surging unemployment, to pay higher taxes.
- Marriage License Fees. During a March 9 hearing on SB 14 in the Senate Finance Committee, the Chamber testified in favor of an amendment offered by our wedding chapel members.
- K-12 Reserve Account for Education. The Chamber testified in support of a proposed K-12 reserve account for education funds (SB 150) before the Senate Finance Committee on March 9.
- Mandated Health Benefits. Valerie Clark (Clark and Associates) testified against AB 162 in the Assembly Commerce and Labor Committee on March 9. The bill would force small employers who do not participate in self-insured ERISA plans to provide coverage for autism – a benefit that other public and private sector health plans are not required to provide.
- Unclaimed Property. The Chamber urged the Senate Judiciary Committee to pass an amendment to SB 167, a bill regarding unclaimed property, on March 11.
- Mandated Health Benefits. The Chamber testified on March 11 against AB 167 before the Assembly Commerce and Labor Committee. The bill would mandate that all insurance policies cover acupuncture. Mandated benefits drive up health costs and drive down health coverage.
- Water. The Chamber on March 16 testified against AB 119 in the Assembly Government Affairs Committee. The bill would implement the anti-growth WC-3 ballot measure that passed in November 2008.
- Tax Policy. On March 17, the Chamber opposed AB 255 and AB 277, bills that would dramatically increase the excise taxes on cigarettes and alcohol, respectively. The Chamber believes that there should be a nexus between any tax and the purpose for that tax and that no industry should be singled out for the entire burden of a specific tax.

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