



Legislative Update

Assemblywoman Marilyn Kirkpatrick

JULY 2011

Assembly District 1

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I'm on the Web!

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Dear Friend,

Our 120-day legislative session ended on time last month, and we are now in the interim period before the next legislative session, which begins in February of 2013. I want to take this opportunity to provide you a wrap up of the session and provide some information on summer safety and energy that I hope you will find useful.

With the session over, I am back in Las Vegas full-time now, so I hope you will call or email me with any questions, concerns or ideas you want to discuss.

The 76th Legislative Session

Our first challenge was to deal with our budget shortfall—the worst in the nation at 54%. It was difficult, requiring painful budget cuts on top of cuts we have had to make in the past two years. We were, however, able to avoid the disastrous cuts to education and other critical programs. Working together, we passed a balanced budget on time, funding education at a substantially higher level than originally proposed by the governor. We also passed reforms to our education system and measures to make government more accountable and efficient.

Jobs and our Economic Recovery

Long before the session convened, we began working to find ways to put Nevadans back to work, and this was certainly my top priority this session. The recession has clearly shown us that we can no longer depend on tourism to drive our economy.

AB 144 establishes a bidder's preference on public works projects for businesses that hire Nevada workers and buy local products, ensuring that Nevada tax dollars are used to put *Nevadans* back to work. This legislation is already producing results. Please contact me for a list of projects that will be starting in the next few months that will, as a result of AB 144, be hiring more Nevadans as a result of this measure.

We also worked to improve our economic diversification efforts to attract more high-paying industries to our state. AB 449 reorganizes economic development in Nevada to help us attract high-tech jobs and make us more competitive with other states.

Education

We passed critical reforms to our education system to improve the evaluation of teachers and administrators and to help more kids graduate. We are completely overhauling the way teachers are evaluated, and for the first time, we are including principals in the evaluation process. We put in place new systems to reward educators who improve student achievement, to help struggling educators improve their performance and to dismiss those who do not belong in the education profession. We are also better tracking the number of teachers, administrators and support staff to make sure we are not spending too much money on education bureaucracy instead of in the classroom.

Government Accountability

This was another priority for me. As chair of the Assembly Government Affairs and Tax Committees, I had the privilege of working on measures to make sure that our state government is open and transparent and that tax money is being spent wisely and carefully.

We passed legislation to implement performance based budgeting (AB 248), to require more accountability on spending from non-profits that get tax dollars (AB 242) and to increase accountability from agencies and boards (AB 1). We are also requiring ongoing reviews of all boards and commissions so that we can get rid of any that are "dead wood" that aren't producing results (SB 251).

Useful Summertime Tips

In these hot summer months, I often hear from parents and grandparents concerned about pool safety and senior citizens struggling to pay energy bills on a fixed income. For pool safety tips, here are a few useful links:

- **Clark County Health District** - <http://www.gethealthyclarkcounty.org/be-safe/drowning-prevention-abcd.php>
- **The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission** - <http://www.poolsafely.gov/>
- **ABC Pool Safety** - <http://www.abcpoolsafety.org/>

And for those seniors who need help with energy bills:

NV Energy is hosting a Senior Energy Assistance Expo in August with nonprofit and government agencies on hand to provide assistance with past due bills and to discuss weatherization options, energy conservation tips, and rebate information.

For more information about the event and qualifications for assistance, please visit www.nvenergy.com/home/assistance/energyexpo.cfm

Senior Energy Assistance Expo

When: Saturday, August 13, 2011 From 10 A.M to 2 P.M

Where: Cashman Center – 850 Las Vegas Blvd. North, Hall A

Please Contact Me Anytime

While I work full-time, as do many citizen legislators, I work hard to respond to constituents in the evenings and on weekends. Please call me at 702-767-1315 or email me at mkirkpatrick@asm.state.nv.us, and I will get back to you.

Sincerely,

Marilyn Kirkpatrick
Assembly District 1