

ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVES

NNDA
Northern Nevada
Development Authority

Improve The State Of Your Business™

Dear Next Governor...



Rob Hooper
President & CEO

The NNDA Sierra Region Economic Council (SREC) held the first of its 2018 bi-annual meetings this past April. SREC members discussed issues and priorities for both the Sierra Region and statewide which they would like to have included on the agenda of the next Governor of Nevada. If the SREC were to send a letter to our future Governor, it would likely read something like this ...

Dear Next Governor of Nevada:

We, the members of the NNDA Sierra Region Economic Council, respectfully submit our wish list which we hope you will sincerely consider for your administration's agenda.

First on the list is how you will work with the Nevada Legislature. The hope is that there will be collaboration and compromise between the Governor's office and legislative leadership **before** proposed legislation is passed, particularly if there is controversy. There ought to be lots of communication with Nevadans, so they understand what is happening. While we expect you to veto bills that are bad policy for the Silver State, we hope that working directly with our state legislators will minimize the need for vetoes. Unfunded mandates are not acceptable.

Nevada has long maintained one of the lowest ratios of state workers per capita, and we believe this is a level worth maintaining. What we do hope is that you will identify the overlaps and redundancies of state agencies with county and local governments. Resolving these inefficiencies through better coordination of efforts will improve the effectiveness and productivity of the state agencies and better meet the needs of Nevadans.

Nevada Native American Tribes have been working directly with county and local governments to meet mutual needs in innovative ways. It is equally important for the Governor of Nevada to maintain an open-door policy and continue to **work directly with Tribal leaders**, sovereign to sovereign and Governor to Tribal Chair. This can help to prevent situations such as the existing issues with the EPA regarding the Anaconda Mine. We believe working together is in the mutual best interests of both the Tribes and the Silver State.

Continuing the growth and diversification of our state's economy is imperative. The Silver State's economic development system is unique and forward-thinking, with visibility, focus and support to economic development efforts rarely found in other states. We believe that the system is definitely headed in the right direction. What we suggest is continuous system refinements and greater investment in the RDAs who are the boots-on-the-ground leading economic development efforts.

By the same token, we hope that you will be forthcoming about your plans regarding economic development priorities for our state. This includes incentives for non-urban areas to stimulate expansion of resident businesses and attracting new ones. We also hope you will continue the Travel Nevada program, which has spurred the growth of rural tourism.

The state's infrastructure needs must be addressed and a plan clearly articulated which details how the state will meet the requirements of the current and projected state population, along with those of the growing business community statewide. Support for rail and air transportation, both urban and rural, is critical to the growth of key Nevada industry sectors, e.g., manufacturing, logistics, construction, aerospace, tourism, etc. High speed **broadband** is needed in **all of the state's rural areas** to facilitate economic development and growth. Regarding water issues and needs, we Nevadans need to know how you and your staff will handle them.

Obtainable housing to meet the needs of the state's growing workforce, both



existing and future, is crucial. Regulatory and permitting impediments need to be resolved, incentives for construction ought to be explored, including easier access to capital for these projects.

Your full support of the 2015 reforms to NRS Chapter 40 just now being implemented is strongly encouraged. The "Homeowner Protections Act" made significant changes to Nevada's construction defect statutes, as well as changes to the statute of repose applicable to construction defect claims. Your predecessor signed this legislation citing that it "discourages frivolous litigation and strengthens Nevada's rebounding housing market."

We would like to see a continued focus on Career and Technical Education (CTE), along with the expansion of workforce education and dual credit programs. NSHE works, and we have seen the community colleges, especially Western Nevada College, step up and be the workforce development and training hubs to meet employer needs. Perhaps the State Department of Education can offer programs that educate both parents and school counselors about the variety of career paths and options for our youth. There also needs to be ongoing support for our school district partners so they can be even more effective.

Finally, we believe that our workforce shortage can be quickly reduced with targeted efforts made toward developing the hidden workforce, i.e., the over 600,000 Nevadans identified by NSHE as having no post-secondary education and our military veterans. These bright and capable individuals are seeking a better future themselves and want to lift up their families. Directing them to the many certification programs offered by our community colleges will help them to see what options are available to them to meet their goals. In addition, more specific support for the military-to-civilian workforce transition is necessary. These highly trained and skilled individuals would be in high demand by employers, once the communication gap can be bridged.

While this is not our entire wish list, these are the issues we believe are most important to Nevada, especially the Sierra Region. We wish you much success, Governor.

Economic development and energy are expected to be focal points during this year's general election. Please join us on Wednesday, May 23, 2018 for our monthly The Business Edge™ from 11:30 am – 1:00 pm at the Carson Valley Inn. NV Energy CEO, Paul Caudill, will discuss "The Future of Energy in Nevada." Visit www.NNDA.org for more information.