

Black lawmakers preparing upcoming legislative session

By John T. Stephens III
Sentinel-Voice

As Kenny Guinn was sworn into the governor's office, African-American legislatures were busy gearing up for the upcoming session.

Senator Joe Neal, Assemblymen Wendell P. Williams and Morse Arberry Jr. have more than 50 years in combined state legislative experience.

Each legislator has a set of bills he will champion in the upcoming session.

Neal, who has been in the Senate since 1973, wants to introduce a bill to add two seats to the 5-member Las Vegas City Council, thus theoretically improving the chances of a minority getting elected. Presently, minority voting clout is concentrated



JOE NEAL



MORSE ARBERRY JR.



WENDELL WILLIAMS

in Gary Reese's ward.

Prompted by his failed gubernatorial bid — which he attributed to a lack of funding — Neal will introduce a bill to allow candidates to print up to 400 words about their platforms on sample ballots mailed to voters.

He'll also attack familiar territory: Seeking tax

increases on the gaming industry. He wants to repeal a tax break granted to Steve Wynn for charging the public to see his nearly \$300 million art collection at the recently opened Bellagio Casino. Neal also wants to repeal the "lucky buck tax" which allows casinos to write off money for taxes on promotional funds used to lure customers

in to gamble.

"They are enticing people to play these games," Neal said. "They (gaming) are getting a write off for what they pay on their gross gaming taxes."

Williams, who was elected in the Nevada legislature in 1987, plans to push a bill which would give return voting rights to ex-convicts.

The District 6 assemblyman wants to establish a community development investment fund for businesses and individuals with improvement projects. He'll also push for legislation to eliminate bank surcharges.

"Your bank and the lender bank add on unnecessary surcharges for ATM activities," he said.

Also on the agenda for the majority whip is fighting for paid leave for employees who need to monitor their children's education and eliminating the hoops extended family members must leap through to adopt young relatives.

"My whole issue is education," said Arberry, who came to the legislature in 1985. "I'm going to promote my own education

package." Arberry chairs the powerful Ways and Means committee and is a member of the Commerce and Taxation committee. The District 7 lawmaker would like to pump funding into after-school programs for at-risk children attending at-risk schools and provide money for libraries and schools to purchase more computers.

Arberry also wants to allocate state money for summer school programs for children who fall behind. Non-profit youth agencies such as Dogcatchers and Phil Harris Kids would get funding too.

Arberry also wants to build a recreational center on Martin Luther King Boulevard and Cheyenne Avenue to accompany the new library being built there.

High-Tech center keeps Sen. Raggio's name

Catisha Marsh
Sentinel-Voice

The William and Dorothy Raggio High Tech Center at Western High School—the name has a certain ring to it.

Even if it didn't, folks had better get used to it.

On Friday, the Board of Regents decided not to carry the motion to rename the \$5 million center, after being pressured by community members who felt that Raggio was unworthy of receiving the honor.

David Phillips, Regent over District 2, Subdistrict A, originally seconded the motion to name the CCSN/Western high tech center after Raggio. This time, the community called upon him to remove the name. When

he called in from Canada to pose the new motion, no one would second it.

"I think there would have been a big difference if Sen. Neal had spoken about it, but he didn't," Phillips said.

Phillips said that he didn't think that the center would be renamed. "We got such a barrage of letters, phone calls and faxes in support of keeping it named after Sen. Raggio that it surprised us," he said.

Dr. Richard Moore, president of the Community College of Southern Nevada, chose to name the center after Raggio last year. The College will run the facility and both high school and college students will share its resources with the Raggio

name donning the front of the building.

Moore said that this issue was out of his hands now. He offered no further comment.

"Dr. Richard Moore is a double-crosser and a liar," said Assemblyman Wendell Williams who was leading the fight against Raggio's name.

He said that the community and Moore had come to an amicable agreement—that Moore would switch Raggio's name at Western with Bob Miller's name at Palo Verde, and Sen. Joe Neal's and his wife, Estelle's, names would go on a facility at the Charleston campus.

Williams said that he confronted Moore in a heated exchange after the meeting

Friday, saying that what happened was "staged."

"Moore has no respect for our community. How are the black faculty and students at the College being treated if he has the audacity to do this to us?," he said.

"It's not over. We'll meet again," Williams added ominously, after mentioning that many measures concerning the College will have to come before his committee when the 1999 legislature convenes.

The Board is expected to create measures against naming things after politicians still serving their terms because of the controversy that has been stirred up over the Raggio high tech center.

Business owner says certificate key to usurping harasser

Special to Sentinel-Voice

Casino Transportation Service Inc. on Monday will make its case for getting a certificate of public convenience and necessity, enabling the new company to provide limousine and airport shuttle service in Las Vegas.

The Transportation Service Authority will conduct the hearing at 10 a.m. Monday — through Friday,

if necessary — at the Grant Sawyer Building, 555 E. Washington Ave.


Jennifer Garland, operations manager for CTS, Inc. and owner of Rancho Florist, said that the hearing comes on the heels of a three-year war that the company has fought to provide service. Rancho Florist initially donated the limousines as a complimentary service to

customers who ordered flowers for funerals and weddings.

Garland implicated Bell-Trans, the major limousine service provider in Las Vegas and the county, in schemes to stifle any competition. She claims the company has driven two car-for-hire services out of business, harassed other companies and repeatedly harassed her —

impounding limos, setting fire to two of them and fining the company for allowing customers to use the vehicles for free. "We need the community to come out and support us this week," Garland said. "If the county sees that the black community is concerned and we show up in numbers at the courthouse, they'll have no choice but to allow us into the arena."

Davis gets national position



VERLIA DAVIS

WASHINGTON, D.C.- Verlia Grice Davis, Clark County, Nevada's Director of Social Services has been appointed to the National Association of Counties' (NACo) Human Services and Education Steering Committee by NACo President Betty Lou Ward.

Davis, once president of NACo's Human Services Administrators group said that the new position was part of a natural progression.

NACo is a lobbying group comprised of 13 steering committees that guide the policies of the organization. Each committee has between 50 and 60 county officials.


The Human Services and Education Steering Committee focuses on welfare reform, income maintenance, older Americans, community action, food stamps, rights of the handicapped, deinstitutionalization, low-income energy assistance, illegal aliens, refugees, domestic violence and administration of county welfare programs. The committee meets three times per year.

The steering committees present their recommendations on legislative policies at the NACo Annual Conference. If approved by members, they become part of the *American County Platform*, the basis of NACo's efforts to represent counties before Congress and the White House.

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