



Nevada Association of Counties  
304 South Minnesota Street  
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[www.nvnaco.org](http://www.nvnaco.org)

## NACO Priorities 2019 Legislative Session

*This interim, based on county legislative priorities, the NACO Board of Directors voted to request five bills. Listed below is a summary of each.*

### **SB 48 - Funding for Critical Road Infrastructure in Nevada's Rural Counties**

Counties with populations less than 100,000 currently receive no revenue from existing diesel taxes collected at the pump. This is in contrast to gasoline. All counties are enabled to impose a nine-cent tax on *regular gasoline* that goes to road maintenance. However, rural counties are responsible for maintaining the majority of roads in their counties and revenues from gasoline taxes alone are not enough to repair many already failing roads. Road maintenance needs in some rural counties are so great that public safety is impacted. In Humboldt County, for example, county roads that were washed away by flooding in 2017 have yet to be repaired due to lack of funds. In Lyon County, the total cost to rebuild roads that are rated as "failing" is nearly \$33 million dollars, yet the County only has a \$2.7-million-dollar annual budget available for road improvements. To solve this problem, the proposed bill would enable rural boards of county commissioners to vote to impose a tax on diesel fuel up to five cents per gallon, or ask voters to approve such a tax. Any diesel tax approved by a county would be distributed proportionally between cities and the county. Also, a portion of the new revenue collected would go to provide much needed parking for commercial trucks, so that drivers can rest in safe and designated areas.

### **SB 13 – Allowing Counties to Provide Financial Assistance to Victims in times of Emergency.**

Senate Bill 13 would authorize a County to create a nonprofit corporation (501c3) for the limited purpose of assisting the County in raising funds and providing emergency assistance and other types of governmental services to residents and visitors in times of great need. In the aftermath of the 1 October tragedy in Clark County, Clark and other Nevada counties realized they needed the ability to establish 501(c)3 accounts in order to accept and disperse donations from those who want to help. Currently under Nevada State Law, local governments are not enabled to establish such funds. SB 13 would change that so, in times of emergency, counties can provide oversight of donations and efficient and fair disbursement of assistance to victims.



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### **AB 21 – A Solution for Rural County Boards that Cannot Meet a quorum.**

Some rural counties lack individuals willing or able to run for office to serve on small but important county governing boards. As a result, there are boards of county districts and other entities that are no longer able to govern. For example, in Humboldt County there are two water and two sewer districts that no longer have enough members to meet a quorum and conduct business - because of this, critical public infrastructure is without local oversight. In Nye County, there are six of these small county boards that can no longer function. To solve this problem, in rural counties only, AB 21 would allow certain local boards and districts with unfilled seats to request that the board of county commissioners vote to make the board appointed.

### **SB 12 – Helping Counties Collect 911 Fees**

Counties are allowed to collect “911 fees” of up to \$1 on all phone lines, to be used to fund 911 systems and to purchase body worn cameras for law enforcement. Currently, however, some Nevada counties may not be collecting all of the revenue due to them from 911 fees. There are many different telecommunications providers and billing entities in each county and counties have become aware that there may be providers or billing entities who may not be assessing and remitting the fees to the county. To correct this situation an audit is required of each of the lines, services, and providers in each county; however, because of the breadth and detail of these audits, they are very expensive. NACO would like a very small change made to the allowed expenditures for 911 fees so that counties may use the fees to pay for the audits.

### **AB 82 – Amending Nevada’s Primary System to Ensure that all Voters can Participate**

In 2015 Nevada law changed regarding primary elections. Prior to the passage of SB 499 (2015) if there were candidates of only one major party on the ballot the primary was carried out as follows:

*if there were two nominees from that party, both would advance to the general election; if there were more than two nominees from that party than either the top two vote getters would advance to the general, or, if one candidate received more than 50% of the vote then only that person would advance to the general.*

SB 499 changed the law so that, now, if a major political party has two or more candidates file for an office, and no candidates file from any other party, then the single top vote getter from the primary always advances to the general, thus deciding the race in the primary. AB 82 would return Nevada to the primary system in place prior to 2015, so that, if candidates from only one party have filed, general election voters decide the outcome of the election.