

Nevada lawmakers seek to sever ties with TRPA

By Jeff DeLong, Reno Gazette-Journal

Characterizing the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency as a heavy-handed bureaucracy treading on property rights and overly influenced by California, Nevada lawmakers are seeking to pull the state from the organization.



Legislators from Southern Nevada, Washoe County and Douglas County are backing legislation to withdraw Nevada from the Tahoe Regional Planning Compact, ratified by Congress in 1969 as a needed step to protect an endangered Lake Tahoe.

Supporters insist a pullout is needed to allow long-stifled property improvements on Tahoe's Nevada side. Detractors say the bill stands to endanger a carefully engineered approach to regulating land use while protecting the environment.

SB 271 – the seventh attempt to distance Nevada from TRPA – is needed to rescue Tahoe's Nevada side from a stifling regulatory environment largely controlled by California interests, said the bill's primary sponsor, Sen. John Lee, D-North Las Vegas.

“The pendulum has swung so far it won't swing back,” Lee said. “We no longer want to be told by California what we can and cannot do. The thrust of this is Nevada just wants to control Nevada.”

The Legislation would create a new Nevada-based planning body, with members appointed by the governor, lieutenant governor, state forester, administrator of state lands, and Washoe, Douglas and Carson City counties.

Another member would represent the public.

The panel, Lee said, would likely work in coordination with a similar California-appointed commission but would give Nevada greater control over its own land use.

In its current structure, Lee said, TRPA is “stopping growth, stopping business, stopping everything.”

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