

# Kite explains thoughts on TRPA, 100% support of gov

By Anne Knowles

*Lake Tahoe News sat down with Assemblyman Kelly Kite, R-Minden, to discuss the issues facing the 2011 Legislature. Kite represents Douglas County and portions of Carson City and Washoe County. He is a retired businessman who served on the Douglas County Commission from 1997 to 2008. Kite sits on three Assembly committees: Natural Resources, Agriculture and Mining; Judiciary; and Commerce and Labor. This is his first legislative session. He can be reached in his Assembly office by email at [kkite@asm.state.nv.us](mailto:kkite@asm.state.nv.us) or by phone at (775) 684.8843.*

**Lake Tahoe News:** *You've co-sponsored a bill with Sen. James Settelmeyer, Senate Bill 271, to remove Nevada from the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency. Why did you sponsor the bill?*

**Assemblyman Kelly Kite:** I had several requests from businesspeople as well as residents. I was on the county commission for Douglas County for 12 years and there were many things that would have been beneficial to the lake that were road blocked by the two-thirds vote that California has. I think we can get a lot more done through a smaller, more responsible local coverage. My intent is not to do away with the TRPA or destroy the TRPA, but to make it more responsible to Nevada citizens.



Kelly Kite

*Q: How do you respond to critics of the bill that the time and money required for Nevada to set up its own mechanism for replacing the TRPA could slow development at the lake and cost the state more in the end?*

**A:** Our goal there is not to reinvent the wheel. We want to take the same organization and set up, but make it more centralized to Nevada's issues and, again, not to destroy the TRPA, but to make it more accessible and open to Nevada residents.

***Q: How do Nevada's issues differ from California's?***

**A:** For many years we wanted to help with fuel loading and it was blocked until we had a fire. There were a lot of projects, including NDOT's (Nevada Department of Transportation), that would have helped run-off into the lake and helped lake clarity, but those were blocked and drug out for years with millions of dollars of extra expense. Those types of projects could have gone forward.

***Q: You've also sponsored a number of bills dealing with firearms. What are you trying to accomplish with all of this legislation and where does it stand?***

**A:** Protect our Second Amendment rights. That's the best answer I can give you. Most of (the bills) have survived. To the best of my knowledge, most of them have or will pass through the Assembly floor and go to the Senate, and vice versa.

***Q: Where do you stand on Gov. Brian Sandoval's proposed budget, in particular his proposed cuts to the state's education budget and his vow to not raise taxes?***

**A:** I support him all the way.

***Q: So, you are opposed to looking at the mining industry for***

***additional revenue or, say, a services tax?***

**A:** I'm not averse to looking at anything. I'm going in with an open mind, but as it stands right now I am 100 percent behind Gov. Sandoval's budget and his tax policies.

***Q: What do you think the state needs to do to revitalize its economy?***

**A:** Stabilize. And stabilization means a lot of things. But in order to get new businesses to come here, one of the things that scares businesses the most is uncertainty. Businesses will deal with a lot of things, but one thing they do not like is not knowing what's ahead of them. Until we can get a stabilized tax structure, get our education stabilized, which is important, we're not going to see a lot of new businesses. And I think the most important part of economic growth comes back to one word: stabilization.

***Q: What do you mean by stabilize the education the system?***

**A:** There are two different schools of thought. We keep throwing more money at it, getting the same results, or reform and stabilization, and by stabilization I mean, they're talking about cutting \$1.2 billion out of education, but they knew a year ago that that was stimulus money that was one-time only money. They did not look ahead to see the conditions that were coming when that money was not there. To the best of my knowledge, we've only cut education once or twice in the last 20 years, every year has been an increase in funding and I don't think we're seeing the results that we need from it.

***Q: The economy is an almost all-consuming issue this session, but are there other issues you consider to be vital as well?***

**A:** Redistricting is going to be huge. Right now, my district covers all of Douglas County and every grain of sand in the Nevada side of Lake Tahoe is in my district. I don't know whether that will be my district next time or not. I'm pretty

sure the South Shore will be; Incline Village and Crystal Bay, I don't know. We've got to make sure that Douglas County and the lake portion is not split up into different districts. I think they need and deserve representation and Lake Tahoe issues are Lake Tahoe issues, whether it's Washoe County or Douglas County. And I think it's imperative that they have contiguous representation.

**Q: *How do you influence such a thing when you are not on the committee that deals with redistricting?***

**A:** It'll come down to a vote. Both sides of the houses will present theirs. The governor will present his, and, to be honest with you, I think the judge will do the decision-making. Shouldn't be that way, but I believe that's how it will turn out.

**Q: *This is your first session. What have you learned so far?***

**A:** I've learned a lot. As 12 years as county commissioner, I was familiar with the way things work, I was here for a lot testifying and lobbying, if you will, for the citizens of Douglas County. There is frustration the first 60 days, seems like we do nothing, the last 60 days, it's all crammed into there. I think it could be run smoother. I have my own ideas about that, but being a freshman in the minority party, so far you're the only one to listen to me about this.

**Q: *Are you concerned that things that have previously been the responsibility of the state will be put on to the counties and towns?***

**A:** Absolutely. It worries me a lot. Probably it concerns me more after working in county government for 12 years, being responsible for a county budget and all the things that counties do. Kicking the can down the road to the counties is not solving any problems. We need to solve our own problems without passing them on to someone else. I've talked with leaders in county government and there are some issues they

feel that they can handle better and cheaper than the state can, but there are some that they are just not equipped to handle. What Washoe and Clark counties can handle, the rural counties cannot.

**Q: *Finally, what is the best way for your constituents to be heard?***

**A:** Email us, directly in. Go to the state's website, pick the bill that they're interested in, make their comments and send those directly to the people who are involved. The shotgun-blast emails are not nearly as effective.