

Nev. bill to alter TRPA being massaged, vote likely Monday

By Anne Knowles

CARSON CITY – The bill to pull Nevada out of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency unless the body implements certain reforms passed out of the Assembly's Government Affairs committee Saturday evening.

The bill passed with a vote of 10-1, with the lone no vote cast by Assemblywoman Teresa Benitez-Thompson, D-Reno, who had expressed opposition to the bill during two days of hearings last week.

"Withdrawal could cheat Nevadans of having a say on what happens on more than half the lake," Benitez-Thompson said during the Friday hearing.



Politics cloud
the future of
Lake Tahoe.

Assemblyman Ed Goedhart, R-Amargosa Valley, and Assemblywoman Peggy Pierce, D-Las Vegas, were both absent. Pierce, who was reportedly sick with food poisoning, was expected to vote no on the bill.

The latest version of the bill includes an amendment introduced by Secretary of State Ross Miller, who sits on the

TRPA board, that changes the agency's voting structure so approval of projects at Lake Tahoe would require a total of nine votes from the board with at least four of those votes made by members from the state where the project is located. Current requirements now call for a total of eight board votes with at least five coming from members of the project's state.

The bill also included additional language clarifying the role of an oversight committee that will produce a report on the TRPA and Nevada's role in it before legislators and the governor decide whether to withdraw.

Senate Bill 271 is expected to be voted on by the Assembly Monday, the last day of the 2011 legislative session. If it passes, it goes to Gov. Brian Sandoval, who has already expressed support for the bill, for his signature.