

Nevada students learn legislative ropes

By Sandra Chereb, Las Vegas Review-Journal

CARSON CITY – Former state Sen. Valerie Wiener was aghast when she read a 2003 report that painted a bleak picture of young people and their basic understanding of government.

“We learned that more than 80 percent of 15- to 25-year-olds could identify the most recent ‘American Idol’ (winner), while fewer than half knew the party of their state’s governor,” Wiener, D-Las Vegas, told an Assembly committee in 2007.

Wiener was testifying on Senate Bill 247, a measure that created what is now the Nevada Youth Legislature, an award-winning program that not only educates Nevada high school students about civics but gives them an active role in setting policy and passing laws pertinent to their generation.

Ten years later, dozens of former and current participants credit the program with sparking their interest in public service. Present and past youth legislators will meet on Saturday for a reunion of sorts, with one event scheduled in Las Vegas and the other in Carson City.

Read the whole story