

Paul J. Christensen
710 Lacy Lane
Las Vegas, NV 89107

May 25, 2007

Dear Nevada Legislator:

Many of you know me. You know how I operate. I've never been shy about saying what I feel. I'm just going to say my peace. Governor Gibbons' transportation proposal is like "lipstick on a pig."

I served on the Las Vegas Convention & Visitors Authority (LVCVA) Board of Directors longer than anyone, nearly 20 years. I know first-hand what the LVCVA does for our communities and the state. Lost in all the chatter about taking their money, is the fact that fifty-three cents of every dollar generated from the visitor-paid room tax already goes back into the communities to build projects such as roads, schools and parks.

As a former elected official, I understand the demands you have to fund programs and balance budgets. But it makes no business sense to take money from the economic engine for the entire state. The plan may sound good, but it's the wrong solution.

The Governor's proposal would cripple the LVCVA. It would have to cancel the \$890-million renovation program at the Las Vegas Convention Center. Conventions bring business people to Las Vegas during the week. They stay in our hotels. That generates room tax. They buy things. That generates sales tax.

Orlando, Chicago, New York and California are all increasing their marketing efforts to take our business. And we're going to choke the LVCVA's ability to market Las Vegas and compete with these other destinations. People who think visitors will come 'just because' don't understand the tourism industry.

The Governor's proposal would limit future LVCVA budgets to less than 1 percent annually over the next eight years. I'm a business owner as many of you are. What business can operate with that noose around its neck?

In addition, the LVCVA funded \$18 million Metro Substation that will provide service to the surrounding neighborhood and resort corridor would be jeopardized.

I often hear elected officials say they want to form public-private partnerships. Well, we've got the best one ever and now we're going to tinker with it? Why?

I understand that visitors create some traffic congestion. So do residents. The solution can't be placed primarily on one industry and one organization.

I respect the challenges in front of you. As a long-time Southern Nevada resident, I want what's good for the state too. But make the right business decision on this issue. I ask you to understand and consider the serious impacts the Governor's proposal will have on the LVCVA. The future of the tourism industry, Clark County and the state depend on it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul J. Christensen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and "C".

Paul J. Christensen