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Office of the Governor

June 5, 2025

The Honorable Francisco Aguilar
Nevada Secretary of State
401 South Carson Street
Carson City, Nevada 89701

Re: Senate Bill 160 of the 83rd Legislative Session

Dear Secretary of State Aguilar:

I am forwarding to you, for filing within the time limit set forth in the Nevada Constitution and without my approval, Senate Bill 160 ("SB 160"), which is titled as follows:

AN ACT relating to discriminatory practices; moving the Nevada Equal Rights Commission from the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation to the Office of the Attorney General; revising certain duties of the Commission; establishing certain requirements relating to attorneys and paralegals who provide services to or are employed by the Commission; setting forth certain requirements relating to the final disposition of a complaint alleging an unlawful discriminatory practice; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

SB 160 is founded on a fundamental misunderstanding of the Nevada Equal Rights Commission's (NERC) essential role. According to NRS 233.010(4), the guiding public policy behind NERC is clear: "the people of this State should be afforded full and accurate information concerning actual and alleged practices of discrimination and acts of prejudice, and that such information may provide the basis for formulating statutory remedies of equal protection and opportunity for all citizens in this State."

This establishes that NERC's primary purpose is administrative and informational, focused on collecting and analyzing data to inform and shape public policy, rather than serving as a prosecutorial enforcement body. The Commission's central responsibility is to investigate and resolve complaints of discrimination in housing, employment, and public accommodations through administrative mechanisms such as hearings, fact-finding, and

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final dispositions. The Department of Employment, Training, and Rehabilitation ("DETR") is structurally and operationally best suited to support these functions. DETR's expertise lies in providing administrative and regulatory oversight within the realms of employment and rehabilitation services, which closely aligns with NERC's mission.

Moreover, the Commission's established procedures—including strict timelines for complaint investigations and resolutions, transparency through public summaries, and clear communication with complainants—are effectively maintained under DETR's administrative framework. This structure prioritizes public service and administrative justice rather than litigation or legal enforcement, ensuring the Commission remains accessible, impartial, and focused on equitable resolution.

I cannot support SB 160 because relocating NERC to the Office of the Attorney General risks shifting its role from a neutral administrative body to an elected, thereby potentially politically oriented, enforcement agency, fundamentally altering its mission and potentially undermining its effectiveness.

For these reasons, I veto this bill and return it to you without my signature or approval.

Respectfully submitted,

A blue ink signature of Joe Lombardo, written in a cursive style.

JOE LOMBARDO
Governor of Nevada

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable Stavros Anthony, President of the Senate (without enclosure)
The Honorable Nicole Cannizzaro, Senate Majority Leader (without enclosure)
The Honorable Steve Yeager, Speaker of the Assembly (without enclosure)
Brendan Bucy, Secretary of the Senate (without enclosure)
Bonnie Borda Hoffecker, Chief Clerk of the Assembly (without enclosure)
Diane Thornton, Legislative Counsel Bureau, Director (without enclosure)
Asher Killian, Legislative Counsel Bureau, Legislative Counsel (without enclosure)

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