



# MOORE INFORMATION

OPINION RESEARCH • STRATEGIC ANALYSIS

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TO: Mary Lau, Retailers Association of Nevada

FROM: Bob Moore, Moore Information

RE: Reno/Las Vegas Focus Groups

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## Introduction

Two focus groups were conducted in Las Vegas, Nevada on Saturday, February 7, 2015 (at 10 AM and 12:00 PM) and one group in Reno on Monday, February 9, 2015 (7:00 PM). All three groups were moderated by Bob Moore, President of Moore Information, Inc. The purpose of these sessions was to explore voters' reactions to a variety of issues facing the Nevada State Legislature.

Recruitment of participants for all groups was performed by Precision Opinion, Inc. of Las Vegas, Nevada. The Las Vegas groups were conducted at Precision Opinion's focus group facility located in the city. The Reno group was conducted at the Silver Legacy Casino Resort. All participants were registered voters residing in the Reno/Las Vegas areas. Each participant received a \$75 cooperation fee as an incentive to participate.

Several screens were used in recruitment of potential participants, including participation in similar groups in the past 12 months and association with any political campaign or advertising, public relations, market research, media or similar firms. In addition, each group was screened to include a mix of gender, age and vote participation in the November 2014 general election (including voters who did and did not participate in that election).

## Overview

### **Political Environment**

The “mood” of these participants about the direction of the state was generally negative.

- In Las Vegas, among the first group, 7 participants described the state as headed in the “right direction” and 5 as “off on the wrong track,” but in the second group, all but 1 participant had a pessimistic outlook.
- In Reno, only 4 participants said “right direction” and 6 said “wrong track.”
- Overall, sentiment among the three groups was roughly two-to-one negative.

In terms of personal finances, these groups were pretty evenly mixed – overall 19 of the 37 participants said they felt optimistic about their personal financial situation, while 17 weren’t feeling optimistic about where they were financially.

When it comes to top-of-mind issue concerns, there was no consensus. However, in all three groups, the most commonly shared concern was the economy and jobs.

### **2014 Voting Behavior**

Although all participants were registered voters, about half admitted they failed to vote in the 2014 November general election. The most common reasons given for not participating were lack of knowledge/information about the candidates, concern about corrupt politicians and lack of time. These voters said they do, however, expect turnout will be higher in 2016 because it will be a Presidential election. Participants in the Las Vegas groups believed those most likely to have voted in 2014 were probably seniors, well-educated and wealthy voters. In Reno, participants agreed it was most likely seniors who turned out in the biggest numbers on Election Day. At the same time, participants in all three groups believed younger people were least likely to have voted in 2014.

### **Perceptions of the Governor and the Legislature**

Neither Governor Sandoval nor state legislators were perceived as having a good understanding of the average person’s problems. This sentiment was shared in both Las Vegas and in Reno.

Just 6 people in the Las Vegas groups (1 person in the first group and 5 in the second group) recalled anything about Governor Sandoval’s State of the State speech and only 1 of those participants was aware that education had been a major theme of the Governor’s speech. In Reno, 6 participants recalled the Governor’s speech; education and increased taxes on business were the major themes recalled.

### **Education Issues**

These participants were not impressed with Nevada’s public schools. Overall, among the 37 participants in all three groups, just 2 people rated schools as “good,” 10 gave “average” ratings and 25 participants gave Nevada public schools a “below average” or “poor” rating. Major problems cited included overcrowding, lack of funding and lack of parental involvement/help.

Most participants believed reform is more important than more funding when it comes to improving Nevada’s public schools, although many of those who believed reform is most important also indicated that more money wouldn’t hurt. After hearing that spending on education in Nevada had doubled in the past 20 years while high school graduation rates have only increased from 66% to 71%, a few more moved to the “reform” camp.

*Charter schools* found more support than opposition overall; however, it was clear that these voters lacked a great deal of passion on either side of this issue. As a result, whichever side defines the issue first is most likely to win the day.

*Merit pay* for teachers was widely popular with participants in all three groups, along with abolishing teacher tenure. A significant majority in these groups also supported the concept of school vouchers, or allowing money to follow the student to a school of their choice. Also widely popular was all-day kindergarten, state funding for pre-K programs and expansion of the classroom breakfast program.

*English language learning* was a popular idea, but these voters widely opposed a \$50 million increase in program funding (from \$50 million to \$100 million).

There was no consensus on the concept of *splitting up Clark County School District* in Las Vegas and it was apparent none of the participants had given the idea much thought.

In the Las Vegas groups there was also no consensus about spending \$36 million for social workers in every school to *combat bullying*, but in Reno this proposal was widely popular. In Reno we heard "bullying prevents kids from learning."

### ***Tax Reform Proposals***

The idea of tax reform didn't stir much enthusiasm among these participants. Some associated tax reform with higher taxes, while for others, tax reform simply meant "change." There was widespread opposition in all groups to increasing sales taxes, property taxes and motor vehicle taxes. Less than half favored higher taxes on insurance companies or on businesses in general. At the same time, there was widespread support for increases on cigarette taxes, gaming taxes and on tickets to outdoor live entertainment events. A majority of participants in these groups also supported higher taxes on mining companies.

*Broadening the sales tax* to include services, food and drugs met with majority opposition in all three groups. Participants also reacted negatively to a proposal that would reduce the sales tax on goods, from 8% to 4%, but create a new tax on services. Several were concerned that this approach wouldn't work or just "didn't add up."

*Increasing the business license fee* (to between \$400 and \$4 million per company, based on company revenues and classification) found majority support overall, even if it applied to businesses that lost money.

Increasing the *cigarette tax* from \$.80 per pack to a \$1.25 per pack found nearly unanimous support in all three groups. In addition, there was also wide support for taxing e-cigarettes.

No one was familiar with *sunset taxes*, but after an explanation, less than half favored an extension of those taxes.

### ***Other Issues***

A *new medical school at UNLV* met with mixed reactions among the Las Vegas participants, with roughly half in favor and half opposed. Overall, we found about half of those in attendance in all three groups believed Nevada was facing a shortage of doctors.

There was wide support for *background checks on all gun sales* in all three groups, largely because these folks were afraid of guns falling into the wrong hands.

There was also nearly unanimous support in the Las Vegas groups for *property tax incentives* to attract business to Nevada. In Reno, however, just 5 of the 11 participants supported this proposal.

All three groups widely agreed *Uber* should be subject to the same rules as taxi and limo companies, specifically with regard to liability insurance and driver background checks.

There was widespread support for new *construction defects legislation*, including:

- Repealing a law that allows lawyers representing homeowners to collect fees from contractors and builders even when the homeowner loses the case.
- New laws designed to prevent builders from using contracts that force all subcontractors to be responsible any time a builder is sued and give a contractor the right to repair or apply a warranty before a lawsuit can be filed.

*Legalizing marijuana* was a mixed bag - these folks were evenly divided between supporters and opponents. However, if a law to legalize marijuana were to pass, it was clear that few would have any objections to using revenues generated from taxing marijuana for schools.

The two Las Vegas groups diverged on *legalizing prostitution on the Strip*; it was unpopular in the first group, but popular in the second.

Following is an in-depth summary of the group discussions.

## Mood, Personal Finances and Issue Concerns

### **General Mood**

Participants in these groups were generally more negative than positive about the direction of thing in Nevada. Overall, 11 participants said things were headed in the right direction but almost twice as many said things were headed off on the wrong track. The remaining participants did not offer an opinion. Pessimism was widely shared among participants in the 12 PM Las Vegas group, while optimism prevailed in the 10 AM group. In Reno 6 participants were negative while 4 were positive. Generally speaking, the “mood” question is a fairly reliable indicator of the desire for change – pessimistic voters are typically more motivated to vote whereas optimistic voters tend to be content with the status quo. Nonetheless, these people are more optimistic than what we saw in focus groups in 2009-2013, during the worst of the “great recession.”

### **Right Direction/Wrong Track**

	<b>Right direction</b>	<b>Wrong track</b>	<b>No opinion/ don't know</b>
Las Vegas 10 AM	7	5	1
Las Vegas 12 PM	0	10	2
Reno	4	6	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>4</b>

### **Personal Financial Situation**

Participants’ perceptions of their own financial situation reflect a mix of both optimism and pessimism. In the Las Vegas 10 AM group, optimistic responses equaled pessimistic participants (7 each) but those in the 12 PM group were largely unhappy with their financial outlook. In Reno, the opposite was true, with 9 of 11 participants reporting they were feeling pretty good about their financial situation.

### **Personal Financial Situation**

	<b>Optimistic</b>	<b>Pessimistic</b>	<b>No opinion/ don't know</b>
Las Vegas 10 AM	7	7	0
Las Vegas 12 PM	3	8	1
Reno	9	2	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>1</b>

### **Most Important Issue Concerns**

Participants in these groups did not share consensus agreement when it comes to the most important problem facing people in Nevada today. However, in all three groups, the most commonly shared concern was the economy and jobs (lack thereof). Beyond that, a wide variety of issues surfaced in the discussion, including terrorism, measles outbreak, misuse of tax dollars, right to work state, re-education of the workforce, lack of personal responsibility and crime.

## Voter Turnout and Voting Behavior

Lack of information/knowledge about the candidates, lack of faith in the system and voter apathy were thought to be the biggest reasons for the historic low turnout in the 2014 general election in Nevada (and nationwide, for that matter). In these groups, roughly half admitted they hadn’t voted, although all in attendance were registered to vote. There was a common complaint in the Las Vegas groups that voters didn’t think their vote would

"count" or make a difference and also sentiment that "politicians will just do what they are doing to do anyway." For one participant in the Las Vegas 12 PM group, voting was simply a "waste of time." In the Reno group, we were more likely to hear folks didn't vote because they were "too busy" or didn't have time and that perhaps they would have voted had they known more about the candidates on the ticket. A perception of corruption in politics was also a contributing factor in lack of participation in elections. One participant in the Las Vegas 12 PM group summed up his feelings when he said, "Politics here is just a dirty game – it's all about money and who the casinos back."

In all three groups participants predicted that turnout in 2016 will be higher because it is a Presidential election. These participants seemed to believe that their vote is more important in affecting the Presidential election than it is in electing statewide or local officials.

Here is a sampling of responses when participants were asked why 2014 voter turnout was so low:

- Because of the candidates. Nothing put on the table as far as the economy.
- People don't care anymore; don't care what's going on.
- You vote for these people but they don't do what they say they are supposed to be doing.
- Wasted effort.
- Reid has been in office for years and years and he does follow through once in a while. Sandoval is there for the money.
- They weren't public enough about what they were doing or planned on doing.
- Everyone will show up to Presidential elections, but smaller stuff isn't important enough to show.
- People don't think it counts.
- Didn't have knowledge of the candidates.
- Not important to people. They are going to elect who they are going elect anyway – my vote doesn't count.
- Propaganda and smear campaigns get on people's nerves. That's what people say.
- Lines are too long.
- Time – people work, we don't feel like our vote's really going to count.
- In construction, I was talking about the election and people were talking about voting – a lot can't vote. There are a lot of felons in NV. In construction almost everyone I talk to is a felon.
- As far as others, they believe it didn't count, didn't matter. I used to be that way until I got more involved. I do feel it's important. A community thing.
- Not unlike the national situation – the midterm election had lowest turnout. We are a microcosm of what happened nationally.
- Feel disenfranchised by billionaires that influence election. Edelson – plays both sides. In Nevada, a lot of outside money coming in to influence elections. Outside money
- Politics here is just a dirty game - it's all about money and who the casinos back.
- I did political canvassing in 2012 in Northern Nevada, which is very Republican. A lot of people in Nevada are very upset because neither party is putting out a lot of promises – people are re-registering as Libertarian or Independent. Also, the donors – I'm 30. People over 35 like to donate to campaigns. People my age don't have financial status to donate. It's all about money.
- Lazy. If you don't vote you don't have any right to complain.

When it comes to who, or which groups of people vote, participants generally agreed that older people/retirees, the more educated and the rich are most likely to turn out to vote.

Conversely, younger people/youth, the less educated and lower income people were believed to be less likely to vote. One person in the Las Vegas group suggested that “religious” people vote, because their church or faith organization may take a position on a certain candidate or issue and encourage their members to vote a certain way.

### Perceptions of Governor and State Legislature

Neither Governor Sandoval nor the State Legislature was viewed as having a good understanding of the problems and lives of these participants and their neighbors. Most scoffed at the idea that the Governor could relate to “regular” citizens. Many present perceived Sandoval to be “out of touch” and “too rich” to be able to relate.

#### Does Governor Sandoval/State Legislature Understand You and Your Problems?

	Governor Sandoval			State Legislature		
	Yes	No	Don't know/ no opinion	Yes	No	Don't know/ no opinion
Las Vegas 10 AM	1	11	0	4	8	0
Las Vegas 12 PM	4	10	0	0	14	0
Reno	0	7	4	0	9	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>2</b>

Here is a sample of comments offered when participants were asked why they believed the Governor does not understand

- How he’s raised. His background.
- Says a lot out of the side of his neck. I was looking forward to seeing what he was going to do, but I haven’t seen anything.
- I don’t think most people in government come down to the level of the regular people.
- A lot of them haven’t lived the lives of some of these people. They never experienced how some of these people have lived. A lot of them have had always had money.
- They understand what they think you want to hear.
- Last time Obama came here to Sandoval’s house. He never showed up. How can he know about the neighbors when he’s not too neighborly himself? The President came to his house and he never even showed up.
- Out for himself.
- Seems like the elite, ivory tower-ish kind of guy.
- He is not a people-person.
- I actually met Sandoval a few times – a good man deep down, but stuck in this X/Y syndrome. Need to stop thinking in terms of partisanship and start thinking about what’s good about the state of Nevada. Don’t think he’s a bad guy and really cares, but like many politicians, he has tunnel vision about being reelected.

As for the Governor’s State of the State speech given January 15th, roughly a third of participants overall recalled seeing, reading or hearing something about it. In the Las Vegas 10 AM group, 1 person recalled the SOS speech, 5 in the second Las Vegas group and 6 in the Reno group. These folks were most likely to recall education issues and tax increases as the major topics covered by the speech.

## Education Issues

The Nevada public school system found few fans in these focus groups. In fact, of the 37 participants present in the three groups, only 2 rated public schools as "good." Participants cited several factors that contribute to their negative perceptions of Nevada public schools, including overcrowding, lack of funding/budget problems, lack of parental involvement and unmotivated students. In two of the groups, participants cited statistics related to Nevada having one of the lowest performing public school systems in the nation (one said NV ranks 43<sup>rd</sup> in the nation).

There was common concern for the difficult job teachers face in public schools today. Participants acknowledge that teachers, for the most part, are good and trying to do the best they can with the limited resources, time and mandates that they have to deal with (like standardized testing and ever-changing curriculum programs). It was mentioned several times that teachers are simply "overwhelmed" by the level of work and number of students they have to deal with, as well as the issues they face with behaviorally challenged students, lack of parental support and the challenges of teaching kids in the age of social media.

It was clear that these participants didn't believe schools will improve simply by throwing more money at them. Reform on many levels was deemed necessary and welcomed. This was further evident when participants were informed that over the last 20 years, education spending has more than doubled while graduation rates have increased only 5% during the same time period. Nearly everyone present was troubled by these incongruent statistics.

### Perceptions of Nevada Public Schools

	Good	Average	Below average	Don't know/ no opinion
Las Vegas 10 AM	1	4	7	2
Las Vegas 12 PM	0	2	9	1
Reno	1	4	6	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>3</b>

### What Do Nevada Schools Need Most - Reform or More Money?

	Money	Reform	Don't know/ no opinion
Las Vegas 10 AM	5	9	0
Las Vegas 12 PM	0	12	0
Reno	3	4	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>4</b>

Comments about Nevada's public schools follow.

- Our test scores are amongst lowest in the country. Because we have so many people moving here. 30 schools opening in one year? Large classrooms, overwhelmed.
- Lack of parent involvement, a lot of it due to job sector. On odd schedules, can't participate like they should. The school districts say they are loading kids up with schoolwork.
- Money – lack of funding and greed. Several teachers say school district likes to hold on to substitute teachers that have no vested interest in these kids. Just getting a paycheck. I have an ADD granddaughter. She just needed special help but school



did not deliver on what they said to help her. They are very involved. That's so with several other friends and family members. They are willing to help even though they work.

- Too many kids out of school, just running the city. Teachers don't care, or parents don't care, social media – think they can just get famous and not go to school. Not active enough, don't think they are good enough.
- Teachers are overwhelmed.
- As a parent, I have three kids, they didn't always do well. The teachers I encounter are sincere. If your child is getting out there and trying. Schools are burdened. CCSD trying to accommodate. Funding is not there to pay teachers what they want. There are some that are really dedicated. I do believe in them.
- I'm a product of parochial schools. Obviously get a better education. I volunteer at my daughter's public school. I see overwhelmed teachers even there. Overall, some don't have a lot of education; just the bare minimum and they are thrust into an overpopulated school system. Parent involvement is 50% of it or lack thereof it.
- Social media is huge – administrators need to take more disciplinary authority, as far as letting kids have access to smart phones and whatnot.
- Kids are not learning.
- Overcrowded.
- Teachers that care don't have enough power to make a difference
- A lot starts at home – I don't think they get it at home.
- I can't say they aren't teaching them nothing.
- Too worried about all the Mexican kids and teaching them English to where our kids are getting left behind.
- The budget – how can we find money to go fight wars in countries we never heard of when we can't get money to educate kids in our schools. How come we are involved in everybody's business but our own? Can't take care of our own backyard.
- Better background checks on the teachers. Been here 45 years and known several teachers doing drugs, molesting children – no one ever knows.
- Parental interference – parents refuse to discipline their own brats but refuse to let others do it.
- It's illegal to discipline your kids these days.
- Seem like schools are more concerned about indoctrination than education. Some of it comes from NEA – not just Nevada, it's all over the country. STEM programs are always lacking. I don't see the children educated well enough to get to college.
- I think they just push them through. They have to get them graduated and don't really care if they learn.
- Nutrition. When I was 18 I worked in cafeteria. They don't serve water. Used to make mashed potatoes and we mixed sugar in it – fat, corn starch.
- I graduated in 2013, and I went to elementary and high school here. I say schools are good, from my personal experience; I had everything available to me. We had low and high and middle income students. I never had any problems. The people who weren't successful were the ones having family problems at home – not focusing on school, didn't do homework, always on their phone, partying. Wasn't the teachers' fault. Students didn't take responsibility to learn the subject themselves.
- Treatment of our teachers. Re-education of our teachers. Students shouldn't be the only ones learning. They need to grow, too in order to teach nowadays.
- It's a complex question. We all have a piece of the truth here. What I found was that it sometimes gets political. Certain demographics get better allocation of resources. Even in Reno. If you go to certain neighborhoods, upper middle class neighborhoods get better resources. It's the teachers' responsibility to make sure the teachers are motivated. The point you make is very important – I've had students ask me, is Europe in Canada? You can't just worry about passing tests to

get into college. Not everyone is college bound. We have sacrosanct duty to make sure every child has an opportunity and make sure there's a democratic distribution of resources.

There was not a great deal of knowledge, nor passion, for the various education reform proposals tested in these groups. While participants clearly believed Nevada schools need change, they were lacking in substantive information and details about proposals such as charter schools and vouchers. At the same time, we did elicit a passionate reaction to the issues of abolishing teacher tenure and merit pay for teachers that perform well. Along those lines, there was also consensus that teachers are not paid enough for the job they do – no one present said they thought teachers were paid too much and only 4 participants said they thought teachers were paid “about right.” The number who said that teachers were paid about right increased slightly when participants learned that Nevada teachers on average earn \$56,000-\$58,000 per year, but still no one was of the opinion that teachers are paid “too much.”

*Charter schools* - Opening additional charter schools was more popular in the Las Vegas groups than in the Reno group. In Las Vegas, a total of 16 participants said they would like to see more charters, while in Reno, no one would. In the Las Vegas 10 AM group, the supporters of more charters seemed to feel that fixing the education system will require a more “creative” approach and that charter schools offer just that – a creative solution. In Reno, however, while participants were not opposed to charter schools in general, they just didn't see the need for more at this time. They did acknowledge that charter schools provide a good alternative for some parents/students and that they can be a good idea, as long there is “accountability.”

*Abolishing Teacher Tenure* - This proposal met with consensus support in all three focus group sessions. Several said they could think back to their own experience in schools and recall having teachers who were simply malingering, not caring about how the students are doing and not even trying anymore.

*Merit Pay* - These participants were supportive of implementing a merit pay system for Nevada's public school teachers. As one respondent summed it up – “In other professional jobs you have bonuses and are held to a certain standard, you don't have protection from a union. In this field, it's only right that there should be incentives, too.” It should be noted that this issue was not widely familiar to most participants, particularly in the Las Vegas groups, but after hearing a brief definition and examples, participants were widely supportive.

*Vouchers* - The idea of allowing the “money to follow the student,” giving parents and students the ability to choose the school of their choice, public or private, found wide support in all three groups. The concept was not familiar to several participants, particularly in the Las Vegas groups. However once they learned about it, they were on board, for the most part.

### Teacher Tenure, Merit Pay and Vouchers

	Abolish teacher tenure?		Merit Pay?		Vouchers?	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Las Vegas 10 AM	11	3	13	1	10	4
Las Vegas 12 PM	12	0	9	3	9	3
Reno	8	3	11	0	10	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>8</b>

Three other education reform proposals were tested, including all-day kindergarten in all schools, state funding of pre-K/early learning programs and increased spending on English language learning for students who don't speak English. The all-day kindergarten and funding for pre-K were both widely popular in all three groups. However, there was nearly four-to-one opposition to increasing state spending on English language learning programs from \$50 million to \$100 million. As one gentleman summed it up, "We need that money for our own kids."

### All-Day Kindergarten, Pre-K Funding and English Language Learning

	All-day kindergarten		Pre-K funding		Double funding for English language learning to \$100M	
	Yes	No/DK	Yes	No/DK	Yes	No/DK
Las Vegas 10 AM	10	4	11	3	3	11
Las Vegas 12 PM	9	3	9	3	0	12
Reno	8	3	6	5	4	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>30</b>

Three additional education reform proposals failed to find consensus agreement in these groups, including \$36 million for social workers in all schools to combat bullying, splitting up the Clark County School District into several smaller districts and \$2 million to expand the classroom breakfast program.

### Breakfast Program, Social Workers and Splitting Clark County School District

	\$2 million to expand breakfast program		\$36 million for social workers/bullying		Split Clark Co. School District	
	Yes	No/DK	Yes	No/DK	Yes	No/DK
Las Vegas 10 AM	11	3	4	10	3	11
Las Vegas 12 PM	8	4	7	5	7	5
Reno	9	2	8	3	4	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>23</b>

### Tax Reform

Voters in these groups were not enthused about the concept of "tax reform." For some, the phrase brought to mind "higher taxes," while for others, it simply meant a "change" to the current tax system. Of the 37 participants, a total of 20 said they supported the conceptual idea of "tax reform" (5 in the 10 AM Las Vegas group, 7 in the 12 PM group and 8 in the Reno group). At the same time, however, when asked if they would be willing to pay higher taxes themselves in order to provide more funding for public schools in Nevada, support

was virtually non-existent in the Las Vegas groups (only 5 in the 10 AM Las Vegas group and none in the 12 PM group), while 7 of the 11 Reno participants said they would be willing to raise their own taxes for education.

Conceptually, participants were opposed to increases in each of the four major tax vehicles that currently fund public education in Nevada - the sales tax, motor vehicle tax, property taxes and insurance premiums. Importantly, in this portion of the discussion, we did not discuss specific tax increase proposals, rather, just the conceptual idea of "raising" these particular taxes. At the same time, however, most would have no problem supporting an increase on the cigarette tax and were also supportive of including e-cigarettes in the tax structure (again, no amount or dollar figure was discussed at this point – but we did test a specific cigarette tax proposal in the following segment of the discussions).

**Tax Proposals**

We asked participants for a quick "yes or no" answer to the concept of raising a series of specific taxes in order to provide more funding for Nevada public schools. The following table summarizes the total "yes" vote for each specific tax increase tested in the groups. Importantly, these questions were designed to get a quick, unaided reaction. In most cases there were no specifics associated with these tax reform proposals (i.e. no percentage increase or dollar amount was presented).

**Support or Oppose Increasing Taxes on.....To Pay for Public Education in Nevada?**

	<b>Yes (out of 37)</b>
Gaming	29
Cigarette taxes from \$.80 cents to \$1.20 per pack	28
Taxing tickets for big outdoor events	27
Mining	21
Reduce sales tax to 4%; add 4% sales tax on services	14
Business taxes (general)	11
Insurance companies	10
Broaden sales tax to include business services like accounting and legal services	4
Gross-receipts tax on business	4*
Broaden sales tax to include services like manicures, lawn mowing, dry cleaning services	2
Broaden sales tax to include food and drugs	1

*(\*only tested in two of the three groups)*

A new *business and license fee based on gross receipts* was well received in the Las Vegas groups but Reno participants were divided. This proposal was explained as a change to the current business licenses fee of \$200 per year fee on all businesses, regardless of size or revenue, to a fee ranging from \$400 to \$4 million dollars, depending on business classification and annual revenues. Support for this type of reform stemmed from participants' desire for bigger businesses to "pay their fair share" as well as the theory that "the more you make, the more you pay." At the same time, hesitancy seemed based on lack of knowledge/understanding of the structure of such a tax and how it works, and there was a healthy level of concern for businesses that might be losing money but would still be subject to the gross receipts tax.

*Cigarette Tax* – There was widespread support for increasing the tax on cigarettes from \$.80 cents per pack to \$1.20 per pack. Basically, the only opponents were smokers, but still even among smokers, one or two were willing to tax themselves at a higher rate in order to help fund public education in Nevada.

*Sunset Taxes* - No one in attendance was familiar with the sunset taxes and upon learning that these taxes had been passed in 2011 and renewed again in 2013, there was little energy or enthusiasm for renewing or eliminating. While 8 in the Las Vegas 10 AM group supported renewing these taxes a third time, only 2 in the 12 PM Las Vegas group and none in the Reno group supported another extension.

*Tax Incentives for Businesses* – Offering tax incentives to big businesses to locate in Nevada, like Tesla and Apple, generated three-to-one support from these participants. However, the Reno folks seemed a tad skeptical of this approach, concerned that offering breaks to big business can have a “ripple effect” down to the consumer in the form of higher prices for goods and services and concern about the notion that big businesses don’t need the breaks and can easily afford to pay their share of the cost of doing business. In the Las Vegas groups, however, the potential for jobs and economic benefits won the day in terms of perceived benefits outweighing the drawbacks of providing tax incentives for businesses to come to Nevada.

**Other Issues**

***New Medical School at UNLV*** – A proposal to build a medical school at UNLV met with mixed reactions among Las Vegas participants (we did not explore this issue in the Reno group). Specifically, only 1 in the 10 AM group supported a new medical school, while 10 in the 12 PM group did. The 10 AM group included a UNLV student and the other participants in that group looked to him for his position on whether or not this was a good idea. This student was of the opinion that a medical school at UNLV was unnecessary based on his perception that there wouldn’t be enough students to make it worth the investment. It was apparent in both groups however that there is a lack of knowledge about the existence of medical schools in Nevada (some were under the impression that there are none or confused the UNLV School of Nursing with a medical school).

***Doctor Shortage*** – 16 of the 37 participants in these groups believed there is a shortage of doctors in Nevada.

***Background Checks for All Gun Sales Including Private Party Transactions*** – Expanding background checks to all gun sales including private parties found four-to-one support from participants in these groups. The prevailing sentiment on this issue was the desire to “keep guns out of the wrong hands.”

**Background Checks on All Gun Sales**

	Yes	No/ no opinion
Las Vegas 10 AM	10	2
Las Vegas 12 PM	13	1
Reno	7	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>7</b>

***Uber*** – The general consensus on Uber was that 1) they should be allowed to operate, but 2) Uber drivers should be subject to the same rules as cab and limo companies and 3) drivers should be subject to background checks.

**Should Uber Be Subject to Same Rules as Cab and Limo Companies?**

	Yes	No/ no opinion
Las Vegas 10 AM	12	2
Las Vegas 12 PM	11	1
Reno	8	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>6</b>

**Construction Defects** – Although this was a somewhat complex issue, these participants were generally supportive of construction defects legislation proposals upon hearing their intended objectives. The first proposal, which would repeal a law that allows lawyers representing homeowners to collect fees from contractors and builders even when the homeowner loses the case met with support – no one liked the idea that lawyers get paid regardless of the outcome. There was unanimous opposition to an existing law that allows builders to bring subcontractors into defects suits, even if the subcontractor has nothing to do with the defect, and participants widely support a law requiring homeowners to give contractors the right to repair or invoke warranty on a defect before a lawsuit can be filed.

**Construction Defects Legislative Proposals**

	Repeal 1995 law/lawyers get paid regardless		Subcontractor shared responsibility for defects		Contractor right to repair or invoke warranty	
	Repeal	Keep	Yes	No/DK	Yes	No/DK
Las Vegas 10 AM	14	0	0	14	13	1
Las Vegas 12 PM	12	0	0	12	12	0
Reno	8	3	0	11	10	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>2</b>

**Marijuana Legalization** - Opinions on this issue were divergent – roughly half of those present favored legalizing marijuana for recreational use (17) and the other half were opposed (20). Rationale for legalizing centered around perception that “people are going to use it anyway” and that the state “might as well get something for it.” Opposition stemmed largely from participants who cited the social pitfalls of smoking marijuana – it’s a “gateway” drug, causes people to be “lazy” and “unmotivated” and the anticipation that legalizing it will simply “cause more problems than it’s worth.”

However, should it become legal, there was widespread support for using any tax revenues generated by the sale of marijuana, for public schools in Nevada.

**Prostitution on the Las Vegas Strip** - In the two Las Vegas groups, we talked about legalizing prostitution on the Strip. Interestingly, the first group was in favor, while the second group was opposed. Folks in the first group were concerned about protecting the “family” environment of the Strip, while those in the second group were more of the mindset that it’s happening anyway, regardless of illegality, and that the state might as well make it legal and benefit from the tax revenues.

### Legalizing Marijuana and Prostitution on the Strip

	Legalize marijuana?		Legalize prostitution on the Strip?	
	Yes	No/DK	Yes	No/DK
Las Vegas 10 AM	5	9	3	11
Las Vegas 12 PM	8	4	11	1
Reno	4	7	NA	NA
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12</b>

**PARTICIPANT LISTS****Las Vegas 10 AM**

<b>First Name</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Party Registration</b>	<b>Zip Code</b>	<b>Vote in 2014 General Election</b>
<b>Charmaine</b>	19	Female	NA/other	89108	No
<b>Carlos</b>	43	Male	NA/other	89032	Yes
<b>Anthony</b>	66	Male	Democrat	89169	Yes
<b>Barbara</b>	57	Female	Democrat	89156	Yes
<b>Daniel</b>	25	Male	NA/other	89119	Yes
<b>Keyon</b>	21	Male	Republican	89106	No
<b>Lou</b>	45	Male	Democrat	89031	No
<b>Jeff</b>	49	Male	Democrat	89183	No
<b>Joseph</b>	29	Male	Democrat	89113	No
<b>Cindy</b>	54	Female	NA/other	89074	Yes
<b>Johnny</b>	40	Male	NA/other	89101	Yes
<b>Latonia</b>	43	Female	Republican	89032	No
<b>Alice</b>	65	Female	Democrat	89103	No
<b>Maneyka</b>	45	Female	Republican	89081	No

**Las Vegas 12 PM**

<b>First Name</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Party Registration</b>	<b>Zip Code</b>	<b>Vote in 2014 General Election</b>
<b>Barbara</b>	44	Female	Democrat	89030	Yes
<b>Pari</b>	44	Female	Democrat	89169	Yes
<b>Mikel</b>	21	Male	Democrat	89014	No
<b>Patti</b>	51	Female	Republican	89121	No
<b>Denise</b>	56	Female	NA/other	89122	No
<b>Michael</b>	40	Female	NA/other	89119	Yes
<b>Morris</b>	42	Male	Republican	89119	No
<b>Benjamin</b>	35	Male	Democrat	89129	Yes
<b>Sondra</b>	32	Female	Democrat	89117	Yes
<b>Ty</b>	50	Male	Republican	89101	No
<b>Christine</b>	58	Female	NA/other	89031	No
<b>Laurie</b>	45	Female	Republican	89052	No



**Reno 7 PM**

<b>First Name</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Party Registration</b>	<b>Zip Code</b>	<b>Vote in 2014 General Election</b>
<b>Marcus</b>	19	Male	NA/other	89523	Yes
<b>John</b>	78	Male	Republican	89519	Yes
<b>Chastity</b>	35-54	Female	Republican	89512	No
<b>Louise</b>	71	Female	Democrat	89502	Yes
<b>Carlos</b>	38	Male	NA/other	89506	Yes
<b>Mario</b>	29	Male	NA/other	89433	No
<b>Tony</b>	63	Male	NA/other	89501	No
<b>Joseph</b>	54	Male	Democrat	89523	No
<b>Bonnie</b>	65	Female	Democrat	89510	Yes
<b>Kim</b>	58	Female	Republican	89432	No
<b>Beverly</b>	63	Female	NA/other	89503	No