

Joe Lombardo
Governor

Richard
Whitley, MS
Director



**DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**
AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES DIVISION
Helping people. It's who we are and what we do.



Rique Robb
Administrator

Nevada Commission for Persons Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing: Legislative Subcommittee

MEETING NOTICE

Date and Time of Meeting: Tuesday, November 4, 2025
2:30 PM

Location of Meeting: Virtual: TEAMS Online

MINUTES

1. Roll Call and Opening Statement:

Obioma Officer, Executive Director

Members: Lee Bullock; Eli Schwartz; Beth Jones

Excused Absent: Catherine Nielsen

Unexcused Absent: Shelly Freed

Guests: Lorraine Belt Dolan

CART Provider: Becky Van Auken

Sign Language Interpreters: Lisa Dopf and Sonya Stark

Staff: Obioma Officer, Autumn Blattman, & Wendy Thornley

2. Public Comment: (No action may be taken upon a matter raised under public comment period unless the matter itself has been specifically included on an agenda as an action item. To provide public comment telephonically, dial +775-321-6111. When prompted to provide the Phone Conference ID, enter 861 864 350#. Comments will be limited to five minutes per person. Persons making comments will be asked to begin by stating their name for the record and to spell their last name and provide the secretary with written comments.)

Beth Jones: Townhall in Las Vegas, there will be a portable timer for public comment.

3. For Possible Action: Discussion and Possible Vote to Approve Minutes of August 12, 2025, meeting.

Obioma Officer, Executive Director

Lee Bullock motioned to approve the draft minutes. Beth Jones seconded. The members voted and the motion carried.

- 4. For Possible Action:** Discussion and Possible Vote to Reappoint/Announcement of: Eli Schwartz, Beth Jones, and Catherine Nielsen, and Nominate, Elect, and/or reappointing subcommittee Chairperson to/for the Legislative Subcommittee. Eli Schwartz, Previous Chairperson.

Obioma Officer, Executive Director

All three individuals have been reappointed for one calendar year and approved by the Deaf Commission Chair, Eric Wilcox.

Eli Schwartz was re-elected as Chair of this subcommittee.

- 5. For Information, Discussion, and Possible Action:** Discuss 2025 Engagement Conference Updates and Possible Vote to include a formal report from the Planning Team Committee Members on the Legislative Subcommittee and review notes taken from the most recent Planning Team Committee meeting.

Eli Schwartz, Planning Team Committee Member
Obioma Officer, Executive Director

Eli Schwartz: The planning committee has been meeting weekly and will continue until the conference. Lori Turner is assisting with finding volunteer interpreters and to do notetaking.

Obioma Officer: Will be sharing the website at the conference. She shared the weblink: <https://dhh-2024-engagement-conference.my.canva.site/2025-engagement-conference>

There will be four tracks at the conference.

1. Deaf-Blind community
2. Legislative gains
3. Senior citizen focus topics and resources
4. Youth advocacy resources

Registration is now open and free to all Nevada residents. Speakers will need to register.

There will be local and out of state speakers and people can choose which speakers to listen to. There will be community and youth panels as well as a vendor faire.

Registration is now open and is free to all Nevada residents.

On December 12th, there will be a gratitude celebration and a community gala hosted by Sammy's Den. Proceeds from the silent auction will go towards the 2027 Deaf Day at the Legislature.

6. For Information Only: Deaf and hard of Hearing (D/HH) Legislative Gains and Outcomes from Nevada's 83rd Legislative Session and Topics Approved by General Commission to Revisit for the 84th Legislative Session.

a) Deaf/Hard of Hearing (D/HH) Related Bills to be Revisited:

Eli Schwartz, Chair
Obioma Officer, Executive Director

- [AB247 Overview](#) – **Died.**

- **Background**

- i. AB 247 originally aimed to require closed captioning in public spaces (restaurants, bars, hospitals, waiting rooms).
- ii. Bill failed because it was combined with three other proposals, creating a fiscal note and confusion about scope.

- **Issues Identified**

- i. Misinterpretation by LCB: "Public spaces" assumed to mean government buildings, leading to cost concerns.

Combined bill included:

1. Closed captioning in public spaces (AB 247).
2. ASL as a foreign language credit for high school/college.
3. Deaf school community study.
4. Interpreter accommodations at public meetings.

- **Next Steps**

- i. Eli will:
 1. Separate AB 247 from combined bill.
 2. Draft a new BDR focusing solely on closed captioning upon request in public spaces (no fiscal impact).
 3. Volunteers will research other components (ASL credit, Deaf school study, interpreter accommodations).
 4. Reports to be submitted in Word format to Obioma before next meeting for review and faster voting.

- **Additional Notes**

- i. Legislator outreach should start early; build relationships before requesting support.
 - ii. Engagement Conference and Deaf Day fundraising updates will be discussed at next meeting.
 - iii. Goal: Have new BDR drafts ready by February meeting for approval and sponsorship.
- [AB395 Overview](#) – **Died.**
 - i. Discuss next steps (if any).
- **Background**
 - i. AB 395 aimed to improve accessibility for Deaf and hard-of-hearing patients in medical and healthcare facilities.
 - ii. Originally initiated by Shelly Freed.
 - iii. Bill died in the previous legislative session and needs review for reintroduction.
- **Next Step**
 - i. Shelly Freed will be contacted to confirm if she will lead the recommitment of AB 395.
Committee will:
 1. Locate the original BDR submitted for AB 395.
 2. Review and update language to remove any fiscal note and ensure feasibility.
 3. Updated draft to be ready by February meeting for discussion and approval.
- **Additional Notes**
 - Related bills discussed:
 1. AB 247 – Closed captioning in public spaces.
 2. SB 192 – Live interpreter requirement for birthing centers.
 - ii. Volunteers will research and submit Word-format reports to Obioma before the next meeting for review and posting.
- [SB192 Overview](#) – **Died.**
 - i. Discuss next steps (if any).
- **Background**
 - i. SB 192 proposed requiring live sign language interpreters in birthing centers and hospitals upon request.

- ii. Bill died in the previous legislative session due to concerns about fiscal impact.
- iii. Other states have successfully passed similar legislation, providing a model for Nevada.
- Discussion
 - Obioma noted:
 1. Hospitals are already required to provide interpreters upon request.
 2. Birthing centers could mirror this requirement without significant additional cost.
 3. Beth volunteered to research SB 192 and collaborate with Catherine for guidance.
 4. Goal: Reword the bill to avoid fiscal note and align with existing hospital requirements.

- **Next Steps**

Beth will:

1. Contact Catherine for support.
 2. Prepare a report on SB 192 for the February meeting.
 3. Committee will:
 4. Review Beth's findings and vote on moving forward with a new BDR draft.
 5. Legislator outreach:
 6. Begin early relationship-building to secure sponsorship for the revised bill.
- [SB352 Overview](#) – **Vetoed by the Governor.** (Return to 84th Session) Watch to see if it comes back during the next session.
 - i. Discuss next steps (if any).

- **Background**

- i. SB 352 addressed discrimination by insurance companies.

Committee confirmed:

1. SB 352 was not initiated by the Deaf Commission.
2. No current action required by this group.

- **Discussion**

Obioma recommended:

3. Remove SB 352 from current agenda, but monitor future sessions for similar bills.
4. Ensure any future legislation does not discriminate against Deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals regarding insurance coverage for accessibility needs.
5. Eli agreed to keep SB 352 on the radar for future review.

- **Next Steps**

Committee will:

1. Watch for SB 352 or similar bills in the next legislative session.
 2. Advocate for inclusion of Deaf and hard-of-hearing needs if insurance-related legislation resurfaces.
- [SB400 Overview](#) – **Passed**. Section 3 effective June 9, 2025. Section 1 effective July 1, 2025. Section 2 effective July 1, 2026.
 - i. Discuss next steps (if any).

- **Background**

- ii. SB 400 was briefly mentioned as a bill to monitor, but no details were provided during the meeting.
 1. Committee acknowledged the need to confirm the bill's relevance to Deaf and hard-of-hearing accessibility.

- **Discussion**

- iii. No substantive discussion occurred on SB 400 in this meeting.

Recommendation:

 1. Research SB 400 to determine its scope and whether it impacts the Deaf and hard-of-hearing community.
 2. If relevant, include in February meeting agenda for review.

- **Next Steps**

Assign a volunteer to:

1. Locate SB 400 in NELIS.
2. Summarize its purpose and potential impact.
3. Report findings at the next meeting for decision on whether to pursue or monitor.

7. For Possible Action: Discussion and Possible Vote to Approve Tentative Agenda Items for Next meeting, February 3, 2026.

Obioma Officer, Executive Director

- **Engagement Conference Outcome**

1. Obioma noted this will be included as an outcome report since the next meeting occurs after the conference.
2. Beth will provide a list of legislators contacted and responses regarding attendance.

- **Report on Bills Under Research**

1. Volunteers will research assigned bills (AB 247, AB 395, SB 192, SB 352, SB 400) and submit Word-format reports to Obioma before the next meeting.
2. Reports will be posted for review to allow faster voting during the meeting.

- **Update from Fundraiser for Deaf Day at the Legislature**

1. Beth suggested adding fundraising updates, including Sammy's Den and community efforts.
2. Obioma agreed to include this under a broad agenda item covering all fundraising activities.

- **Time Management Concern**

1. Eli expressed concern about limited meeting time (1 hour 15 minutes).
2. Obioma reassured that the current meeting stayed on schedule despite technical issues, and the next meeting should be manageable.

- The committee approved the following tentative agenda items for the February 3, 2026 meeting:

1. Engagement Conference outcome.
2. Reports on bills being researched.
3. Fundraising update for Deaf Day at the Legislature.

- Reports must be submitted in Word format only (no images or graphics) to comply with open meeting laws.

- **Action Items**

- All Volunteers: Submit Word-format reports on assigned bills to Obioma before the next meeting.
- Obioma: Prepare and post agenda and meeting materials within two weeks.
- Beth: Complete legislator outreach and report responses.
- Committee: Prepare for February meeting to review and vote on BDR drafts.

8. Public Comment:

Lorraine Belt-Dolan announced that the Accessibility Subcommittee will hold its meeting on Friday, November 7th at 2:30 PM via Teams. Details are available on the ADSD website under Boards and Commissions → Nevada Commission for Persons Who Are Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

No other public comments were noted.

9. Adjournment:

Meeting adjourned at: 3:40

AGENDA POSTED AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:

Notice of this meeting was posted at the following Aging and Disability Services Office at 1550 E. College Parkway, Carson City, NV. 89706. Notice of this meeting was posted on the Internet through the Nevada Aging and Disability Services Division website at [ADSD \(nv.gov\)](https://adsd.nv.gov) and Nevada Public Notices website at <https://notice.nv.gov>