

SUPPORT – SB153

Date: April 2, 2019

To: Senate Committee on Government Affairs

Re: NSEA Support for SB153

The Nevada State Education Association represents teachers, other licensed education professionals, and education support professionals across the state. We believe every Nevada student deserves a high-quality public education.

NSEA affiliates negotiate employment contracts for educators with every school district in the state. NSEA supports SB153, the result of years of work done by union stakeholders to strengthen collective bargaining provisions for public employees.

Changes made by SB241 in the 2015 session had chilling effects on collective bargaining for public employees. It did not achieve its stated goal of labor peace and locked employers and public employee unions in contentious, non-stop negotiations. By creating burdensome timelines on the selection of arbitrators for both employers and employee associations representing teachers and education support professionals, the changes fostered mistrust at the bargaining table. The changes gave economic incentives to public employers to not reach agreement with their bargaining units. SB153 addresses these issues, making timelines more reasonable and restoring the evergreen provisions to expired contracts. This would set a more level playing field for collective bargaining.

Many of our local associations, particularly those in rural Nevada, previously negotiated benefits such as leave for contract discussions. These were unilaterally removed by SB241, further slowing the process of negotiating a mutually agreeable contract. Due to this change, several districts have had to schedule bargaining at inconvenient times for both the employer and employees. SB153 would clarify these leave provisions clearing many logistical hurdles from our rural bargaining tables.