

1 V. Plaintiffs' Standing to Challenge the ESA Statute Under Article XI, Sections 2 and  
2 10

3 Plaintiffs Ruby Duncan, Rabbi Mel Hecht, Howard Watts III, and Leora Olivas all reside  
4 in Southern Nevada and pay taxes in Nevada. Plaintiff Adam Berger is also a resident and  
5 taxpayer in Southern Nevada as well as a special-education teacher at a public school and the  
6 parent of a public-school student. Pla.' Compl. ¶ 12. Plaintiffs assert they have standing to  
7 challenge SB 302 because they object to the use of their tax dollars being disbursed through the  
8 ESA program to private schools, including religious ones, to pay for the enrollment of students  
9 in those academic facilities. Compl. ¶ 8-12. The Nevada Supreme Court has yet to rule whether  
10 taxpayer standing is available in Nevada. *See Pojunis v. Denis*, 2014 WL 7188221, at \*1 (Nev.  
11 Dec. 16, 2014) (unpublished opinion finding plaintiff lacked standing "even assuming that  
12 taxpayer standing is available in Nevada"). Plaintiff Berger also contends he has standing  
13 because the ESA program "would divert massive sums from the State's Distributive School  
14 Account, depriving school districts of a key source of funding, and thereby depleting the  
15 resources at the school that Plaintiff Berger's son attends and the one where he teaches."

16 Defendant State of Nevada, joined by Parent/Interveners, challenges the Court's  
17 jurisdiction to hear the instant matter, contending Plaintiffs lack standing to bring this action.  
18 Defendants argue Nevada law does not recognize taxpayer standing, citing primarily *Doe v.*  
19 *Bryan*, 102 Nev. 523, 525, 728 P.2d 443, 444 (1986) and *Blanding v. City of Las Vegas*, 52 Nev.  
20 52, 280 P. 644, 650 (1929); *cf. Citizens for Cold Springs v. City of Reno*, 125 Nev. 625, 630, 218  
21 P.3d 847, 850 (2009) (finding statutory standing). Additionally, Defendants argue in cases  
22 where plaintiffs seek declaratory relief or raise constitutional issues, the Nevada Supreme Court  
23 requires them "to meet increased jurisdictional standing requirements." *Stockmeier v. Nevada*  
24 *Dep't of Corr. Psych. Review Panel*, 122 Nev. 385, 393, 135 P.3d 220, 225-26 (2006).

1 In *Stockmeier*, the Nevada Supreme Court stated it has a "long history of requiring an  
2 actual justiciable controversy as a predicate to judicial relief." 122 Nev. at 393, 135 P.3d at 225.  
3 The high court explained further that in matters such as the instant case, where plaintiffs seek a  
4 statute to be declared unconstitutional, it has "required plaintiffs to meet increased jurisdictional  
5 standing requirements." *Id.* at 393, 135 P.3d at 225-26. Presumably, in making these statements,  
6 the Nevada Supreme Court was referencing the federal judiciary's "case or controversy"  
7 requirement for standing. *Id.* at 392, 135 P.3d at 225. Under this standard, "the federal judiciary  
8 cannot declare the rights of individuals or 'determine the constitutionality of legislative or  
9 executive acts' without an 'actual controversy' between the parties." *Id.* at 392-93, 135 P.3d at  
10 225 (quoting *Lujan v. Defenders of Wildlife*, 504 U.S. 555, 560-61 (1992)). However, the  
11 Nevada Supreme Court specifically rejected that state's courts are bound by the federal "case or  
12 controversy" requirements, noting standing is "'a self-imposed rule of restraint.'" *Id.* at 393, 135  
13 P.3d at 225. The high court approved language allowing state courts to implement standing  
14 requirements in "'favor of just and expeditious determination on the ultimate merits.'" *Id.*  
15 (quoting 59 Am.Jur.2d *Parties* § 36, at 441-42 (2002)). The Nevada Supreme Court ultimately  
16 found the plaintiff had standing to bring an action seeking declaratory and injunctive relief  
17 concerning the "open meetings" law because the statute specifically provided for any person  
18 deprived a right under the statute to bring an action. *Id.* at 394-95, 135 P.3d at 226-27.

19 In *Doe v. Bryan*, the Nevada Supreme Court referenced the federal standing requirement  
20 of an actual controversy and again noted our State's "long history of requiring an actual  
21 justiciable controversy as a predicate to judicial relief." 102 Nev. 523, 525, 728 P.2d 443, 444  
22 (1986). Moreover, the high Court stated "litigated matters must present an existing controversy,  
23 not merely the prospect of a future problem." *Id.* To define a justiciable controversy, the Nevada  
24 Supreme Court in *Doe v. Bryan* relied on *Kress v. Corey*, quoting: "(1) there must exist a

1 justiciable controversy; that is to say, a controversy in which a claim of right is asserted against  
2 one who has an interest in contesting it; (2) the controversy must be between persons whose  
3 interests are adverse; (3) the party seeking declaratory relief must have a legal interest in the  
4 controversy, that is to say, a legally protectable interest; and (4) the issue involved in the  
5 controversy must be ripe for judicial determination." *Id.* (quoting *Kress v. Corey*, 65 Nev. 1, 26,  
6 189 P.2d 352, 364 (1948)). The Nevada Supreme Court also noted a party could not bring an  
7 action when the damage is merely apprehended or feared. *Id.* (citing *Kress*, 65 Nev. at 28-29,  
8 189 P.2d at 365).

9 In saying it generally requires an "actual justiciable controversy" for standing in  
10 particular in cases with a constitutional law dimension, the Nevada Supreme Court has indicated  
11 it generally looks to requirements of injury, causation, and redressability. *See Lujan v. Defenders*  
12 *of Wildlife*, 504 U.S. at 560-61. In *Lujan v. Defenders of Wildlife* the United States Supreme  
13 Court stated it has generally refrained from finding standing to challenge the constitutionality of  
14 legislation without an "actual controversy" between the parties. *Id.* The Court has generally  
15 refrained from finding standing to determine the constitutionality of legislation without an  
16 "actual controversy" between the parties. In *Blanding*, which both parties cite in support of their  
17 positions, the Nevada Supreme Court declined to find standing for taxpayers to maintain a suit to  
18 enjoin the municipality from closing a public road. 52 Nev. 52, 280 P. at 651. There, the  
19 plaintiffs alleged they would be harmed in various ways by the diversion of traffic the closure  
20 would cause. The high Court found a plaintiff did not have standing to challenge a  
21 municipality's act "where he has not sustained or is not threatened with any injury peculiar to  
22 himself as distinguished from the public generally." *Id.* at 651. Further, it concluded that to  
23 "entitle a property owner to injunctive relief against the vacation of a street or highway he must  
24 show that he will suffer a special or peculiar injury, and not merely such inconvenience as is cast

1 upon all other persons of that neighborhood.” *Id.* at 651 (quoting 13 R. C. L. at 75-76).

2 In discussing plaintiffs’ assertion of taxpayer standing, the Nevada Supreme Court in  
3 *Blanding* quoted 28 Cyc. pp. 1736, 1737, which provided a resident or taxpayer may sue to  
4 enjoin an unauthorized or illegal act of a municipality if the plaintiff has sustained a special  
5 injury different from that of the public. *Id.* at 650. Additionally, the Court quoted with approval:

6 And where it (the act of the municipality) is prejudicial to the rights of taxpayers,  
7 as such, as involving the levy of tax, creation of a municipal debt, or  
8 appropriation or expenditure of public funds, or in any way tending to increase  
9 the burden of taxation, the great weight of authority is that if such action be illegal  
or unauthorized, taxpayers may sue to restrain it, without showing any special  
injury different from that sustained by other taxpayers.

10 *Id.*

11 The high court found plaintiffs in their complaint failed to allege anything sufficient to  
12 suggest the municipality misused its power in vacating the street, engaged in fraud or abused its  
13 discretionary powers. Consequently, the Nevada Supreme Court held plaintiffs lacked standing  
14 as “the appellants are not specially injured in regard to their special vocations as alleged, and it  
15 does not otherwise appear that the act of the municipality vacating the present street and  
establishing the proposed street is unlawful or beyond its chartered powers.” *Id.*

16 The Nevada Supreme Court has rarely allowed parties to pursue litigation on behalf of  
17 the public’s interest as taxpayers and to preserve public funds. In *State Bar of Nev. v. List*, 97  
18 Nev. 367, 368, 632 P.2d 341, 342 (1981), the high Court held a private citizen could seek a writ  
19 of mandamus to compel a public officer to perform an act in view of statutory language  
20 authorizing the writ where “the law especially enjoins as a duty resulting from an office.” NRS  
21 34.160. The Court found “[m]andamus will therefore lie to compel the [public officer] to  
22 perform [a] duty at the suit of any citizen instituted to enforce compliance with the law.” *Id.*  
23 Likewise, in *Citizens for Cold Springs v. City of Reno*, the Court found standing existed for  
24 citizens to challenge a land annexation under NRS 268.668. 125 Nev. at 629-32, 218 P.3d 849-



1 52. There, like in *Stackmeter*, the Nevada Supreme Court noted the statute provided that "any  
2 person ... claiming to be adversely affected" by an annexation can challenge it. *Id.*

3 In *City of Las Vegas v. Crugin Indus. Inc.*, 86 Nev. 933, 935-37, 939-40, 478 P.2d 585,  
4 587-88, 589 (1970), the Nevada Supreme Court found standing for taxpayers to challenge the  
5 placement of above-ground power lines within their municipal taxing district. The high court  
6 declined to consider defendant's position that plaintiffs had to show special irreparable injury  
7 different in kind from that sustained by the general public to maintain an action challenging a  
8 particular use of a public street. Instead, the Supreme Court found the municipality's own  
9 ordinance required underground circuits, and, consequently, the power company and the city had  
10 entered into an agreement authorizing them to jointly violate the ordinance. The Nevada  
11 Supreme Court concluded this agreement was null, void, and against public policy. Under these  
12 facts, it found the ordinance was clear as to its limitations and could be changed only by a new  
13 enactment. The high court held any citizen of the municipality would have had standing to seek  
14 "injunctive relief, inasmuch as the relief sought is the abatement of unauthorized conduct. It was  
15 the only just, speedy and effective remedy available to the respondent." 86 Nev. at 939-40, 478  
16 P.2d at 589.

17 What *Blanding* and these cases suggest is to meet the standing requirement, a plaintiff  
18 generally must present an actual case or controversy to the court demonstrating a sustained or  
19 threatened injury peculiar to himself as distinguished from the public generally. Only in rare  
20 instances, such as when a taxpayer has a particularly close interest in a matter involving illegal  
21 conduct of a municipality, or when a statute specifically creates standing, has the Nevada  
22 Supreme Court granted standing for a party to maintain an action as a taxpayer or citizen.  
23 Additionally, in discussing standing due to the illegal conduct of a municipality, the high court  
24 also indicated allowing standing was appropriate even if the plaintiff did not suffer a particular

1 injury because there was no one else who could present an actual case or controversy. *See City*  
2 *of Las Vegas v. Cragin Indus., Inc.*, 86 Nev. 933, 935-37, 939-40, 478 P.2d 585, 587-88, 589  
3 (1970).

4 Defendant contends the decisions where the Nevada Supreme Court has allowed taxpayer  
5 standing to challenge illegal conduct of municipalities are limited to municipalities. Defendant  
6 argues allowing taxpayer standing in such instances may be appropriate because of the close  
7 interest a taxpayer has to the expenditure of funds where he or she lives. Defendant suggests the  
8 holdings of *Doe* and *Stockmeier* indicate such standing is not appropriate when considering a  
9 challenge at the state level to a legislative statute and its constitutionality. Defendant asserts the  
10 close interest that may exist between a taxpayer and the municipality does not exist when  
11 considering the taxpayer's status on the state level. This Court is not persuaded the principles  
12 which allow taxpayers to bring an action against a municipality never have any application at the  
13 state level. While the immediate impact of a city's illegal decision may justify a taxpayer  
14 bringing suit in certain circumstances, the immediate impact of a Legislature's alleged illegal  
15 action in certain circumstances may also justify taxpayer standing. With some municipalities  
16 involving hundreds of thousands of residents, limiting taxpayer standing to illegal actions of  
17 municipalities and not to those of the State Legislature cannot be justified or distinguished.

18 The question to this Court then is whether Plaintiffs, in challenging the State's transfer of  
19 public funds into parents' ESAs under Article XI, sections 2 and 10, have a sufficiently close  
20 interest in a matter possibly involving illegal conduct of the Nevada Legislature, and whether  
21 there is anyone else better suited than Plaintiffs who could demonstrate an actual case and  
22 controversy through injury peculiar to themselves to challenge the ESA program. This approach  
23 allows the Court to permit taxpayer standing in "favor of a just and expeditious determination  
24 on the ultimate merits" in very limited instances where the taxpayer has a close interest in the

1 alleged illegal conduct of the governmental body. See *Stockmeier*, 122 Nev. at 393, 135 P.3d at  
2 225. However, in those instances where a plaintiff has a sufficiently close interest, but lacks a  
3 particular injury presenting a case or controversy, standing will be denied if another individual  
4 could suffer actual injury from the complained-of illegal conduct and bring an action. Limiting  
5 standing in such instances to those who can present an actual case and controversy challenging  
6 the illegal State conduct prevents the courts from being involved in entering advisory opinions  
7 and ensures the consideration of the legal issues under real life application of the State action,  
8 rather than in the context of hypotheticals.

9 In answering the question of whether Plaintiffs have a sufficient close interest as  
10 taxpayers to the challenged illegal State action in the instant case, this Court notes federal courts  
11 have accepted, in limited circumstances, a plaintiff's status as a taxpayer to find standing to  
12 enjoin unlawful appropriations. *Flast v. Cohen*, 392 U.S. 83 (1968). In its decision in *Flast*, the  
13 United States Supreme Court held, to have standing, a taxpayer must first demonstrate a "logical  
14 link" between his taxpayer status "and the type of legislative enactment attacked," and then "a  
15 nexus" between such taxpayer status and "the precise nature of the constitutional infringement  
16 alleged." 392 U.S., at 102, 88 S.Ct. 1942. In considering these two requirements together, the  
17 United States Supreme Court in *Flast* explained "individuals suffer a particular injury for  
18 standing purposes when, in violation of the Establishment Clause and by means of 'the taxing  
19 and spending power,' their property is transferred through the Government's Treasury to a  
20 sectarian entity," 392 U.S., at 105-106. "Such an injury," the Court found, is unlike "generalized  
21 grievances about the conduct of government" and so is "appropriate for judicial redress." *Id.*, at  
22 106. "The taxpayer's allegation in such cases would be that his tax money is being extracted and  
23 spent in violation of specific constitutional protections against such abuses of legislative power."  
24 *Id.*

1       This Court finds Plaintiffs have standing as taxpayers to facially challenge the ESA  
2 statute as violating Article XI, Section 10's prohibition on the use of public funds for sectarian  
3 purposes. Similar to what was presented in *Flast*, if Plaintiffs are correct in their assertions the  
4 ESA statute is unconstitutional, then they would suffer an injury by the transfer of their property  
5 through the State treasury to sectarian entities. Plaintiffs cannot demonstrate any peculiar injury  
6 to themselves from that suffered by any other taxpayer. However, at this time, no other taxpayer  
7 or potential claimant is in a better position than Plaintiffs to assert a case or controversy.  
8 Consequently, unless Plaintiffs are allowed to bring the facial challenge to the ESA statute, no  
9 one will be in a position to bring a challenge other than State executives charged with carrying  
10 out the program. Since the State executives are proponents of the ESA program, finding only the  
11 executives are in a position to bring an action would effectively mean no action would be  
12 brought.

13       The Court also finds the Plaintiffs have standing as taxpayers to facially challenge the  
14 ESA statute as violating Article XI, section 2's provisions concerning the Legislature's  
15 responsibility to provide a uniform system of public schools. In looking at federal precedent, the  
16 United States Supreme Court has never found taxpayer standing except in considering challenges  
17 under the Establishment Clause. *See Arizona Christian School Tuition Organization v. Winn*, 563  
18 U.S. 125, 139 (2011)(declining to lower the taxpayer standing bar in any other constitutional  
19 challenge apart from the Establishment Clause). However, providing education to Nevada  
20 citizens is a paramount responsibility of the Legislature. Nevada's Constitution requires the  
21 Legislature to budget and fund education before making any other appropriations. Nev. Const.  
22 Art XI, § 6. If Plaintiffs are correct in their assertion the ESA program exceeds the constitutional  
23 scope of section 2's required uniform public school system, then they would suffer an injury by  
24 the transfer of their property out of the uniform school system in "violation of specific

1 constitutional protections against such abuses of legislative power.” *Cf. Flast v. Cohen*, 392 U.S.  
2 at 106. Likewise, no other taxpayer or potential claimant is in a better position to assert a case or  
3 controversy, and thus, Plaintiffs should be allowed to bring the facial challenge to the statute.

4 This Court emphasizes that it finds the Plaintiffs as taxpayers only have standing to bring  
5 facial challenges to the ESA statute. Plaintiffs allege many of the schools that will receive  
6 disbursements from parents through their ESA accounts may engage in various forms of  
7 discrimination in hiring of staff and admitting of students. Likewise, Plaintiffs make assertions  
8 as to potential consequences to some schools from the possible loss of certain funding due to  
9 ESA accounts. Plaintiffs do not have standing to assert these potential specific applied injuries  
10 as challenges to the ESA program as they have not personally suffered any harm. There may be  
11 individuals who could assert the challenges on a specific case basis should injury actually occur.  
12 This will allow the Court to avoid providing advisory opinions and to consider such challenges  
13 under real life circumstances and better understand the nature and impact of the challenged  
14 conduct. Additionally, as most of these challenges would be unique to individual schools, the  
15 remedy for any particular challenged conduct would be against the school and its participation in  
16 the ESA program, and not the striking of the ESA program in its entirety.

17 **VI. ESA Program Does Not Violate Article XI, Section 2’s Uniform Public School**  
18 **System Provision**

19 Generally, for a complaint to “survive dismissal, a complaint must contain some set of  
20 facts, which, if true, would entitle [the plaintiff] to relief” *In re Amerco Derivative Litig.*, 127  
21 Nev. Adv. Op. 17, 252 P.3d 681, 692 (2011) (quotation marks omitted). This Court is mindful  
22 legislative acts are entitled to a “strong presumption” that “they are constitutional.” *Sheriff*  
23 *Washoe Cnty. v. Smith*, 91 Nev. 729, 731, 542 P.2d 440, 442 (1975). “Statutes are presumed to  
24 be valid, and the challenger bears the burden of showing that a statute is unconstitutional. In

1 order to meet that burden, the challenger must make a clear showing of invalidity.” *Tam v.*  
2 *Eighth Jud. Dist. Ct.*, 131 Nev. Adv. Op. 80, 358 P.3d 234, 237-38 (2015) (quoting *Silvar v.*  
3 *Eighth Judicial Dist. Court*, 122 Nev. 289, 292, 129 P.3d 682, 684 (2006)). “The Court will  
4 construe statutes, ‘if reasonably possible, so as to be in harmony with the constitution.”’ *Thomas*  
5 *v. Nevada Yellow Cab Corp.*, 130 Nev. Adv. Op. 52, 327 P.3d 518, 521 (2014) (quoting *State v.*  
6 *Ghusman*, 98 Nev. 412, 419, 651 P.2d 639, 644 (1982)). Because this Court looks at the  
7 Complaint as a facial challenge to the ESA statute, Plaintiffs must “demonstrat[e] that there is no  
8 set of circumstances under which the statute would be valid.” *Deja Vu Showgirls v. Nevada*  
9 *Dep’t of Tax.*, 130 Nev. Adv. Op. 73, 334 P.3d 392, 398 (2014). Under Nevada Revised  
10 Statutes, section 0.020, “[i]f any provision of the Nevada Revised Statutes, or the application  
11 thereof to any person, thing or circumstance is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect the  
12 provisions or application of NRS which can be given effect without the invalid provision or  
13 application, and to this end the provisions of NRS are declared to be severable.” Consequently,  
14 if a law can be constitutionally applied, but is unconstitutional as to some of its provisions or  
15 applications, the statute’s lawful applications or provisions will be sustained if it appears the  
16 Legislature would have enacted the constitutional aspects of statute independently of the  
17 unconstitutional provisions or applications. *See Binegar v. Eighth Judicial Dist. Court In and*  
18 *For County of Clark*, 112 Nev. 544, 551–552, 915 P.2d 889, 894 (1996).

19 This Court first considers Plaintiffs’ claim that Article XI, section 2 limits the Legislature  
20 in encouraging education in Nevada to the only means of a uniform public school system and  
21 precludes it from adopting the ESA program. The Court looks at this issue first because if  
22 section 2 does not preclude the Legislature from creating the ESA program, and the program  
23 may be constitutionally established, then this Court can turn to the question whether the  
24 Legislature may permit schools with religious affiliations to participate. If the Legislature can

1 create an ESA program as a suitable means under Article XI, sections 1 and 2, then, at a  
2 minimum, non-religious schools and educational services can properly participate in the program  
3 and parents can set up ESA accounts and direct funds to such schools, home schooling or other  
4 education options. Consequently, the first issue is whether the Legislature may create the ESA  
5 program for anyone.

6 Plaintiffs contend Article XI, section 2, by directing the Legislature "shall provide for a  
7 uniform system of common schools," prohibits the Nevada Legislature from providing for the  
8 education of Nevada school children by any other means. In this respect, Plaintiffs argue, that  
9 while Article XI, section 1 provides the Legislature shall encourage education "by all suitable  
10 means," Article XI, section 2, and the subsequent sections of the article, define what are the  
11 "suitable means." Consequently, Plaintiffs argue the specific directive of section 2 for a system  
12 of uniform public schools limits the Legislature from adopting the ESA program.

13 The Nevada Constitution articulates in two separate sections the duties of the Assembly  
14 in providing education opportunities in Nevada to school children. In Article XI, the framers set  
15 out in the first section that "[t]he legislature shall encourage by all suitable means the promotion  
16 of intellectual, literary, scientific, mining, mechanical, agricultural, and moral improvements... ."  
17 This language was used in the original constitution of 1864 and has remained unchanged through  
18 the last 150 years. In section 2, the framers further provided "[t]he legislature shall provide for a  
19 uniform system of common schools, by which a school shall be established and maintained in  
20 each school district at least six months in every year, and any school district which shall allow  
21 instruction of a sectarian character therein may be deprived of its proportion of the interest of the  
22 public school fund during such neglect or infraction, and the Legislature may pass such laws as  
23 will tend to secure a general attendance of the children in each school district upon said public  
24 schools." Again, this language has remained unchanged since the enactment of the 1864

1 constitution.

2 In determining whether Article XI, section 1, permits the Legislature to create the ESA  
3 program as part of its duty to "encourage by all suitable means" education, and whether that duty  
4 is subsequently limited by the command of Article XI, section 2 that the "legislature shall  
5 provide for a uniform system of common schools," this Court is mindful of the basic interpretive  
6 principal that the Nevada Constitution should be construed in its ordinary sense unless some  
7 apparent absurdity or unmistakable interest of its framers forbids such construction. *State ex rel.*  
8 *Lewis v. Doron*, 5 Nev. 399, 411 (1870). Consequently, where the language in the Nevada  
9 Constitution is plain and not ambiguous, it should be read in those plain and unambiguous terms.  
10 *State ex rel. Summerfield v. Clarke*, 21 Nev. 333, 31 P. 545, 546 (1982). These principles were  
11 recently reaffirmed by the Nevada Supreme Court in the context of interpreting Article II,  
12 section 9, explaining "we, like the United States Supreme Court, 'are guided by the principle that  
13 "[t]he Constitution was written to be understood by the voters; its words and phrases were used  
14 in their normal and ordinary as distinguished from technical meaning.'" *Strickland v. Waymire*,  
15 126 Nev. 230, 233, 235 P.3d 605, 608 (2010) (quoting *District of Columbia v. Heller*, 554 U.S.  
16 570, 577 (2008) (internal quotations omitted). Additionally, a constitutional provision should be  
17 construed to give meaning to its entirety. Generally, the Nevada Constitution should be read to  
18 give all provisions meaning and avoid any language being treated as superfluous. *See Harris*  
19 *Associates v. Clark County School Dist.*, 119 Nev. 638, 642, 81 P.3d 532, 534 (2003). This  
20 principle requires this Court whenever possible to interpret different provisions of the  
21 constitution in harmony with each other. *See Bowyer v. Taack*, 107 Nev. 625, 627, 817 P.2d  
22 1176, 1178 (1991). Consequently, the Court must first consider whether the language of Article  
23 XI, section 1, providing the "legislature shall encourage [education] by all suitable means," in  
24 the normal and ordinary sense of its terms permits the Legislature to create the ESA program to



1 allow parents financial resources to educate their children outside the uniform public school  
2 system. The Court then must determine if this interpretation is inconsistent with any other  
3 provision of the constitution and can be read in harmony with other provisions, giving meaning  
4 to all.

5 By setting out in section 1, the Legislature shall encourage education by "all suitable  
6 means," with no specific reference to any other section, and then by setting out in a different  
7 section the Legislature's responsibility to create a uniform public school system, the framers  
8 indicated they intended to create two duties, a broad one to encourage education by "all suitable  
9 means," and a specific, but separate, one to create a uniform public school system. The framers'  
10 use of two different sections to set out the Legislature's responsibilities without reference in  
11 either section to the other plainly suggests the sections are separate and distinct. This distinction  
12 means the Legislature's duty "to encourage, by all suitable means, moral, intellectual, scientific,  
13 and agricultural improvement" is to be carried out *in addition to* the provision for the common  
14 school system. In considering similar language, the Indiana Supreme Court noted that while such  
15 constitutional language creates a duty that is "'general and aspirational' and not well suited to  
16 judicial enforceability, . . . this by no means lessens the efficacy of the imperative." *Meredith v.*  
17 *Pence*, 984 N.E.2d 1213, 1222 (2013) (quoting *Bonner ex rel Bonner v. Daniels*, 907 N.E.2d  
18 516, 520 (Ind.2009)). In 1864, with less than 40,000 people living in our State comprised of  
19 over 110,000 square miles and with an economy based largely on mining, which historically was  
20 a boom and bust industry, the framers of Nevada's constitution had no idea what the future  
21 would hold in regard to population, land, economic and educational development. Because of  
22 this reality in 1864, the drafters of the Nevada Constitution reasonably intended to provide the  
23 Legislature broad powers going forward into the future to take whatever actions it believed  
24 appropriate to encourage education and the improvement of a population to take on any potential

1 new opportunities. By including the phrase "by all suitable means" in defining the Legislature's  
2 responsibility to encourage education, the framers recognized the need for broad legislative  
3 discretion, and thus, left to the Nevada Legislature the sound discretion of determining the  
4 "method and means of fulfilling this duty." *Meredith v. Pence*, 984 N.E.2d at 1222.

5 This Court agrees with Plaintiffs that Article XI, section 1's use of the phrase "all  
6 suitable means" imposes limitations on the Legislature's authority. The Legislature must use  
7 means suited for encouraging education, and as long as a means is suited for encouraging  
8 education, it is available for the Legislature to consider and use. However, the fact the phrase  
9 implicitly grants broad authority to the Legislature in choosing the means to accomplish the goal  
10 of encouraging education is in no way inconsistent with or overriding the other sections of  
11 Article XI.

12 Plaintiffs are correct "[t]he maxim 'expressio Unius Est Exclusio Alterius', the  
13 expression of one thing is the exclusion of another, has been repeatedly confirmed in this State,"  
14 *Galloway v. Truesdell*, 83 Nev. 13, 26, 422 P.2d 237 (1967), and applied to interpreting the  
15 Nevada constitution. See *State v. Arrington*, 18 Nev. 412, 4 P. 735, 737 (Nev. 1884). Plaintiffs  
16 are also correct the drafters when saying the Legislature may "use all suitable means," did not  
17 say the Legislature could use any means. However, the Court disagrees with Plaintiffs' position  
18 when they argue the Legislature is limited to the suitable means specifically required in section 2  
19 and the subsequent sections of Article XI. Such a reading would ignore the framers' specific use  
20 of the word "all," granting the Legislature the authority to use "all suitable means," not just the  
21 ones stated in the subsequent sections of the article. If the framers wanted to limit the broad  
22 discretion they accorded the Legislature in Section 1, they could have easily and should have  
23 clearly stated it. Cf. *Strickland v. Waymire*, 126 Nev. 230, 235 P.3d 605, 611 (2010) (citing 3  
24 Norman J. Singer & J.D. Shambie Singer, *Sutherland Statutory Construction* 58:3, at 114-15

1 (7th ed. 2008) (discussing in the context of subsequent amendments to the constitution that if the  
2 Legislature and voters in passing an amendment intended to eliminate another right, the  
3 legislators and voters would have made "a direct statement and express language to that effect.").  
4 Sections 1 and 2 are not inconsistent with each other. The Legislature's broad authority under  
5 section 1 is not inconsistent with its baseline obligation to provide a uniform public school  
6 system in section 2. The Legislature can provide for a uniform system of common schools, free  
7 from religious instruction and open to general attendance by all Nevada children, and still adopt  
8 other suitable means to encourage education. To read section 2 and the other sections of Article  
9 XI as Plaintiffs seek to do, would make section 1 superfluous, without any meaning or purpose.  
10 In this Court's view, in drafting the first section of Article XI to grant the Legislature authority to  
11 use all suitable means to encourage education, the framers in 1864 actually intended to give the  
12 Legislature that authority and did not intend the section to have no meaning. If the framers had  
13 intended such an interpretation, they could have easily said the Legislature had the authority to  
14 encourage education through the means included in Article XI. They did not, and the ordinary  
15 and normal reading of the language of the section clearly allows the Legislature to use any  
16 means suitable for encouraging education, not just those outlined in the remaining sections of the  
17 Article.

18 *Bush v. Holmes*, 919 So.2d 392 (Fla. 2006), which Plaintiffs cite, is the only State case  
19 suggesting a uniform school clause in a State constitution limits the Legislature's authority to use  
20 other means to promote education. In *Bush*, the Florida Supreme Court found a Florida  
21 scholarship program violated section 1(a) of Article IX of the Florida constitution. Section 1(a)  
22 of Florida's constitution provides in pertinent part it is "a paramount duty of the State to make  
23 adequate provision for the education of all children residing within its borders. Adequate  
24 provision shall be made by law for a uniform, efficient, safe, secure, and high quality system of

1 free public schools . . .” Fla. Const. art. IX, § 1(a). The Court found the language making it a  
2 “paramount duty of the State to make adequate provision for the education of all children  
3 residing within its borders,” as requiring the Legislature to provide education for Florida school  
4 children through “adequate provision.” The Florida high Court then looked at the next sentence,  
5 which stated “[a]dequate provision shall be made by law for a uniform, efficient, safe, secure,  
6 and high quality system of free public schools,” and concluded the sentence defined what the  
7 drafters meant by “adequate provision.” The Court found this represented a restriction on the  
8 Legislature’s authority to create a separate voucher program.

9 In the instant case, the Nevada Constitution sets out the authority of the Legislature in  
10 two different sections with no reference to the other. This Court does not agree with the Florida  
11 Court’s *in pari materia* interpretation of its constitution. However, assuming the Florida Court’s  
12 correct interpretation of its own State Constitution, the consistent use of the term “adequate  
13 provision” that existed between the sentences of the Florida constitution section does not exist in  
14 Article XI, sections 1 and 2 of our State’s Constitution. This consistent use of terms between  
15 sentences was the basis the Florida Court used to limit the Legislature authority to make  
16 “adequate provision for education” to just “adequate provision for a uniform public school  
17 system.” Unlike the Florida constitution, Article XI, section 1 uses broad language granting the  
18 Nevada Legislature the authority to encourage education by all suitable means, and section 2  
19 makes no reference to suitable means or uses any other language suggesting a restriction of the  
20 Legislature’s authority under section 1.

21 Plaintiffs’ argue the ESA program runs afoul of section 2’s uniformity and general  
22 attendance requirements because it allows for the education of Nevada students through public  
23 funding of private schools with divergent admissions criteria, curricula, educational programs,  
24 academic-performance standards, teacher qualifications and training. These arguments are only

1 valid if a uniform public school system is the only means the Legislature may use to encourage  
2 education. However, as discussed above, section 1 directs the Legislature generally to encourage  
3 education in Nevada through all suitable means and this imperative is broader than and in  
4 addition to the responsibility under section 2 to provide for a uniform public school system. The  
5 Legislature may act under section 1 without reference to section 2. The ESA program does not  
6 alter the existence or structure of Nevada's public school system.

7 The Plaintiffs contend the ESA program theoretically could divert to private schools all  
8 of Nevada's school children, and by consequence, all funding for the uniform public school  
9 system. However, while theoretically almost all school children may be eligible for the ESA  
10 programs and a significant number may enroll in this option, this does not mean there is "no set of  
11 circumstances under which the statute can be constitutionally applied." *Deja Vu Showgirls v.*  
12 *Nevada Dep't of Tax.*, 130 Nev. Adv. Op. 73, 334 P.3d at 398. This Court has no reason to  
13 believe and Plaintiffs have not proffered any factual allegations to suggest all parents of Nevada  
14 school children will enroll in the ESA program. Even assuming large numbers of parents do  
15 enroll their children in the program, so long as there is a "uniform" public school system," open  
16 to the "general attendance" of all, the Legislature has fulfilled the duty imposed by Article XI,  
17 section 2. Plaintiffs assert a potential damage resulting from the application of the ESA program  
18 which is, at best, "merely apprehended or feared." *See Doe v. Bryan*, 102 Nev. at 525, 728 P.2d  
19 at 444 (citing *Kress v. Corey*, 65 Nev. 1, 28-29, 189 P.2d 352, 365 (1948)). As discussed above,  
20 Plaintiffs lack standing to seek declarative relief for applied constitutional challenges. Plaintiffs  
21 do not have standing to assert these potential injuries as they have not personally suffered the  
22 harm and have no actual justiciable controversy. *See Doe v. Bryan*, 102 Nev. at 525, 728 P.2d at  
23 444. Plaintiff Berger's position as school teacher and parent of a student at a public school and  
24 his contention the ESA program will deprive school districts of funding, and deplete the

1 "resources at the school his son attends and the one where he teaches" is no less merely  
2 apprehended or feared than Plaintiffs' wholesale contention all school children may enroll in the  
3 ESA program. The applied effect of the ESA program is yet to be determined and can ultimately  
4 be considered based on the impact it actually makes. If the impact causes an identifiable injury,  
5 individuals affected by such damages will have standing to bring an action. The ESA program  
6 provides parents with funding they may use to choose different educational opportunities for  
7 their children and does not replace the public school system. The Legislature has continued to  
8 meet its constitutional obligation of providing for public schools which are open to all Nevada  
9 school children as required by Article XI, section 2.

10 Plaintiffs argue the ESA program violates fundamental constitutional precepts of equality  
11 and fairness, and certain schools participating in the program will improperly discriminate in  
12 admissions, enrollment, and hiring based on religion and other protected characteristics under the  
13 United States and Nevada Constitutions and statutes. *Cf. e.g.*, NRS § 6 13.330; NRS § 651.070  
14 (statutes prohibiting discrimination in employment and public accommodations, including  
15 schools, on basis of religion, sexual orientation and gender identity). As this Court discussed  
16 above in considering Plaintiffs' standing to bring this action, these contentions possibly may be  
17 relevant as to whether the funds the State provides parents may be used for certain schools which  
18 may act in violation of discrimination laws. However, these contentions are not determinative of  
19 whether the State has the authority to create the ESA program. While this Court has found  
20 Plaintiffs have standing to challenge the Legislature's authority to create the ESA program under  
21 Article XI, sections 1 and 2, they do not have standing to challenge anticipated illegal  
22 discrimination of some schools as they have not suffered such injury. Individuals who suffer  
23 discrimination may challenge the inclusion of certain schools in the ESA program under the law.  
24 Whether illegal discrimination occurs and a school may participate under the program can be

1 dealt with in the specific context of the facts of an actual controversy rather than in the  
2 hypothetical.

3 This Court concludes Plaintiffs have not alleged facts establishing their claim the  
4 Legislature's creation of the ESA program violates the uniform school system provisions of  
5 Article XI, section 2. Plaintiffs' claim is therefore dismissed.

6  
7 **VII. ESA Program Does Not Violate Article XI, Section 10's Prohibition on Use of Public  
Funds for Sectarian Purposes**

8 This Court next turns to Plaintiffs' claim the ESA program violates Article XI, section 10  
9 of the Nevada constitution which provides "[n]o public funds of any kind or character whatever,  
10 State, County or Municipal, shall be used for sectarian purpose." Significantly, since this Court  
11 has found the Legislature had the constitutional authority to create the ESA program generally,  
12 Plaintiffs' constitutional challenge potentially affects only religious affiliated schools  
13 participation in the program. If any schools because of their religious affiliation constitutionally  
14 cannot participate in the program, they may be severed from participation and the ESA program  
15 can continue with the participation of other schools or education options in view of the  
16 Legislature's clear intent to provide Nevada parents with the broadest spectrum of educational  
17 options.

18 In determining the meaning of section 10 and its proscriptions on State action, this Court,  
19 as with the process of interpreting Article XI, sections 1 and 2, must first consider whether the  
20 language of Article XI, Section 10, providing "no public funds . . . shall be used for sectarian  
21 purpose," in the normal and ordinary sense of its terms, permits the Legislature to create ESAs  
22 which parents may use to educate their children through religion affiliated services. If the terms  
23 of section 10 on their face are not clear, this Court must consider the intent and goals of the  
24 Legislature and voters at the time of the section's adoption to construe it ""in line with what

1 reason and public policy would indicate the Legislature intended." *State ex rel. Harvey v.*  
2 *Second Judicial Dist. Court*, 117 Nev. 754, 770, 32 P.3d 1263, 1274 (2001)(quoting *McKay v.*  
3 *Bd. of Supervisors*, 102 Nev. 644, 649, 730 P.2d 438, 442 (1986) (quoting *Robert E. v. Justice*  
4 *Court*, 99 Nev. 443, 445, 664 P.2d 957, 959 (1983)).

5 In its simplest terms, section 10 says the Legislature cannot use any public funds for a  
6 sectarian purpose. The Nevada Supreme Court in *State v. Hallock*, 16 Nev. 373, 387 (1882),  
7 considering the meaning of the section only two years after its adoption, concluded that  
8 "sectarian" as used in section 10:

9 was used in the popular sense. A religious sect is a body or number of persons  
10 united in tenets, but constituting a distinct organization or party, by holding  
11 sentiments or doctrines different from those of other sects or people. In the sense  
intended in the constitution, every sect of that character is sectarian, and all  
members thereof are sectarians.

12 Consequently, "sectarian purpose" as used in section 10 would generally include any purpose in  
13 support of a specific religion or general groups holding similar religious tenets. The Nevada  
14 Supreme Court in *Hallock* probably expressed it best by stating the section was intended that  
15 public funds should not be used for the purpose of "building up of any sect." *Id.*

16 The purpose *Hallock* defines for section 10, avoiding State action to build up a sect,  
17 parallels largely the purpose of the federal Establishment Clause. In *Everson v. Board of Educ.*  
18 *of Ewing*, 330 U.S. 1, 15-16 (1947), the United States Supreme Court stated the Establishment  
19 Clause was intended to accomplish, as Thomas Jefferson described, a "wall of separation  
20 between Church and State." The Court found the clause precluded State practices that "aid one  
21 religion . . . or prefer one religion over another," as well as practices that "aid all religions" and  
22 consequently endorse the ideas of religion over nonreligion. *Everson*, 330 U.S. at 15. The Court  
23 has gone on to explain in a series of cases starting with *Flast v. Cohen*, 392 U.S. 83, (1968), that  
24 the Establishment Clause prevents governments from spending public money "in aid of



1 religion." *DaimlerChrysler Corp. v. Cuno*, 547 U.S. 332, 348 (2006)). The Court in *Flast* traced  
2 the history of the Establishment Clause in part to James Madison's contention that "government  
3 should not "force a citizen to contribute three pence only of his property for the support of any  
4 one establishment." *Arizona Christian School Tuition Organization v. Winn*, 563 U.S. 125  
5 (2011) (quoting *Flast*, 392 U.S. at 103)(quoting 2 Writings of James Madison 183, 186 (G. Hunt  
6 ed.1901)). The Court identified Madison's view as a "specific evil" the Establishment Clause  
7 was intended to protect against. *Id.*

8 Plaintiffs note the federal Establishment Clause uses language different from Article XI,  
9 section 10. Compare Nev. Const. art. XI, § 10 ("No public funds of any kind or character  
10 whatever, State, County or Municipal, shall be used for sectarian purpose.") with U.S. Const.  
11 amend. I ("Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion"). They contend  
12 that, on its face, Section 10 sets a higher bar than the Establishment Clause.

13 This Court does not concur with Plaintiffs' logic in interpreting whether Nevada's  
14 Legislature and voters in approving section 10 sought to set a higher bar to the use of public  
15 funds for aid of religions than the Establishment Clause. It is important to remember at the time  
16 section 10 was amended, Nevada's constitution had few provisions limiting the State  
17 government from passing any law respecting a particular religion. The Establishment Clause of  
18 the First Amendment had not yet been applied to the states through the Due Process clause of the  
19 Fourteenth Amendment. The First Amendment was not applied to the states until 1925 when the  
20 United States Supreme Court applied the freedoms of speech and press to the states through the  
21 Due Process Clause. *Gillow v. New York*, 268 U.S. 652 (1925). The Establishment Clause was  
22 not applied to the states until 1947. *Everson v. Board of Education*, 220 U.S. 1 (1947). Article I,  
23 section 4 of the Nevada constitution provides for "[t]he free exercise and enjoyment of religious  
24 profession and worship without discrimination or preference shall forever be allowed in this

1 State . . .," and Article XI, Sections 2 and 9 precluded sectarian education in public schools.  
2 Consequently, in 1879, before section 10 was ratified, few restrictions rested on the State  
3 Government in regard to legislation which might promote the establishment of religion. Because  
4 of this circumstance, when the Nevada Legislature and voters approved Section 10 in 1879,  
5 which provided "[n]o public funds of any kind or character whatever, State, County or  
6 Municipal, shall be used for sectarian purpose," it is not clear the Legislature intended something  
7 more than the federal Establishment Clause which then precluded Congress from making any  
8 "law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

9 Defendants attack Section 10 as a "Blaine Amendment," which is a term used to denote a  
10 series of State constitutional amendments from approximately 1875 to 1900 which limited  
11 through various language State governments from providing funding to religious schools.  
12 Defendants suggest these amendments, including Nevada's, were the result of anti-Catholic  
13 bigotry arising at the time from the growth of parochial schools. However, as Justice William  
14 Brennan explained in his dissent in *Lemon v. Kurtzman*, the inclusion of limitations in State  
15 constitutions on public support of religious schools was an ongoing process beginning soon after  
16 the formation of the federal government and its inclusion of the Establishment Clause in the Bill  
17 of Rights. See *Lemon v. Kurtzman*, 403 U.S. 602, 645-50 (1971)(Brennan, J., dissenting).<sup>7</sup>

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19 <sup>7</sup> While undoubtedly dislike of another's religion as compared to one's own may encourage one to preclude public  
20 funds be given to a competing religion, it is this concern that no religion should be given governmental preference  
21 over another that led to the creation of the Establishment Clause in the first place and the subsequent state  
22 limitations on support of religions. In its history on the adoption of section 10, the Nevada Supreme Court in  
23 *Hallock* identified the State's appropriation of funds to the Catholic affiliated orphanage as the only appropriation  
24 prior to the adoption of the section to an arguably sectarian organization. The Court looked at the legislative history  
surrounding the appropriation for guidance as to the scope of the section and what the Legislature and voters  
considered to be a sectarian purpose. *Hallock*, 16 Nev. at 381. In looking at the first request for the appropriation  
in 1866, the Court noted that in addition to the request for an appropriation in support of the Catholic affiliated  
orphanage, there was also a request for an appropriation for the support of an Episcopal affiliated orphanage. Both  
appropriation requests failed to pass. The Court considered the report of the Senate Ways and Means Committee in  
the 1866 session, which reported against the passage of the two appropriation requests at that time. The Committee  
reported the appropriations sought were intended to:

enable them to train up children in the tenets or religious belief of the respective churches, without

1 Section 10 does no more than preclude the Legislature from supporting specific religions  
2 or religion in general, the principle of which was enshrined in the Establishment Clause of the  
3 federal Bill of Rights. Nevada, as well as most other states over the course of United States  
4 history, separately acted in view of the void that existed in its own constitution to limit State  
5 support of religion. As the Nevada Supreme Court in *Hallock* explained: "People of nearly all  
6 nationalities and many religious beliefs established our State. They met on common ground, and

7  
8 regard to the question of religious opinions of the relatives of such children, which is  
9 commendable zeal for the progress of those denominations, as the right training of the children is  
10 the best way to build up churches. But if the state contribute twenty thousand dollars towards  
11 building up and strengthening those churches, and making provision thus for future increase of  
12 Episcopal pastors and laymen and Catholic priests, nuns, and laymen, other denominations, such  
13 as Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, and Unitarians, will feel equally entitled to similar  
14 appropriations; and thus the revenues of the state might be absorbed to such an extent as to  
15 endanger its ability to pay its bonds, interest, and other obligations, for which its faith is already  
16 pledged, or which may be necessary for ordinary current expenses."

17 *Id.* at 381. The Court noted the appropriation request for the Catholic affiliated charity was made in subsequent  
18 sessions prior to 1879, with the appropriation being approved in some sessions. Based on this history, the Court  
19 concluded that the voters in adopting section 10 sought to prevent the "use of public funds for the benefit of  
20 petitioner and kindred institutions." *Id.* at 383. The Court concluded that sectarian as used in section 10:

21 was used in the popular sense. A religious sect is a body or number of persons united in tenets, but  
22 constituting a distinct organization or party, by holding sentiments or doctrines different from  
23 those of other sects or people. In the sense intended in the constitution, every sect of that character  
24 is sectarian, and all members thereof are sectarians. The framers of the constitution undoubtedly  
considered the Roman Catholic a sectarian church. (Const. Debates, 568 *et seq.*) The people  
understood it in the same sense when they ratified it.

25 *Id.* at 386-87. While defendants may be correct that the impetus for the section was concern with providing  
26 public support to Catholic parochial schools, the section does no more than preclude the Legislature from supporting  
27 a specific religion, which principle was enshrined in the Establishment Clause of the federal Bill of Rights and  
28 separately acted upon by states in view of the void that existed in their own constitutions to limit state support of  
29 religions. The section does not prohibit any one or religious order from practicing their beliefs and is consequently  
30 unlike the municipal law struck down in *Church of the Lukumi Babalu Aya, Inc. v. City of Hialeah*, 508 U.S. 520  
31 (1993), which was clearly intended to proscribe a religion's particular rite. Neither the United States Supreme Court,  
32 nor any other court, has ever struck down a state constitutional provision which limits state support of sectarian  
33 interests and is neutral in its limitation. See *Locke v. Doney*, 540 U.S. 712 (2004). The history of section 10 as  
34 outlined by the Nevada Supreme Court in *Hallock* and its own terms, very different from the federally proposed  
Blaine Amendment and other state amendments focused on public support of sectarian schools and education,  
convince this Court that section 10 is not unconstitutional under the First Amendment and is a proper exercise of  
Nevada citizens' right to limit support of specific religions or of religion generally. The issue is certainly not ripe at  
this point in view of the myriad of legislative histories, speeches and news articles all parties have provided for a  
determination on a motion to dismiss. This Court finds the best explanation of section 10 and the reasons for its  
adoption to be the one the Nevada Supreme Court in *Hallock* expressed: "People of nearly all nationalities and many  
religious beliefs established our state. They met on common ground, and in the most solemn manner agreed that no  
sect should be supported or built up by the use of public funds. It is a wise provision and must be upheld." *Hallock*,  
16 Nev. at 387.

1 in the most solemn manner agreed that no sect should be supported or built up by the use of  
2 public funds. It is a wise provision and must be upheld." *Hallock*, 16 Nev. at 387.

3 The question remains, however, what is the scope of Section 10 and was it intended to  
4 exceed the limitations of the Establishment Clause to make no law in support of a religion. The  
5 proposed "Blaine Amendment" to the United States Constitution sought to impose an  
6 Establishment Clause upon the states which at that time were under no such restrictions. The  
7 language of the proposed amendment provided: "No State shall make any law respecting an  
8 establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; and no money raised by  
9 taxation in any State for the support of public schools, or derived from any public fund therefor,  
10 nor any public lands devoted thereto, shall ever be under the control of any religious sect; nor  
11 shall any money so raised or lands so devoted be divided between religious sects or  
12 denominations" See [https://ballotpedia.org/Blaine\\_Amendment](https://ballotpedia.org/Blaine_Amendment). Significantly, the proposed  
13 amendment applied only to the states and did not impose any new limitations on the federal  
14 government. If the drafters of the amendment had perceived the federal Establishment Clause as  
15 permitting federal public expenditures in support of religious schools, they would have been  
16 expected to have specifically precluded the federal government along with the states from  
17 making such expenditures. Conversely, the inclusion of the additional language in the proposed  
18 amendment arguably suggests the drafters were adding further limitations beyond the scope of  
19 the Establishment Clause. However, in the context of the times, the drafters may have sought to  
20 insure clarity rather than the creation of a higher bar beyond the Establishment Clause.  
21 Education at the time the Blaine Amendment was proposed was a specific province of the states  
22 and local governments, and such governments had a history of providing public support to  
23 religious schools. *Lemon v. Kurtzman*, 403 U.S. at 645-50 (Brennan, J., dissenting).  
24 Consequently, the inclusion of the specific language in the proposed amendment prohibiting

1 funding of religious schools does not necessarily suggest the drafters sought to make limitations  
2 beyond what was required in the Establishment Clause as opposed to clarifying the scope of the  
3 limitations of the Establishment Clause in the context and history of State educational systems.

4 The plain terms of Section 10 also suggest it does not place greater limitations on the  
5 Legislature than the Establishment Clause. Section 10 prohibits the Legislature from using  
6 public funds for a "sectarian purpose." Unlike the proposed federal Blaine Amendment and  
7 many other State "no-aid" amendments enacted after it, which specifically precluded money  
8 from being appropriated to religious schools, section 10 simply precludes the Legislature from  
9 having a sectarian purpose in the appropriation of any money. Consequently, in this Court's  
10 view, the drafters contemplated the Legislature could make expenditures which might impact  
11 upon a religion as long as the Legislature's purpose in making the appropriation was not to build  
12 up any religion. Such an approach, if truly the intent of Nevada's drafters, would be a logical  
13 one in view of the impracticality of an expansive prohibition of "any and all government  
14 expenditures from which a religious or theological institution derives a benefit—for example,  
15 fire and police protection, municipal water and sewage service, sidewalks and streets, and the  
16 like. Certainly religious or theological institutions may derive relatively substantial benefits from  
17 such municipal services. But the primary beneficiary is the public, both the public affiliated with  
18 the religious or theological institution, and the general public." *Meredith v. Pence*, 984 N.E.2d  
19 1213, 1227 (Ind. 2013). Other courts considering State provisions limiting public expenditures  
20 for sectarian purposes have regularly concluded that the provisions do not preclude  
21 appropriations for non-sectarian/secular purposes which have an incidental benefit to a church  
22 related institution. *See, e.g., Embry v. O'Bannon*, 798 N.E.2d 157 (Ind. 2003) (State Constitution  
23 prohibited drawing money "from the treasury, for the benefit of any religious or theological  
24 institution"; upholding dual-enrollment program providing public school corporations with

1 additional funds to provide secular educational services to parochial school students also  
2 enrolled in public school); *State ex rel. Warren v. Nusbaum*, 55 Wis.2d 316, 198 N.W.2d 650  
3 (Wis.1972) (State Constitution prohibited use of public funds "for the benefit of religious  
4 societies, or religious or theological seminaries"; court approved State contract with a church-  
5 related university for dental education services as it did not have the primary effect of advancing  
6 religion); *State ex rel. Warren v. Nusbaum*, 64 Wis.2d 314, 219 N.W.2d 577  
7 (Wis.1974)(approving school boards contracting education services for exceptional needs  
8 children in religious schools as a secular purpose); *Advisory Opinion re Constitutionality of*  
9 *P.A.1970, No. 100*, 384 Mich. 82, 180 N.W.2d 265 (Mich. 1970)(approving teachers paid with  
10 public funds teaching secular subjects in private schools as serving a public purpose). These  
11 cases and their conclusions support the view Nevada's Article XI, section 10 with its limitation  
12 on the use of public funds for sectarian purposes was not intended to preclude any expenditure  
13 that has an incidental benefit to religion, where such is made for a primary secular purpose. The  
14 drafters of the Nevada constitution and Section 10 seem to have allowed the Legislature  
15 flexibility in its actions so long as its purpose in its actions is not to build up a religious sect.

16 This Court believes this history of Section 10 and its language supports the consideration  
17 of the United States Supreme Court's interpretation of the Establishment Clause in considering  
18 the scope of section 10. These decisions concerning the Establishment Clause focus for the most  
19 part on the underlying purpose of the challenged State action, just as the language of Section 10  
20 focuses on whether an expenditure of public funds is for a sectarian purpose. "The  
21 Establishment Clause of the First Amendment, applied to the States through the Fourteenth  
22 Amendment, prevents a State from enacting laws that have the 'purpose' or 'effect' of advancing  
23 or inhibiting religion." *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris*, 536 U.S. 639, 648-49 (2002) (quoting  
24 *Agostini v. Felton*, 521 U.S. 203, 222-223 (1997)).

1       The Supreme Court in *Agostini v. Felton*, 521 U.S. 203, 222-223, (1997), explain that in  
2       evaluating the constitutionality of a State action under the Establishment Clause, the question to  
3       be asked is "whether the government acted with the purpose of advancing or inhibiting religion  
4       [and] whether the aid has the 'effect' of advancing or inhibiting religion." *Id.* at 222-23 (citations  
5       omitted). This Court finds Plaintiffs have failed to allege any facts disputing the ESA program  
6       was enacted for the valid secular purpose of providing financial assistance to parents to take  
7       advantage of educational options available to Nevada children. The legislative history for the  
8       statute demonstrates the Legislature considered the implementation of the ESA program  
9       important in view of what it perceived was the limited achievement of the public school system.  
10      As in *Zelman* and *Agostini*, the question is whether the ESA program has "the forbidden 'effect'  
11      of advancing or inhibiting religion." *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris*, 536 U.S. at 648-49.

12      The United States Supreme Court's "decisions have drawn a consistent distinction  
13      between government programs that provide aid directly to religious schools, and programs of  
14      true private choice, in which government aid reaches religious schools only as a result of the  
15      genuine and independent choices of private individuals." *Id.* at 649 (citations omitted). Where a  
16      school aid program, such as the ESA program, is neutral with respect to religion, and provides  
17      assistance available directly to a wide spectrum of citizens, or as in this case, essentially all  
18      parents of Nevada school children, who, in turn, direct the financial assistance to religion  
19      affiliated schools "wholly as a result of their own genuine and independent private choice, the  
20      program is not readily subject to challenge under the Establishment Clause." *Id.* This Court  
21      concludes the ESA program does not violate Article XI, section 10, as the State is not using  
22      public funds for a sectarian purpose, but for a non-sectarian/secular one, of providing parents a  
23      broad range of educational options for their children. The ESA program "permits government  
24      aid to reach religious institutions only by way of the deliberate choices of numerous individual

1 recipients. The incidental advancement of a religious mission, or the perceived endorsement of a  
2 religious message, is reasonably attributable to the individual recipient, not to the government,  
3 whose role ends with the disbursement of benefits." *Zelman*, 536 U.S. at 652.

4 As provided under the provisions of the ESA statute, the funds the State deposits in each  
5 student's savings account are reserved for educational purposes, and not for any sectarian  
6 purpose. The State has no influence or control over how any parent makes his or her genuine  
7 and independent choice to spend his or her ESA funds. Consequently, the State cannot be  
8 deemed to be using the funds for a sectarian purpose as the parents, and not the State, direct  
9 through their own independent decision the funds to religious education schools. Parents, if they  
10 choose to use the ESA program, must expend the ESA funds for secular education goods and  
11 services, even if they choose to obtain these services from religion affiliated schools. As  
12 discussed above, since the United States Supreme Court's 1993 decision in *Mueller v. Allen*, the  
13 federal courts interpreting the Establishment Clause, which, like Article 11, Section 10, prohibits  
14 government action for the purpose of supporting or building up of religion, have concluded  
15 student assistance programs allowing participants to use their benefits at religious schools further  
16 a secular, not sectarian purpose. *See, e.g., Zelman v. Simmons-Harris*, 536 U.S. at 648-49;  
17 *Zobrest v. Catalina Foothills School Dist.*, 509 U.S. 1 (1993); *Witters v. Washington Dept. of*  
18 *Servs. for Blind*, 474 U.S. 481 (1986); *Mueller v. Allen*, 463 U.S. 388 (1983).

19 This Court agrees the ESA program as provided in the statute does not restrict any public  
20 funds for use at any religion affiliated school. The program provides funds through ESAs to  
21 parents to pay for education choices the parents may choose for their children. Indeed, the  
22 Legislature in creating the program provided a wide range of options to parents for use of ESA  
23 funds. Consequently, under the plain terms of section 10, the Legislature is not using public  
24 funds for a "sectarian purpose." Other courts considering their State constitutional provisions



1 restricting the use of public funds to sectarian schools or for sectarian purposes have found such  
2 provisions do not preclude the State from offering education financial aid to parents who, in turn,  
3 independently spend the aid with religious affiliated schools for education services. See, e.g.,  
4 *Oliver v. Hofmeister*, 2016 WL 61400 (Okla. Feb. 16, 2016); *Niehaus v. Huppenthal*, 310 P.3d  
5 983, 988, (Ariz. Ct. App. 2013); *Meredith v. Pence*, 984 N.E.2d 1213, 1229 (Md. 2013);  
6 *Simmons-Harris v. Goff*, 711 N.E.2d 203, 212 (Ohio 1999); *Jackson v. Benson*, 578 N.W.2d 602,  
7 621 (Wis. 1998).

8 Plaintiffs contend the Nevada Supreme Court's decision in *State v. Hallock* precludes  
9 public funds from being passed through the ESA program to religion affiliated schools. In  
10 *Hallock*, the Nevada Supreme Court considered what was clearly a direct appropriation of public  
11 funds to an orphanage that provided religious instruction and was affiliated with a specific  
12 religion. The Court did not consider whether the State could provide money to the orphanage for  
13 the purely secular costs of care and feeding of the orphans. The Court noted this argument was  
14 made that the appropriation, if "paid, would not be used for sectarian purposes, but for the  
15 physical necessities of the orphans." However, the Court specifically found the appropriation  
16 was intended to be a "mere charity" and a "contribution only" to the orphanage. *State v. Hallock*,  
17 16 Nev. at 388. Consequently, the *Hallock* Court was faced only with considering the  
18 constitutionality of a direct appropriation to a religion affiliated orphanage. While it expressed  
19 the intent of section 10 was "that public funds should not be used, directly or indirectly, for the  
20 building up of any sect," the Court provided no guidance as to what would be considered  
21 "indirect" support because it specifically found that it was dealing with a direct charitable  
22 contribution.<sup>8</sup>

23  
24 <sup>8</sup> Plaintiffs contend various Attorney General Opinions support their view of section 10's prohibition on public funds for sectarian purposes. The Court has reviewed these opinions, which are not binding on the Court. Defendants also have cited Attorney General Opinions which they contend support the use of public funds as

1 In contrast, in *Murray Indian Orphans Home v. Childers*, 171 P.2d 600, 603 (Okla.  
2 1946), the State Board of Affairs, acting under legislative authority, made a contract with a  
3 Baptist affiliated orphanage to care for certain orphan and dependent children. Plaintiffs  
4 challenged this contract under the "no aid" clause of the Oklahoma Constitution, Article II, § 5,  
5 which provides: "No public money or property shall ever be appropriated, applied, donated, or  
6 used, directly or indirectly, for the use, benefit, or support of any sect, church, denomination, or  
7 system of religion, or for the use, benefit or support of any priest, minister or other religious  
8 teacher or dignitary, or sectarian institution as such." Considering the issue the Nevada Supreme  
9 Court left open in *Hallock*, whether the State could provide funds to a sectarian institution for a  
10 secular purpose, in this instance the contracting of care of State wards, the Oklahoma Supreme  
11 Court held the State, in making the contract, was "fulfilling a duty to needy children. The  
12 institution can render a service that goes far toward the fulfillment of this duty, and for  
13 compensation that is a matter of contract and public record. The matter of the wisdom of the

14 provided under the BSA program. In none of the cited opinions were the facts before the Attorney General similar  
15 to the circumstances before this Court and none of the Attorney General's opinions clearly support one side or the  
16 other. While in 65-276 Op. Nev. Att'y Gen. (Nov. 6, 1965), the Attorney General opined that school districts may  
17 receive federal funds and use the funds to assist both public and religious school students as required by federal law,  
18 he also stated the federal funds had to be kept separate from the state public school funds to avoid violating section  
19 10. As defendants note, the Attorney General subsequently reversed his opinion in Opinion No. 65-278 (Nov. 15,  
20 1965), and found children enrolled in parochial schools could enroll in public school classes not offered in the  
21 parochial school. 74-158 Op. Nev. Att'y Gen. (Jan. 24, 1974). In 41-B-40 Op. Nev. Att'y Gen. (Feb. 11, 1941), the  
22 Attorney General was asked whether the state could provide funds to a sectarian hospital for the care of crippled  
23 children. The Attorney General concluded "[w]e do not believe that [section 10], strict as it seems, was intended to  
24 prevent necessary hospitalization in sectarian hospitals." However, in reaching his opinion, the attorney general goes  
on to emphasize "no sectarian instruction of any kind was imparted." In 63-67 Op. Nev. Att'y Gen. (Sept. 5, 1963),  
the Attorney General concluded the "holding of divine services at state [prison] institutions by the various  
preceptors of religious faiths, and where attendance is not compulsory, does not violate any constitutional  
prohibition, and that compliance . . . does not contravene the prohibition of Article XI, Section 10, of the  
Constitution of Nevada." However, the Attorney General in reaching the conclusion considered the inmates' rights  
under Article I, section 4, allowing Nevada citizens to freely exercise their religions. He did not consider the issue  
of whether the state could support such religious services as part of an expenditure for secular purposes. In 70-688  
Op. Nev. Att'y Gen. (June 16, 1970), the Attorney General did recognize that some courts had concluded that state  
"aid" to provide secular services to children in religious schools "accrues to the child and not to the religious order,  
and is so far removed from religious connotations that no problem is presented." However, while the Attorney  
General concluded the state could provide secular television programming to religious schools, the state was charging  
for the programming at the same rate it charged public schools and there was arguably no issue involving the use of  
public funds. Indeed, Article XI, section 10 is not even referenced in the opinion. Consequently, this Court has  
found the Attorney General Opinions referenced in the parties' filings to be of limited application in deciding the  
issue before it.

1 terms of these contracts is for the Legislature and the agency upon which it thrusts the  
2 performance of its commands, and so long as they involve the element of substantial return to the  
3 State and do not amount to a gift, donation, or appropriation to the institution having no  
4 relevancy to the affairs of the State, there is no constitutional provision offended." While there  
5 were a number of factual distinctions between the orphanage in *Hallock* and the one in *Childer*,  
6 this Court finds the Oklahoma decision persuasive in defining the scope of Section 10's  
7 limitations on the use of public funds for sectarian purposes. *See also* 41-B-40 Op. Nev. Att'y  
8 Gen. (Feb. 11, 1941) (State may contract and pay religion affiliated hospital for care of crippled  
9 children if religious indoctrination is not required of the patients). The Court concludes the  
10 Nevada Supreme Court's decision in *Hallock* precluding a direct payment of public funds as a  
11 charitable contribution to a religious affiliated orphanage does not preclude the Legislature from  
12 providing funds to ESA accounts for the secular purpose of education, even if the funds are used  
13 to contract the secular education through a religion affiliated school.

14 To the degree Article XI, Section 10, arguable precludes the State from making a direct  
15 payment to a religion affiliated school, under the ESA program, the State deposits funds into an  
16 account from which parents may draw to purchase services. While Plaintiffs argue the State's  
17 contention that ESA accounts are individual ones of the parents is more form than substance,  
18 with the State limiting the use of the accounts, continuing some oversight of the accounts and  
19 maintaining a right to unused funds, the accounts as provided by statute are accounts under the  
20 control of the parents who can use the funds to pay for a wide-range of education options.  
21 Consequently, this Court finds the form the State has chosen to provide parents with financial  
22 assistance, does not result in direct payments from the State to any preordained or particular  
23 destination.

24 This Court accepts the funds parents may direct from ESA accounts to religion affiliated

1 schools will be comingled with other tuitions and other funds. These comingled funds will be  
2 used to provide education to children and may be used to provide religious instruction or  
3 services. The Plaintiffs assert, absent any requirement that participating schools segregate the  
4 public funds for secular education, the funds will be used to further religious activities that take  
5 place in these schools. Plaintiffs argue this use of comingled funds, in part in furtherance of  
6 religious activities, amounts to a direct use of public funds for a sectarian purpose. Again, this  
7 Court disagrees as "the principal actors and direct beneficiaries under the voucher program are  
8 neither the State nor program-eligible schools," but Nevada families with school-age children.  
9 *See Meredith v. Pence*, 984 N.E.2d at 1228. As the Indiana Supreme Court found when faced  
10 with a similar argument, the "direct beneficiaries under the voucher program are the families of  
11 eligible students and not the schools selected by the parents for their children to attend. The  
12 voucher program does not directly fund religious activities because no funds may be dispersed to  
13 any program-eligible school without the *private, independent selection by the parents of a*  
14 *program-eligible student*. . . . Any benefit to program-eligible schools, religious or non-  
15 religious, derives from the private, independent choice of the parents of program-eligible  
16 students, not the decree of the State, and is thus ancillary and incidental to the benefit conferred  
17 on these families," *Id.* at 1228-29 (Emphasis in original).

18 Plaintiffs emphasize the likelihood that large amounts of aid will be diverted from the  
19 public schools to religion affiliated schools. However, the United States Supreme Court has  
20 emphasized the amount of government aid channeled to religious institutions by individual aid  
21 recipients is not relevant to the Establishment Clause inquiry, and this Court does not see it as  
22 relevant to the Article IX, section 10 inquiry. Either the RSA program's likely potential to divert  
23 public funds through parent choice to some religion-affiliated schools is constitutional or it is  
24 not. The amount of funds diverted does not affect the inquiry or the outcome. *Zelman v.*

1 *Simmons-Harris*, 536 U.S. 639, 648-49 (citing *Mueller v. Allen*, 474 U.S., at 490-491, (Powell,  
2 J., joined by Burger, C. J., and REHNQUIST, J., concurring) (citing *Mueller, supra*, at 398-  
3 399); 474 U.S., at 493, 106 S.Ct. 748 (O'CONNOR, J., concurring in part and concurring in  
4 judgment); *Id.*, at 490, (White, J., concurring)). This Court's decision rests not on whether few  
5 or many recipients chose to expend government aid at a religious school but, rather, on whether  
6 recipients generally were empowered to direct the aid to schools or institutions of their own  
7 choosing. *Id.*

8 The Plaintiffs contend the ESA program could theoretically divert to private schools all  
9 of Nevada's school children, and, by consequence, all funding for the uniform public school  
10 system. However, that almost all school children *may* be eligible for the ESA program and a  
11 significant number may enroll in this option does not mean there is "no set of circumstances  
12 under which the statute can be constitutionally applied." *Deja Vu Showgirls v. Nevada Dep't of*  
13 *Tax.*, 130 Nev. Adv. Op. 73, 334 P.3d at 398. As discussed before, this Court has no reason to  
14 believe and Plaintiffs have not proffered any factual allegations to suggest all parents of Nevada  
15 school children are going to enroll in the ESA program. As noted above, even if large numbers  
16 of parents enroll in the program, so long as there is a "uniform" public school system," open to  
17 the "general attendance" of all, the Legislature has fulfilled the duty imposed by Article XI,  
18 section 2. Plaintiffs assert a potential damage resulting from the application of the ESA program  
19 which is, at best, "merely apprehended or feared." *See Doe v. Bryan*, 102 Nev. at 525, 728 P.2d  
20 at 444 (citing *Kress v. Corey*, 65 Nev. 1, 28-29, 189 P.2d 352, 365 (1948)). What the applied  
21 impact of the ESA program will be is yet to be determined and can be considered based on the  
22 impact it actually makes. If the impact causes an identifiable injury, individuals affected by such  
23 damages will have standing to bring an action. The ESA program provides parents with funding  
24 they may use to choose different educational opportunities for their children and does not replace

1 the public school system. The Legislature has continued to meet its constitutional obligation of  
2 providing for public schools which are open to all Nevada schoolchildren as required by Article  
3 XI, section 2.

4 As with its uniform public schools claim, Plaintiffs also argue the ESA program violates  
5 Article XI, Section 10's prohibition on the use of funds for sectarian purpose because certain  
6 schools participating in the program will improperly discriminate in admissions, enrollment, and  
7 hiring based on religion and other protected characteristics under the United States and Nevada  
8 constitutions and statutes. *Cf. e.g.*, NRS § 6 13.330; NRS § 651.070 (statutes prohibiting  
9 discrimination in employment and public accommodations, including schools, on basis of  
10 religion, sexual orientation and gender identity). Again as this Court has previously held,  
11 Plaintiffs' contentions may be possibly relevant as to whether the funds the State provides  
12 parents may be used for certain schools which may act in violation of discrimination laws.  
13 However, these contentions are not determinative of whether the State has the authority to create  
14 the ESA program or whether the program may be used by parents to direct funds to religion  
15 affiliated schools. While this Court has found Plaintiffs have standing to challenge the  
16 Legislature's authority to create the ESA program under Article XI, section 10, they do not have  
17 standing to challenge anticipated illegal discrimination of some schools as they have not suffered  
18 such injury. Again, as stated above, individuals who suffer discrimination may challenge the  
19 inclusion of certain schools in the ESA program under the law. Whether illegal discrimination  
20 occurs and a school may participate under the ESA program can be dealt with in the specific  
21 context of the facts of an actual controversy rather than in the hypothetical. *See Doe v. Bryan*,  
22 102 Nev. at 525, 728 P.2d at 444.

23 This Court concludes Plaintiffs have not alleged facts establishing its claim that the  
24 Legislature's creation of the ESA program violates Article XI, section 10, prohibiting the use of

1 public funds for a sectarian purpose. Plaintiffs' claim is dismissed.

2 **VIII. Conclusion**

3 This Court holds the Nevada program, the Choice Scholarship Program, is within the  
4 Legislature's power under Article XI, Sections 1 and 2, and the enacted program does not violate  
5 Section 10's prohibition on the use of funds for sectarian purposes. The Court finds Plaintiffs  
6 are not entitled to relief under any set of facts alleged in their complaint. The Court grants  
7 Defendants' Motion to Dismiss and dismisses Plaintiffs' Complaint pursuant to NRCP 12(b)(5).

8 DATED this 18th day of May, 2016.

9   
10 \_\_\_\_\_  
11 ERIC JOHNSON  
12 DISTRICT COURT JUDGE  
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**DISTRICT COURT  
CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA**

**Other Civil Matters**

**COURT MINUTES**

**October 20, 2015**

---

A-15-723703-C      Ruby Duncan, Plaintiff(s)  
vs.  
Nevada State of, Defendant(s)

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**October 20, 2015      7:30 AM      Minute Order**

**HEARD BY:** Thompson, Charles

**COURTROOM:** RJC Courtroom 10D

**COURT CLERK:** Linda Skinner

**RECORDER:**

**REPORTER:**

**PARTIES**

**PRESENT:**

**JOURNAL ENTRIES**

- Law Clerk advised there has been no opposition filed as to the Intervener-Defendants' Motion to Associate Counsel and Motion to Intervene as Defendants. Therefore, COURT ORDERED, both Motions are GRANTED as unopposed and the hearing date of October 21, 2015 is VACATED. Law Clerk will notify the parties.



**DISTRICT COURT  
CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA**

**Other Civil Matters**

**COURT MINUTES**

**November 02, 2015**

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A-15-723703-C      Ruby Duncan, Plaintiff(s)  
vs.  
Nevada State of, Defendant(s)

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**November 02, 2015      2:00 PM      Minute Order**

**HEARD BY:** Johnson, Eric      **COURTROOM:** RJC Courtroom 10D

**COURT CLERK:** Linda Skinner

**RECORDER:**

**REPORTER:**

**PARTIES**

**PRESENT:**

**JOURNAL ENTRIES**

- The Court grants Plaintiffs' request for an extension of time to respond to the State of Nevada's Motion to Dismiss, Intervenor-Defendants Joinder and proposed Amici's submissions. Plaintiff's shall have until November 10, 2015 to file a single consolidated response to State of Nevada's Motion to Dismiss, Intervenor-Defendants Joinder and proposed Amici's submissions. Plaintiff's response shall not exceed 30 pages. The remaining briefing schedule remains unchanged. However, in view of the Court's decision to allow Plaintiffs additional time, Defendants may request additional time for any replies if they determine in good faith such additional time is necessary to appropriately reply to Plaintiff's response.

**DISTRICT COURT  
CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA**

**Other Civil Matters**

**COURT MINUTES**

**November 17, 2015**

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A-15-723703-C      Ruby Duncan, Plaintiff(s)  
vs.  
Nevada State of, Defendant(s)

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**November 17, 2015      7:30 AM      Minute Order**

**HEARD BY:** Johnson, Eric

**COURTROOM:** RJC Courtroom 10D

**COURT CLERK:** Linda Skinner

**RECORDER:**

**REPORTER:**

**PARTIES**

**PRESENT:**

**JOURNAL ENTRIES**

- Law Clerk advised a Notice of Non-Opposition has been filed as to the Motion to Associate Counsel. Therefore, COURT ORDERED, the Motion is GRANTED as unopposed and the hearing date of November 18, 2015 is VACATED. Law Clerk to notify the parties.

**DISTRICT COURT  
CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA**

**Other Civil Matters**

**COURT MINUTES**

**December 01, 2015**

---

A-15-723703-C      Ruby Duncan, Plaintiff(s)  
vs.  
Nevada State of, Defendant(s)

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**December 01, 2015      7:30 AM      Minute Order**

**HEARD BY:** Johnson, Eric      **COURTROOM:** RJC Courtroom 10D

**COURT CLERK:** Linda Skinner

**RECORDER:**

**REPORTER:**

**PARTIES**

**PRESENT:**

**JOURNAL ENTRIES**

- The Court DENIES the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty's ("Becket Fund") Motion for Leave to Appear as Amicus Curiae to the extent that Becket Fund wishes to personally appear for oral argument. However, the Court will consider the Amicus Curiae Brief when making its decision in this matter. The hearing currently set for Wednesday, December 2, 2015 at 8:30 a.m. is VACATED.

**DISTRICT COURT  
CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA**

**Other Civil Matters**

**COURT MINUTES**

**December 07, 2015**

---

A-15-723703-C      Ruby Duncan, Plaintiff(s)  
vs.  
Nevada State of, Defendant(s)

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**December 07, 2015      7:30 AM      Minute Order**

**HEARD BY:** Johnson, Eric      **COURTROOM:** RJC Courtroom 10D

**COURT CLERK:** Linda Skinner

**RECORDER:**

**REPORTER:**

**PARTIES**

**PRESENT:**

**JOURNAL ENTRIES**

- Law Clerk advised there is no opposition to the Motion to Associate Counsel. Therefore, COURT ORDERED, Motion is GRANTED as unopposed and the hearing date of Wednesday, December 9, 2015 is VACATED. Law Clerk to notify the parties.

**DISTRICT COURT  
CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA**

**Other Civil Matters**

**COURT MINUTES**

**December 10, 2015**

---

A-15-723703-C      Ruby Duncan, Plaintiff(s)  
vs.  
Nevada State of, Defendant(s)

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**December 10, 2015      7:00 AM      Minute Order**

**HEARD BY:** Johnson, Eric      **COURTROOM:** RJC Courtroom 10D

**COURT CLERK:** Linda Skinner

**RECORDER:**

**REPORTER:**

**PARTIES  
PRESENT:**

**JOURNAL ENTRIES**

- COURT ORDERED, Defendant's Motion to Associate Counsel (filed 11/6) and Plaintiff's Motion to Associate Counsel (filed 11/16) have been GRANTED as unopposed and the hearing date of December 23, 2105 is VACATED. Law Clerk to notify the parties.

**DISTRICT COURT  
CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA**

**Other Civil Matters**

**COURT MINUTES**

**December 10, 2015**

---

A-15-723703-C      Ruby Duncan, Plaintiff(s)  
vs.  
Nevada State of, Defendant(s)

---

**December 10, 2015      1:30 PM      All Pending Motions**

**HEARD BY:** Johnson, Eric      **COURTROOM:** RJC Courtroom 10D

**COURT CLERK:** Linda Skinner

**RECORDER:**

**REPORTER:** Amber Riggio

**PARTIES**

**PRESENT:**      Bhirud, Ketan D.      Attorney  
                 Rose, Amy M, ESQ      Attorney

**JOURNAL ENTRIES**

- DEFENDANT'S MOTION TO DISMISS FOR LACK OF JURISDICTION AND FAILURE TO STATE A CLAIM...DEFENDANT'S MOTION FOR EXPEDITED ARGUMENT AND DECISION...PARENT-INTERVENERS' JOINDER IN DEFENDANTS' MOTION TO DISMISS AND MEMORANDUM OF POINTS AND AUTHORITIES IN SUPPORT THEREOF

Lawrence Vandyke and Joseph Tartakovsky, present for the Defendants; Tim Keller, present for the Intervener Defendants and Richard Katskee appeared for the Plaintiffs. Arguments by Mr. Vandyke, Mr. Keller and Mr. Katskee in support of their respective positions. Following, COURT ORDERED, matter taken UNDER ADVISEMENT.

CLERK'S NOTE: Court's Order filed 5/18/16 GRANTED Defendant's Motion to Dismiss for Lack of Jurisdiction and DISMISSED Plaintiff's Complaint. Is

**DISTRICT COURT  
CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA**

Other Civil Matters

COURT MINUTES

December 18, 2015

---

A-15-723703-C      Ruby Duncan, Plaintiff(s)  
vs.  
Nevada State of, Defendant(s)

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December 18, 2015      9:30 AM      Motion      Motion for Expedited  
Discovery in Support  
of Plaintiff's Motion  
for Preliminary  
Injunction

HEARD BY:    Bulla, Bonnie

COURTROOM:    RJC Level 5 Hearing Room

COURT CLERK:    Jennifer Lott

RECORDER:    Francesca Haak

REPORTER:

**PARTIES**

**PRESENT:**      Bhirud, Ketan D.      Attorney  
                 Rose, Amy M, ESQ      Attorney  
                 Zastrow, Lisa J.      Attorney

**JOURNAL ENTRIES**

- Joseph Tartakovsky, Esquire, for the Office of the Attorney General; Keith Diggs, Esquire, for Intervenor Defts.

A Preliminary injunction is set in January, and the Program could possibly start in February. Ms. Rose needs information for the Evidentiary Hearing, and counsel has a proposed schedule. Ms. Zastrow strongly opposed any discovery. Colloquy re: constitutional challenge to a law. Argument by Ms. Rose. Commissioner inquired what information could be reasonably made available to Pltff prior to an Evidentiary Hearing.

Upon Commissioner's inquiry, Ms. Zastrow stated six Intervenor are involved. Argument by Ms. Zastrow. Money has not been distributed yet. Colloquy re: obtaining information from the State of

Nevada. Mr. Tartakovsky stated schools are still able to apply, and to date, there is no list of schools who've applied to the program. Mr. Tartakovsky must speak with the client re: if a list can be compiled. Argument by Mr. Tartakovsky.

COMMISSIONER RECOMMENDED, Commissioner and counsel need a list of schools who have applied to the program to date; no names except name Intervenor, but use numbers for names. Colloquy re: zip codes where students reside. COMMISSIONER RECOMMENDED, motion is GRANTED within parameters; 1) identify schools who applied to program, 2) the number of students who applied to receive money from program (broken down by zip code if possible), 3) the schools they applied to, and 4) how many want to go to which school. Arguments by counsel. Commissioner WAIVED time to object when the Attorneys are served with a courtesy copy of DCRR.

Arguments by counsel. Ms. Rose provided a document to Commissioner in Open Court. Ms. Rose has seen all public information, but she requested anything done that wasn't put on the Treasury website. Colloquy. Commissioner suggested Ms. Rose send Request for Admissions re: policies and procedures / rules published on the website. Ms. Rose requested studies on this program's impact on public schools. Commissioner advised counsel the statistics of what currently exists must be available. Commissioner noted Judge Johnson's Law Clerk is present in the courtroom.

Commissioner DEFERRED the structure of Preliminary Injunction to Judge Johnson. Upon Commissioner's inquiry, Mr. Tartakovsky stated there are no preliminary studies to address the impact of the school system. Colloquy. Commissioner suggested Ms. Rose send Request for Admissions or Interrogatories re: studies.

Commissioner suggested counsel have a pre-preliminary conference, and exchange documents and witness lists in advance of the hearing. Commissioner is available by conference call; however, Admissibility will be determined by the District Court Judge. COMMISSIONER RECOMMENDED, Applications must be identified for schools that applied, and copy curriculum information available (or provide in written format as discussed). Ms. Rose suggested Subpoenaing the schools directly to obtain information. No Approvals yet.

Commissioner advised counsel they must use discovery tools. COMMISSIONER RECOMMENDED, use Request to Produce for curriculum only. Ms. Rose stated the Intervenor answered (difficulty setting up an ECC). Ms. Zastrow will set up an Early Case Conference to move forward. Review Rule 36 to authenticate documents before the Hearing. Do not Subpoena the schools. COMMISSIONER RECOMMENDED, Interrogatories 3 and 4 are PROTECTED for those types of questions from going forward for now; Intervenor are PROTECTED, no further information from them, but obtain information from the State.



COMMISSIONER RECOMMENDED, by 12/24/15, Pltf will serve discovery on counsel for the State; provide information by 1/8/16; HAND DELIVER discovery to all counsel; conduct a pre-preliminary conference by 1/5/16.

Ms. Rose to prepare the Report and Recommendations, and counsel to approve as to form and content. A proper report must be timely submitted within 10 days of the hearing. Otherwise, counsel will pay a contribution. Ms. Rose to appear at status check hearing to report on the Report and Recommendations. Commissioner is available by conference call if necessary.

Mr. Tartakovsky requested reciprocal discovery. The issue is not before Commissioner today. Have a 2.34 conference before bringing a Motion in Discovery. Commissioner stated if issues arise, other counsel can be present on Jan. 8, 2016.

1/8/16 11:00 a.m. Status Check: Compliance

**DISTRICT COURT  
CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA**

**Other Civil Matters**

**COURT MINUTES**

**December 21, 2015**

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A-15-723703-C      Ruby Duncan, Plaintiff(s)  
vs.  
Nevada State of, Defendant(s)

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**December 21, 2015      7:30 AM      Minute Order**

**HEARD BY:** Johnson, Eric      **COURTROOM:** RJC Courtroom 10D

**COURT CLERK:** Linda Skinner

**RECORDER:**

**REPORTER:**

**PARTIES**

**PRESENT:**

**JOURNAL ENTRIES**

- Law Clerk advised a non-opposition has been filed. Therefore, COURT ORDERED, Nevada State Education Association and National Education Association Motion for Leave to File Brief as Amici Curiae in Support of Plaintiffs' Opposition to Motion to Dismiss has been GRANTED as unopposed and hearing date of December 23, 2015 is VACATED. Law Clerk to notify the parties.

**DISTRICT COURT  
CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA**

**Other Civil Matters**

**COURT MINUTES**

**January 07, 2016**

---

A-15-723703-C      Ruby Duncan, Plaintiff(s)  
vs.  
Nevada State of, Defendant(s)

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**January 07, 2016      3:30 PM      Minute Order**

**HEARD BY:** Johnson, Eric      **COURTROOM:** RJC Courtroom 10D

**COURT CLERK:** Linda Skinner

**RECORDER:**

**REPORTER:**

**PARTIES**

**PRESENT:**

**JOURNAL ENTRIES**

- Per Law Clerk, COURT ORDERED, Motion to Associate Counsel Daniel Patrick Kearney, Esq.; Motion to Associate Counsel Daniel Walter Hartmen, Esq.; Motion to Associate Counsel Alyssa Hope DaCunha, Esq. and Motion to Associate Counsel Kevin Michael Gallagher, Esq. are all GRANTED as unopposed and the hearing date of January 13, 2016 is VACATED. Law Clerk to notify the parties.

**DISTRICT COURT  
CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA**

Other Civil Matters

COURT MINUTES

February 01, 2016

A-15-723703-C      Ruby Duncan, Plaintiff(s)  
vs.  
Nevada State of, Defendant(s)

February 01, 2016      7:30 AM      Minute Order

HEARD BY: Johnson, Eric      COURTROOM: RJC Courtroom 10D

COURT CLERK: Linda Skinner

RECORDER:

REPORTER:

PARTIES

PRESENT:

**JOURNAL ENTRIES**

- In view of the decision in the First Judicial District Court of the State of Nevada staying implementation of NRS 387.045, finding a likelihood that Plaintiffs would prevail on their cause of action that the statute violates Article 11, Section 6 of the Nevada Constitution, the Court discloses the following information: This Court reads the decision of Judge James E. Wilson, Jr. to rest largely on amendments to Section 6 which were passed by the voters in 2006 as part of the Education First Initiative Petition. Although in this case Plaintiffs have not alleged a cause of action based on Section 6, the Court is cognizant that, depending on the parties consideration, the section may play a role in the litigation of the instant case.

This Court was appointed to the bench in May 2015 and must run in the primary and general election this year. As of January 15, 2016, the Court has drawn three opponents, and, consequently, has arranged for Jim Denton Associates, Inc., a Nevada corporation, to manage his retention campaign. Jim Denton Associates also managed Judge Susan Johnson s (wife to Judge Eric Johnson) judicial campaigns in 2006, 2008, and 2014. With the decision of the First Judicial District Court and the need to confirm retention of a campaign manager, this Court was reminded that Jim Denton Associates was retained to supervise and secure the signatures required to place the Education First Initiative on the ballot in two consecutive elections. The firm was then retained to pass it once the signatures were obtained, including the setting up of numerous editorial board interviews and participating in other

earned media. Over a four year period, the firm was primarily responsible for managing the campaign to pass the Education First Initiative which it successfully did in 2006.

The Court has in keeping with its ethical obligations not discussed its analysis, thoughts or views on the instant case with Jim Denton Associates, but believes that its relationship to Jim Denton Associates and Jim Denton Associates' relationship to the Education First Initiative should be disclosed to the parties for them to independently assess and express any concerns they may have with the Court continuing to preside over this matter.

If the parties do not have any concerns with the Court continuing to preside, the Court asks the parties to contact the Court's law clerk, Josephine Groh, to schedule a status check hearing preferably at any time on February 5, 2016 or Monday, February 8, 2016 at 8:30a.m. The purpose of the hearing would be to (1) determine any outstanding issues between the parties as to discovery in view of the Discovery Commissioner's order; (2) determine, in view of the discovery provided to date, what, if any, factual issues remain in dispute which the parties believe are essential for the Court's determination of the case; and (3) schedule an evidentiary hearing on the remaining essential factual issues.

The day prior to the hearing the Court asks each party to file, with a courtesy copy to the Court, what it believes are factual issues that remain in dispute and a short explanation of their essential nature to the proof of their case.

**DISTRICT COURT  
CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA**

**Other Civil Matters**

**COURT MINUTES**

**February 04, 2016**

---

A-15-723703-C      Ruby Duncan, Plaintiff(s)  
vs.  
Nevada State of, Defendant(s)

---

**February 04, 2016      7:30 AM      Minute Order**

**HEARD BY:** Johnson, Eric      **COURTROOM:** RJC Courtroom 10D

**COURT CLERK:** Linda Skinner

**RECORDER:**

**REPORTER:**

**PARTIES**

**PRESENT:**

**JOURNAL ENTRIES**

- Pursuant to the Law Clerk, COURT ORDERED, the Motion to Associate Counsel is GRANTED and the hearing date of February 10, 2016 is VACATED. Law Clerk to notify the parties.

**DISTRICT COURT  
CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA**

**Other Civil Matters**

**COURT MINUTES**

**February 11, 2016**

---

A-15-723703-C      Ruby Duncan, Plaintiff(s)  
vs.  
Nevada State of, Defendant(s)

---

**February 11, 2016      7:30 AM      Minute Order**

**HEARD BY:** Johnson, Eric      **COURTROOM:** RJC Courtroom 10D

**COURT CLERK:** Linda Skinner

**RECORDER:**

**REPORTER:**

**PARTIES  
PRESENT:**

**JOURNAL ENTRIES**

- Pursuant to Law Clerk, COURT ORDERED, Plaintiff's Motion to Associate Counsel filed 1/20/16 is GRANTED and the hearing date of 2/24/16 is VACATED. Law Clerk to notify the parties.

**DISTRICT COURT  
CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA**

Other Civil Matters

COURT MINUTES

February 11, 2016

---

A-15-723703-C      Ruby Duncan, Plaintiff(s)  
vs.  
Nevada State of, Defendant(s)

---

February 11, 2016      8:00 AM      Status Check

HEARD BY: Johnson, Eric      COURTROOM: RJC Courtroom 10D

COURT CLERK: Linda Skinner

RECORDER:

REPORTER: Amber Riggio

**PARTIES**

**PRESENT:**      Bhirud, Ketan D.      Attorney  
DaCunha, Alyssa H.      Attorney  
Rose, Amy M, ESQ      Attorney

**JOURNAL ENTRIES**

- Nitin Subhedar, counsel for Plaintiff; Lawrence Vandyke, counsel for Defendant; Tim Keller and Keith Diggs, counsel for Intervenor also present; Ms. Weaver, counsel for ACLU and Mr. Tartakovsky, counsel for State of Nevada, appeared via Court Call. Arguments by Ms. Rose, Mr. Subhedar, Mr. VanDyke, Ms. Weaver, Mr. Tartakovsky and Mr. Keller. Following, Plaintiff's to file an Amended Complaint by 2/25. Further, Plaintiffs to provide a very straight outline of facts to establish cause of action and denote which ones are in dispute and will add discovery noting depositions or interrogatories they need as to each fact by 2/19 and State to file response by 2/26. COURT ORDERED, matter CONTINUED, however, advised it will try to resolve on the merits.

... CONTINUED 3/2/16 1:45 PM



**DISTRICT COURT  
CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA**

**Other Civil Matters**

**COURT MINUTES**

**March 02, 2016**

---

A-15-723703-C      Ruby Duncan, Plaintiff(s)  
vs.  
Nevada State of, Defendant(s)

---

**March 02, 2016      1:45 PM      Status Check**

**HEARD BY:** Johnson, Eric      **COURTROOM:** RJC Courtroom 10D

**COURT CLERK:** Linda Skinner

**RECORDER:**

**REPORTER:** Amber Riggio

**PARTIES**

**PRESENT:**      Rose, Amy M, ESQ      Attorney

**JOURNAL ENTRIES**

- Nitin Subhedar and Samuel Edwards, counsel for Plaintiffs; Lawrence Vandyke and Joseph Tartakovsky, counsel for Defendants; Tim Keller and Keith Diggs, counsel for Intervenors, also present. Mr. Lipper appeared for the Plaintiffs via Court Call. Statements by Ms. Rose, Mr. Subhedar, Mr. Vandyke and Mr. Keller in support of their prospective positions. Court wants to issue a decision on the Motion to Dismiss or Motion for Preliminary Injunction and requested a statement of fact from each side that the Court can utilize in the decision. Additionally, Court requested a short briefing as to jurisdiction by 3/11 with the responses due by 3/18 and from this, the Court will determine if additional discovery is necessary. COURT ORDERED, UNDER ADVISEMENT.

CLERK'S NOTE: Court's Order filed 5/18/16 GRANTED Defendant's Motion to Dismiss for Lack of Jurisdiction and DISMISSED Plaintiff's Complaint. Is

# Certification of Copy

State of Nevada }  
County of Clark } SS:

I, Steven D. Grierson, the Clerk of the Court of the Eighth Judicial District Court, Clark County, State of Nevada, does hereby certify that the foregoing is a true, full and correct copy of the hereinafter stated original document(s):

NOTICE OF APPEAL; APPELLANTS' CASE APPEAL STATEMENT;  
DISTRICT COURT DOCKET ENTRIES; CIVIL COVER SHEET; ORDER ON DEFENDANT'S  
MOTION TO DISMISS FOR LACK OF JURISDICTION AND FAILURE TO STATE A CLAIM;  
NOTICE OF ENTRY OF ORDER; DISTRICT COURT MINUTES

RUBY DUNCAN; RABBI MEL HECHT;  
HOWARD WATTS, III; LEORA OLIVAS;  
ADAM BERGER,

Plaintiff(s),

vs.

STATE OF NEVADA ex rel, THE OFFICE OF  
THE STATE TREASURER and THE NEVADA  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION; DAN  
SCHWARTZ, Nevada State Treasurer, in his  
official capacity; STEVE CANAVERO, Interim  
Superintendent of Public Instruction, in his  
official capacity,

Defendant(s),

Case No: A-15-723703-C

Dept No: XX

now on file and of record in this office.

**IN WITNESS THEREOF**, I have hereunto  
Set my hand and Affixed the seal of the  
Court at my office, Las Vegas, Nevada  
This 22 day of June 2016.

Steven D. Grierson, Clerk of the Court



Heather Ungermann, Deputy Clerk

AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION  
OF NEVADA FOUNDATION INC.  
601 S RANCHO DR B-11  
LAS VEGAS, NV 89106

BANK OF THE WEST  
SAHARA OFFICE  
1-800-488-2265  
90-78/1211

2261

6/17/2016

PAY TO THE ORDER OF Nevada Supreme Court

\$\*\*250.00

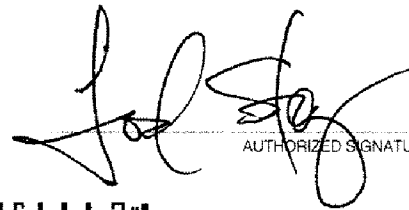
Two Hundred Fifty and 00/100\*\*\*\*\*

DOLLARS

Nevada Supreme Court Clerk

MEMO

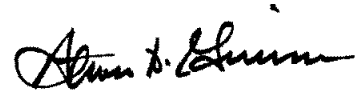
NV Supreme Court filing fee



AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE

MP

⑈002261⑈ ⑆121100782⑆ 028864447⑈



CLERK OF THE COURT

Electronically Filed  
Jun 23 2016 05:13 p.m.  
Tracie K. Lindeman  
Clerk of Supreme Court

1 NOAS

2 Amy M. Rose (SBN 12081)  
3 AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION OF NEVADA  
4 601 S. Rancho Drive, Suite B-11  
5 Las Vegas, Nevada 89106  
6 Telephone: (702) 366-1536  
7 rose@aclunv.org

8 Daniel Mach\*  
9 Heather L. Weaver\*  
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12 Washington, D.C. 20005  
13 dmach@aclu.org  
14 hweaver@aclu.org

15 Richard B. Katskee\*  
16 AMERICANS UNITED FOR SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE  
17 1901 L Street NW, Suite 400  
18 Washington, DC 20036  
19 katskee@au.org

20 Nitin Subhedar\*  
21 Samuel Jacob Edwards\*  
22 COVINGTON & BURLING LLP  
23 One Front Street, 35th Floor  
24 San Francisco, California 94111-5356  
25 nsubhedar@cov.com

26 Anupam Sharma\*  
27 COVINGTON & BURLING LLP  
28 333 Twin Dolphin Dr., Suite 700  
Redwood Shores, CA 94065  
asharma@cov.com

\*Admitted via Pro Hac Vice

DISTRICT COURT  
CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA

20 Ruby Duncan, an individual; Rabbi Mel Hecht, an  
21 individual; Howard Watts III, an individual; Leora  
22 Olivas, an individual; Adam Berger, an individual,  
23 Plaintiffs,

24 v.

25 State of Nevada *ex rel*, the Office of the State Treasurer  
26 of Nevada and the Nevada Department of Education;  
27 Dan Schwartz, Nevada State Treasurer, in his official  
28 capacity; Steve Canavero, Interim Superintendent of  
Public Instruction, in his official capacity,

Defendants,

and

Case No.: A-15-723703-C

Dept. No.: 20

NOTICE OF APPEAL

1 Aimee Hairr; Aurora Espinoza; Elizabeth  
2 Robbins; Lara Allen; Jeffrey Smith; and  
3 Trina Smith,  
4 Parent-Intervenors.

5 **NOTICE OF APPEAL**

6  
7 Notice is hereby given that Ruby Duncan, Rabbi Mel Hecht, Howard Watts III, Leora Olivas, and Adam  
8 Berger, Plaintiffs above named, hereby appeal to the Supreme Court of Nevada from the Order granting  
9 Defendants' Motion to Dismiss for Lack of Jurisdiction and Failure to State a Claim, entered in this action  
10 on the 18<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2016.  
11

12 Respectfully Submitted this June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2016  
13

14 Daniel Mach\*  
15 Heather L. Weaver\*  
16 AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION FOUNDATION  
17 915 15th Street NW, Ste. 600  
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26 katskee@au.org

/s/ Amy M. Rose

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Anupam Sharma\*  
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asharma@cov.com

*Attorneys for Plaintiffs*

*\* Admitted via Pro Hac Vice*

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**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on the 17th of June, 2016, I served a true and correct copy of the foregoing Notice of Appeal upon the following parties hereto, by the WIZNET electronic service provided by the court and via depositing it in the U.S. Mail:

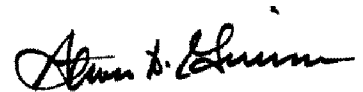
Adam Laxalt  
Lawrence VanDyke  
Joseph Tartakovsky  
Ketan Bhirud  
Office of the Nevada Attorney General  
100 North Carson Street  
Carson City, NV 89701

Mark A. Hutchison  
Jacob A. Reynolds  
Robert T. Stewart  
Hutchison & Steffen, LLC  
10080 West Alta Drive, Suite 200  
Las Vegas, NV 89145

Timothy D. Keller  
Keith E. Diggs  
Institute For Justice  
398 South Mill Ave., Ste. 301  
Tempe, AZ 85281

Lisa Zastrow  
Matthew Dushoff  
Kolesar and Leatham  
400 N Rampart #400  
Las Vegas, NV 89145

/s/ Tamika Shauntee  
An employee of the ACLU of Nevada



CLERK OF THE COURT

1 ASTA

Amy M. Rose (SBN 12081)

2 AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION OF NEVADA

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3 Las Vegas, Nevada 89106

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Heather L. Weaver\*

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8 hweaver@aclu.org

9 Richard B. Katskee\*

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11 katskee@au.org

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15 Anupam Sharma\*

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333 Twin Dolphin Dr., Suite 700

17 Redwood Shores, CA 94065

asharma@cov.com

18 \*Admitted via Pro Hac Vice

DISTRICT COURT  
CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA

20 Ruby Duncan, an individual; Rabbi Mel Hecht, an  
individual; Howard Watts III, an individual; Leora  
21 Olivas, an individual; Adam Berger, an individual,  
22 Plaintiffs,

23 v.

24 State of Nevada *ex rel*, the Office of the State Treasurer  
of Nevada and the Nevada Department of Education;  
25 Dan Schwartz, Nevada State Treasurer, in his official  
capacity; Steve Canavero, Interim Superintendent of  
26 Public Instruction, in his official capacity,

27 Defendants,

28 and

Case No.: A-15-723703-C

Dept. No.: 20

APPELLANTS' CASE APPEAL STATEMENT

1 Aimee Hairr; Aurora Espinoza; Elizabeth  
2 Robbins; Lara Allen; Jeffrey Smith; and  
3 Trina Smith,  
4 Parent-Intervenors.

5  
6 **APPELLANTS' CASE APPEAL STATEMENT**  
7

8 PETITIONERS Ruby Duncan, Rabbi Mel Hecht, Howard Watts III, Leora Olivas, and Adam  
9 Berger, by and through their attorneys file this Case Appeal Statement pursuant to NRAP 3(f).  
10

11 **1. The name of the judge who entered the order or judgment being appealed:**

12 The Honorable Judge Eric Johnson  
13

14 **2. The name of each appellant and the name and address of counsel for each appellant:**

15 **Name of Appellants:** Ruby Duncan, an individual; Rabbi Mel Hecht, an individual; Howard  
16 Watts III, an individual; Leora Olivas, an individual; and Adam Berger, an individual.  
17

18 **Name And Address Of Counsel For All Appellants:**

19 Amy M. Rose (SBN 12081)  
20 American Civil Liberties Union Of Nevada  
601 S. Rancho Drive, Suite B-11  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89106

21 Daniel Mach (Admitted via Pro Hac Vice)  
22 Heather L. Weaver (Admitted via Pro Hac Vice)  
23 American Civil Liberties Union Foundation  
915 15th Street NW, Ste. 600  
24 Washington, D.C. 20005

25 Richard B. Katskee (Admitted via Pro Hac Vice)  
26 AMERICANS UNITED FOR SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE  
1901 L Street NW, Suite 400  
Washington, DC 20036

27 Nitin Subhedar (Admitted via Pro Hac Vice)  
28 Samuel Jacob Edwards (Admitted via Pro Hac Vice)



Covington & Burling LLP  
One Front Street, 35th Floor  
San Francisco, California 94111-5356

Anupam Sharma (Admitted via Pro Hac Vice)  
Covington & Burling LLP  
333 Twin Dolphin Dr., Suite 700  
Redwood Shores, CA 94065

3. **The name of each respondent and the name and address of appellate counsel, if known, for each respondent, but if the name of a respondent's appellate counsel is not known, then the name and address of that respondent's trial counsel:**

**Names of Respondent:** State of Nevada *ex rel*, the Office of the State Treasurer of Nevada and the Nevada Department of Education; Dan Schwartz, Nevada State Treasurer, in his official capacity; Steve Canavero, Interim Superintendent of Public Instruction, in his official capacity.

**Names and Addresses of Trial Counsel for Respondent:**

Adam Laxalt  
Lawrence VanDyke  
Joseph Tartakovsky  
Ketan Bhirud  
Office of the Nevada Attorney General  
100 North Carson Street  
Carson City, NV 89701

**Names of Respondent-Intervenors:** Aimee Hairr; Aurora Espinoza; Elizabeth Robbins; Lara Allen; Jeffrey Smith; and Trina Smith

**Names and Addresses of Trial Counsel for Respondent-Intervenors:**

Mark A. Hutchison  
Jacob A. Reynolds  
Robert T. Stewart  
Hutchison & Steffen, LLC  
10080 West Alta Drive, Suite 200  
Las Vegas, NV 89145

Timothy D. Keller  
Keith E. Diggs  
Institute For Justice  
398 South Mill Ave., Ste. 301  
Tempe, AZ 85281

1 Lisa Zastrow  
2 Matthew Dushoff  
3 Kolesar and Leatham  
4 400 N Rampart #400  
5 Las Vegas, NV 89145

- 6 **4. Whether an attorney identified in response to 3 or 4 is not licensed to practice law in Nevada, and if so, whether the district court granted that attorney permission to appear under SCR 42, including a copy of any district court order granting that permission.**

7 The following counsel are not licensed to practice law in Nevada and were granted permission to  
8 practice for the purposes of this proceeding by the district court. All orders are attached.

9 Daniel Mach  
10 Heather L. Weaver  
11 Richard B. Katskee  
12 Nitin Subhedar  
13 Samuel Jacob Edwards  
14 Anupam Sharma  
15 Timothy D. Keller  
16 Keith E. Diggs

- 17 **5. Whether the appellant was represented by appointed counsel in the district court, and whether the appellant is represented by appointed counsel on appeal.**

18 No appellant was represented by appointed counsel in the district court.

- 19 **6. Whether the district court granted the appellant leave to proceed in forma pauperis, and if so, the date of the district court's order granting that leave.**

20 No appellant was granted leave to proceed in forma pauperis.

- 21 **7. The date that the proceedings commenced in the district court**

22 Proceedings commenced on August 27, 2015.

- 23 **8. A brief description of the nature of the action and result in the district court, including the type of judgment or order being appealed and the relief granted by the district court.**

24 **Description of the Nature of the Action:** Appellants brought suit because the voucher program  
25 established under Senate Bill 302 (2015) violates both Section 2 and Section 10 of Article 11 of  
26 the Nevada Constitution. Appellants alleged that, if allowed to proceed, the voucher program will,  
27  
28

1 in violation of Article 11, Section 10 divert millions of dollars in public-education funds to private  
2 schools—the majority of which are religious—and that this program will allow those taxpayer  
3 funds to be used for religious education, indoctrination, and discrimination. Appellants also alleged  
4 that the voucher program will, in violation of Article 11, Section 2, create a non-uniform and  
5 competing system of private schools by providing public funding to private and religious schools  
6 that (1) are not open and accessible to all Nevada children and teachers due to discriminatory  
7 admissions and employment practices, and (2) use curricula, instruction, and educational standards  
8 that diverge dramatically from those in public schools. Appellants also alleged that the voucher  
9 program further violates Article 11, Section 2 because—by diverting funds from public schools  
10 and bolstering a system of competing private and religious schools—it will undermine the public  
11 school system that the State is constitutionally required to provide. Appellants appeal the district  
12 court’s dismissal of both the Section 2 and Section 10 claims.  
13

14 **Result in District Court:** Respondents filed a motion to dismiss for lack of jurisdiction and for  
15 failure to state a claim on October 19, 2015. Respondent-Intervenors filed a joinder to this motion  
16 on October 26, 2015. Appellants filed an opposition on November 10, 2016. On May 18, 2016  
17 the District Court granted this motion to dismiss and dismissed Appellants’ case.  
18

19 **9. Whether the case has previously been the subject of an appeal to or original writ**  
20 **proceeding in the Supreme Court and, if so, the caption and Supreme Court docket**  
21 **number of the prior proceeding.**

22 This case has not previously been the subject of an appeal or original write proceeding in the  
23 Supreme Court.

24 **10. Whether the appeal involves child custody or visitation.**

25 This appeal does not involve child custody or visitation.

26 ...

27 ...  
28

**11. In civil cases, whether the appeal involves the possibility of settlement.**

Although Appellants are open to discussion of settlement, it is not likely this case will be resolved through settlement.

DATED this June 17th, 2016

Respectfully Submitted,

Daniel Mach\*  
Heather L. Weaver\*  
AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION FOUNDATION  
915 15th Street NW, Ste. 600  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
dmach@aclu.org  
hweaver@aclu.org

Richard B. Katskee\*  
AMERICANS UNITED FOR SEPARATION OF  
CHURCH AND STATE  
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katskee@au.org

/s/ Amy M. Rose

Amy M. Rose (SBN 12081)  
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Anupam Sharma\*  
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asharma@cov.com  
*Attorneys for Plaintiffs*

\* *Admitted via Pro Hac Vice*

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**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I HEREBY CERTIFY that on the 17<sup>th</sup> of June, 2016, I served a true and correct copy of the foregoing Appellants' Case Appeal Statement upon the following parties hereto, by the WIZNET electronic service provided by the court and via depositing it in the U.S. Mail:

Adam Laxalt  
Lawrence VanDyke  
Joseph Tartakovsky  
Ketan Bhirud  
Office of the Nevada Attorney General  
100 North Carson Street  
Carson City, NV 89701

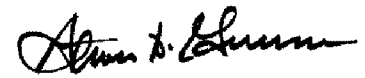
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Tempe, AZ 85281

Lisa Zastrow  
Matthew Dushoff  
Kolesar and Leatham  
400 N Rampart #400  
Las Vegas, NV 89145

/s/ Tamika Shauntee  
An employee of the ACLU of Nevada

# **EXHIBIT 1**



CLERK OF THE COURT

**ORDER**

Amy M. Rose (SBN 12081)  
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nsubhedar@cov.com

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asharma@cov.com

**DISTRICT COURT  
CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA**

Ruby Duncan, an individual; Rabbi Mel Hecht, an  
individual; Howard Watts III, an individual; Leora  
Olivas, an individual; Adam Berger, an individual,  
Plaintiffs,

v.

State of Nevada *ex rel*, the Office of the State Treasurer  
of Nevada and the Nevada Department of Education;  
Dan Schwartz, Nevada State Treasurer, in his official  
capacity; Steve Canavero, Interim Superintendent of  
Public Instruction, in his official capacity,  
Defendants,

Case No.: A-15-723703-C  
Dept. No.: 20

**PLAINTIFFS' ORDER ADMITTING TO  
PRACTICE**

1 and

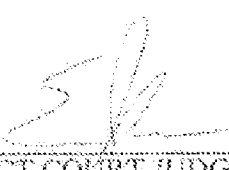

2 Amee Hairr; Aurora Espinoza; Elizabeth  
3 Robbins; Lara Allen; Jeffrey Smith; and  
4 Trina Smith,

Parent-Intervenors.

5 Plaintiffs, Ruby Duncan, Rabbi Mel Hecht, Howard Watts III, Leora Olivas, and Adam Berger,  
6 through their attorney, Amy M. Rose *Esq.*, having filed their MOTION TO ASSOCIATE COUNSEL  
7 under Nevada Supreme Court Rule 42, together with the Verified Applications for Association of Counsel,  
8 a Certificate of Good Standing from their respective jurisdictions and their State Bar of Nevada  
9 Statements; said applications having been noticed, no objections having been made, and the Court being  
10 fully apprised in the premises and good cause appearing, it is hereby

11 ORDERED, that said applications are hereby granted, and Daniel Mach, Heather L. Weaver and  
12 Gregory M. Lipper are hereby admitted to practice in the above entitled Court for the purposes of the  
13 above entitled matter only.

14 Dated this 19 day of March, 2016

15  
16   
DISTRICT COURT JUDGE JOHNSON 

17 Daniel Mach  
18 Heather L. Weaver  
19 American Civil Liberties Union Foundation  
20 915 15th Street NW, Ste. 600  
21 Washington, D.C. 20005  
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hweaver@aclu.org

22 Richard B. Katskee  
23 Gregory M. Lipper  
24 AMERICANS UNITED FOR SEPARATION OF  
25 CHURCH AND STATE  
26 1901 L Street NW, Suite 400  
27 Washington, DC 20036  
28 katskee@au.org  
lipper@au.org

*is/ Amy M. Rose*

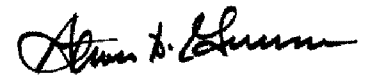
Amy M. Rose (SBN 12081)  
AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION OF NEVADA  
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Redwood Shores, CA 94065  
asharma@cov.com

*Attorneys for Plaintiffs*





CLERK OF THE COURT

**ORDER**

Amy M. Rose (SBN 12081)  
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**DISTRICT COURT  
CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA**

Ruby Duncan, an individual; Rabbi Mel Hecht, an individual; Howard Watts III, an individual; Leora Olivas, an individual; Adam Berger, an individual,  
Plaintiffs,

v.

State of Nevada *ex rel.* the Office of the State Treasurer of Nevada and the Nevada Department of Education; Dan Schwartz, Nevada State Treasurer, in his official capacity; Steve Canavero, Interim Superintendent of Public Instruction, in his official capacity,  
Defendants.

Case No.: A-15-723703-C  
Dept. No.: 20

**PLAINTIFFS' ORDER ADMITTING TO PRACTICE**

1 and

2 Aimee Haire; Aurora Espinoza; Elizabeth  
3 Robbins; Lara Allen; Jeffrey Smith; and  
4 Trina Smith,

Parent-Intervenors.

5 Plaintiffs, Ruby Duncan, Rabbi Mel Hecht, Howard Watts III, Leora Olivas, and Adam Berger,  
6 through their attorney, Amy M. Rose *Esq.*, having filed their MOTION TO ASSOCIATE COUNSEL  
7 under Nevada Supreme Court Rule 42, together with the Verified Application for Association of Counsel,  
8 a Certificate of Good Standing from his respective jurisdictions and his State Bar of Nevada Statements;  
9 said applications having been noticed, no objections having been made, and the Court being fully apprised  
10 in the premises and good cause appearing, it is hereby

11 ORDERED, that said applications are hereby granted, and Richard B. Katskee are hereby admitted  
12 to practice in the above entitled Court for the purposes of the above entitled matter only.

13 Dated this 19 day of March, 2016

14  
15 DISTRICT COURT JUDGE JOHNSON *Rn*

16 Daniel Mach  
17 Heather L. Weaver  
18 American Civil Liberties Union Foundation  
19 915 15th Street NW, Ste. 600  
20 Washington, D.C. 20005  
dmach@aclu.org  
hweaver@aclu.org

21 Richard B. Katskee  
22 Gregory M. Lipper  
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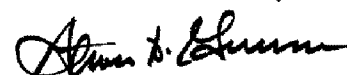
*1st Amy M. Rose*

Amy M. Rose (SBN 12081)  
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*Attorneys for Plaintiffs*



CLERK OF THE COURT

1 **ORDER**

2 Amy M. Rose (SBN 12081)  
3 AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION OF NEVADA  
4 601 S. Rancho Drive, Suite B-11  
5 Las Vegas, Nevada 89106  
6 Telephone: (702) 366-1536  
7 rose@aclunv.org

8 Daniel Mach  
9 Heather L. Weaver  
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asharma@cov.com

\*\*Pro Hac Vice Applications Forthcoming

DISTRICT COURT  
CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA

Ruby Duncan, an individual; Rabbi Mel Hecht, an  
individual; Howard Watts III, an individual; Leora  
Olivas, an individual; Adam Berger, an individual,  
Plaintiffs,

v.

State of Nevada *ex rel*, the Office of the State Treasurer  
of Nevada and the Nevada Department of Education;  
Dan Schwartz, Nevada State Treasurer, in his official  
capacity; Steve Canavero, Interim Superintendent of  
Public Instruction, in his official capacity,  
Defendants,

Case No.: A-15-723703-C  
Dept. No.: 20

**PLAINTIFFS' ORDER ADMITTING TO  
PRACTICE**

1 and

2 Aimee Hairr; Aurora Espinoza; Elizabeth  
3 Robbins; Lara Allen; Jeffrey Smith; and  
4 Trina Smith,

Parent-Intervenor.

5 Plaintiffs, Ruby Duncan, Rabbi Mel Hecht, Howard Watts III, Leora Olivas, and Adam Berger, through  
6 their attorney, Amy M. Rose Esq., having filed their MOTION TO ASSOCIATE COUNSEL under Nevada  
7 Supreme Court Rule 42, together with the Verified Applications for Association of Counsel, a Certificate of Good  
8 Standing from their respective jurisdictions and their State Bar of Nevada Statements; said applications having been  
9 noticed, no objections having been made, and the Court being fully apprised in the premises and good cause  
10 appearing, it is hereby


11 **ORDERED**, that said applications are hereby granted, and Samuel Jacob Edwards, Anupam Sharma and  
12 Nitin Subhedar, are hereby admitted to practice in the above entitled Court for the purposes of the above entitled  
13 matter only.

14 Dated this 1 day of March, 2016

15  
16 DISTRICT COURT JUDGE JOHNSON

17  
18 Daniel Mach  
19 Heather L. Weaver  
20 American Civil Liberties Union Foundation  
21 915 15th Street NW, Ste. 600  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
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asharma@cov.com

Attorneys for Plaintiffs

DEPARTMENT 20  
**CASE SUMMARY**  
**CASE No. A-15-723703-C**

Ruby Duncan, Plaintiff(s)  
vs.  
Nevada State of, Defendant(s)

§  
§  
§  
§  
§

Location: **Department 20**  
Judicial Officer: **Johnson, Eric**  
Filed on: **08/27/2015**  
Cross-Reference Case Number: **A723703**

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**CASE INFORMATION**

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Case Type: **Other Civil Matters**

Case Flags: **Appealed to Supreme Court**  
**Automatically Exempt from Arbitration**

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**DATE**

**CASE ASSIGNMENT**

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**Current Case Assignment**

Case Number	A-15-723703-C
Court	Department 20
Date Assigned	08/27/2015
Judicial Officer	Johnson, Eric

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**PARTY INFORMATION**

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


<b>Plaintiff</b>	<b>Berger, Adam</b>	<b>Rose, Amy M, ESQ</b> <i>Retained</i> 702-362-6666(W)
	<b>Duncan, Ruby</b>	<b>Rose, Amy M, ESQ</b> <i>Retained</i> 702-362-6666(W)
	<b>Hecht, Rabbi Mel</b>	<b>Rose, Amy M, ESQ</b> <i>Retained</i> 702-362-6666(W)
	<b>Olivas, Leora</b>	<b>Rose, Amy M, ESQ</b> <i>Retained</i> 702-362-6666(W)
	<b>Watts, Howard, III</b>	<b>Rose, Amy M, ESQ</b> <i>Retained</i> 702-362-6666(W)
<b>Defendant</b>	<b>Canavero, Steve</b> Removed: 05/18/2016 Dismissed	
	<b>Nevada State of</b>	
	<b>Schwartz, Dan</b> Removed: 05/18/2016 Dismissed	
<b>Intervenor Defendant</b>	<b>Allen, Lara</b>	<b>Stewart, Robert T.</b> <i>Retained</i> 702-385-2500(W)
	<b>Espinoza, Aurora</b>	<b>Stewart, Robert T.</b> <i>Retained</i> 702-385-2500(W)
	<b>Hairr, Aimee</b>	<b>Stewart, Robert T.</b>

DEPARTMENT 20  
**CASE SUMMARY**  
CASE NO. A-15-723703-C












		<i>Retained</i> 702-385-2500(W)
	Robbins, Elizabeth	Stewart, Robert T. <i>Retained</i> 702-385-2500(W)
	Smith, Jeffrey	Stewart, Robert T. <i>Retained</i> 702-385-2500(W)
	Smith, Trina	Stewart, Robert T. <i>Retained</i> 702-385-2500(W)
Other	Becket Funding For Religious Liberty	Barr, Jeffrey F. <i>Retained</i> 702-631-7555(W)
	Foundation for Excellence in Education	Hutchison, Mark A <i>Retained</i> 702-385-2500(W)

DATE	EVENTS & ORDERS OF THE COURT	INDEX
08/27/2015	 Complaint Filed By: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Complaint Requesting Injunctive Relief and Declaratory Relief</i>	
08/27/2015	 Initial Appearance Fee Disclosure Filed By: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Initial Appearance Fee Disclosure NRS Chapter 19</i>	
09/17/2015	 Initial Appearance Fee Disclosure Filed By: Intervenor Defendant Hairr, Aimee <i>Initial Appearance Fee Disclosure</i>	
09/17/2015	 Motion to Associate Counsel Filed By: Intervenor Defendant Allen, Lara <i>Intervenor-Defendants' Motion to Associate Counsel</i>	
09/17/2015	 Motion to Intervene Party: Intervenor Defendant Allen, Lara <i>Motion to Intervene as Defendants</i>	
09/17/2015	 Answer to Complaint Filed by: Intervenor Defendant Hairr, Aimee <i>Intervenor-Defendants' Answer to Plaintiffs' Complaint Requesting Injunctive and Declaratory Relief</i>	
09/21/2015	 Summons Filed by: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Summons - Dan Schwartz (Nevada State Treasurer)</i>	
09/21/2015	 Summons Filed by: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Summons - Office of the State Treasurer of Nevada)</i>	
09/21/2015	 Summons	

DEPARTMENT 20  
**CASE SUMMARY**  
**CASE No. A-15-723703-C**

	Filed by: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Summons - State of Nevada (Nevada Department of Education)</i>
09/21/2015	 Summons Filed by: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Summons - Steve Canavero</i>
09/21/2015	 Summons Filed by: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Summons - Nevada State Treasurer</i>
09/21/2015	 Summons Filed by: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Summons - State of Nevada (Nevada Department of Education)</i>
09/21/2015	 Summons Filed by: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Summons - Steve Canavero</i>
09/21/2015	 Summons Filed by: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Summons - State of Nevada (Nevada Department of Education)</i>
10/09/2015	 Response Filed by: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Plaintiffs' Response to Applicants' Motion to Intervene as Defendants</i>
10/09/2015	 Motion Filed By: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Plaintiffs' Motion to Associate Counsel</i>
10/13/2015	 Notice of Non Opposition Filed By: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Plaintiffs' Notice of Non-Opposition to Intervenor-Defendants' Motion to Associate Counsel</i>
10/14/2015	 Notice of Non Opposition Filed By: Intervenor Defendant Hairr, Aimee <i>Notice of Nonopposition to Intervenor-Defendants' Motion to Associate Counsel and Motion to Intervene as Defendants Request Pursuant to EDCR 2.23 for Grant of Intervenor-Defendants' Motion to Associate Counsel and Motion to Intervene as Defendants Without Oral Argument</i>
10/19/2015	 Receipt of Copy Filed by: Defendant Nevada State of <i>Receipt of Copy</i>
10/19/2015	 Certificate of Service Filed by: Defendant Nevada State of <i>Certificate of Service</i>
10/19/2015	 Motion Filed By: Defendant Nevada State of <i>Motion to Dismiss for Lack of Jurisdiction and Failure to State a Claim</i>
10/19/2015	 Motion

DEPARTMENT 20  
**CASE SUMMARY**  
**CASE NO. A-15-723703-C**

	Filed By: Defendant Nevada State of <i>Motion for Expedited Argument and Decision</i>
10/20/2015	 <b>Minute Order (7:30 AM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Thompson, Charles)
10/21/2015	<b>CANCELED Motion to Associate Counsel (8:30 AM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Thompson, Charles) <i>Vacated - per Law Clerk</i> <i>Intervenor-Defendants' Motion to Associate Counsel</i>
10/21/2015	<b>CANCELED Motion to Intervene (8:30 AM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Thompson, Charles) <i>Vacated - per Law Clerk</i> <i>Motion to Intervene as Defendants</i>
10/26/2015	 <b>Initial Appearance Fee Disclosure</b> Filed By: Other Foundation for Excellence in Education <i>Initial Appearance Fee Disclosure (NRS Chapter 19)</i>
10/26/2015	 <b>Brief</b> Filed By: Other Foundation for Excellence in Education <i>Brief of Amicus Curiae Foundation for Excellence in Education in Support of Defendants' Motion to Dismiss</i>
10/26/2015	 <b>Motion for Leave to File</b> Party: Other Becket Funding For Religious Liberty <i>Motion for Leave to Appear as Amicus Curiae</i>
10/26/2015	 <b>Initial Appearance Fee Disclosure</b> Filed By: Other Becket Funding For Religious Liberty <i>Initial Appearance Fee Disclosure</i>
10/26/2015	 <b>Brief</b> Filed By: Other Foundation for Excellence in Education <i>Brief of the Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, Inc., as Amicus Curiae in Support of the Defendants</i>
10/26/2015	 <b>Joinder</b> Filed By: Intervenor Defendant Hairr, Aimee <i>Parent-Intervenors' Joinder in Defendants' Motion to Dismiss and Memorandum of Points and Authorities in Support Thereof</i>
10/28/2015	 <b>Notice of Non Opposition</b> Filed By: Intervenor Defendant Hairr, Aimee <i>Parent-Inventors' Notice of Non Opposition to Plaintiffs' Motion to Associate Counsel</i>
11/02/2015	 <b>Opposition to Motion</b> Filed By: Defendant Nevada State of <i>Opposition to Plaintiffs' Emergency Ex Parte Motion to Extend Time</i>
11/02/2015	 <b>Minute Order (2:00 PM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Johnson, Eric) <i>Minute Order Re: Plaintiffs Request for An Extension of Time to Respond to the State of Nevada's Motion to Dismiss, Intervenor-Defendants Joinder and proposed Amici s submissions</i>
11/05/2015	 <b>Motion to Associate Counsel</b> Filed By: Other Becket Funding For Religious Liberty















DEPARTMENT 20  
**CASE SUMMARY**  
**CASE NO. A-15-723703-C**

*Motion to Associate Counsel*



11/06/2015	 <b>Stipulation and Order</b> Filed by: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Stipulation and Order to Vacate and reset Current Hearing on State Defendant's Motion to Dismiss for Lack of Jurisdiction and Failure to State a Claim</i>
11/10/2015	 <b>Opposition to Motion</b> Filed By: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Plaintiffs' Opposition to State Defendants' Motion to Dismiss and Intervenors' Joinder</i>
11/16/2015	 <b>Motion to Associate Counsel</b> Filed By: Defendant Nevada State of <i>Defendants' Motion to Associate Counsel</i>
11/16/2015	 <b>Notice of Non Opposition</b> Filed By: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Notice of Non-Opposition to Motion to Associate Counsel and Request to Grant Motion Without Oral Argument</i>
11/16/2015	 <b>Motion to Associate Counsel</b> Filed By: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Plaintiffs' Motion to Associate Counsel</i>
11/17/2015	 <b>Minute Order (7:30 AM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Johnson, Eric)
11/17/2015	 <b>Notice of Change of Hearing</b> <i>Notice of Change of Hearing</i>
11/18/2015	<b>CANCELED Motion to Associate Counsel (8:30 AM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Johnson, Eric) <i>Vacated - per Law Clerk</i>
11/20/2015	 <b>Notice</b> Filed By: Defendant Nevada State of <i>Notice of Motion and Motion of Nevada State Education Association and National Education Association for Leave to File Brief as Amici Curiae in Support of Plaintiffs' Opposition to Motion to Dismiss</i>
11/23/2015	 <b>Notice</b> Filed By: Defendant Nevada State of <i>Defendants Notice of NonOpposition to Nevada State Education Association and National Education Associations Motion for Leave to File Brief as Amici Curiae</i>
11/24/2015	 <b>Motion</b> Filed By: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Motion for Expedited Discovery in Support of Plaintiffs' Motion for Preliminary Injunction</i>
11/25/2015	 <b>Motion for Preliminary Injunction</b> Filed By: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Plaintiff's Motion for Preliminary Injunction and Supporting Memorandum</i>
12/01/2015	 <b>Minute Order (7:30 AM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Johnson, Eric)
12/02/2015	 <b>Association of Counsel</b>

DEPARTMENT 20  
**CASE SUMMARY**  
**CASE NO. A-15-723703-C**







	Filed By: Intervenor Defendant Hairr, Aimee <i>Notice of Association of Counsel</i>
12/02/2015	<b>CANCELED Motion for Leave (8:30 AM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Johnson, Eric) <i>Vacated</i> <i>Motion for Leave to Appear as Amicus Curiae</i>
12/03/2015	 <b>Reply in Support</b> Filed By: Intervenor Defendant Hairr, Aimee <i>Parent-Intervenors' Reply in Support of Their Joinder to Defendants' Motion to Dismiss</i>
12/03/2015	 <b>Substitution of Attorney</b> Filed by: Intervenor Defendant Hairr, Aimee <i>Notice of Substitution of Counsel for Intervenor Defendants</i>
12/03/2015	 <b>Reply in Support</b> Filed By: Defendant Nevada State of <i>Reply in Support of Motion to Dismiss for Lack of Jurisdiction and Failure to State a Claim</i>
12/04/2015	 <b>Notice of Non Opposition</b> Filed By: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Plaintiff's Notice of Non-Opposition to Motion to Associate Counsel and Request to Grant Motion without Oral Argument on an Expedited Basis</i>
12/07/2015	 <b>Minute Order (7:30 AM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Johnson, Eric)
12/08/2015	 <b>Motion to Associate Counsel</b> Filed By: Other Foundation for Excellence in Education <i>Motion to Associate Counsel</i>
12/08/2015	 <b>Motion to Associate Counsel</b> Filed By: Other Foundation for Excellence in Education <i>Motion to Associate Counsel</i>
12/08/2015	 <b>Motion to Associate Counsel</b> Filed By: Other Foundation for Excellence in Education <i>Motion to Associate Counsel</i>
12/08/2015	 <b>Motion to Associate Counsel</b> Filed By: Other Foundation for Excellence in Education <i>Motion to Associate Counsel</i>
12/09/2015	<b>CANCELED Motion to Associate Counsel (8:30 AM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Johnson, Eric) <i>Vacated - per Law Clerk</i> <i>Motion to Associate Counsel</i>
12/09/2015	 <b>Notice</b> Filed By: Defendant Nevada State of <i>Notice of Consent to Service by Electronic Means</i>
12/10/2015	 <b>Minute Order (7:00 AM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Johnson, Eric)
12/10/2015	 <b>Opposition</b> Filed By: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Opposition To (Anticipated Ex Parte) Motion By Defendants To Extend Time To Respond To</i>

DEPARTMENT 20  
**CASE SUMMARY**  
**CASE NO. A-15-723703-C**

*(1) Plaintiffs' Motion For Preliminary Injunction And (2) Plaintiffs' Motion For Expedited Discovery*












12/10/2015	 <b>Joinder To Motion</b> Filed By: Intervenor Defendant Hairr, Aimee <i>Parent-Intervenors Joinder in Defendants' Emergency Ex Parte Motion to Extend Time on Plaintiffs' Motion for Preliminary Injunction and Plaintiffs' Motion for Expedited Discovery (on Order Shortening Time) (First Request)</i>
12/10/2015	<b>Motion to Dismiss (1:30 PM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Johnson, Eric) <i>Defendant's Motion to Dismiss for Lack of Jurisdiction and Failure to State a Claim</i>
12/10/2015	<b>Motion to Dismiss (1:30 PM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Johnson, Eric) <i>Defendant's Motion for Expedited Argument and Decision</i>
12/10/2015	<b>Joinder (1:30 PM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Johnson, Eric) <i>Parent-Intervenors' Joinder in Defendants' Motion to Dismiss and Memorandum of Points and Authorities in Support Thereof</i>
12/10/2015	 <b>All Pending Motions (1:30 PM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Johnson, Eric)
12/11/2015	 <b>Media Request and Order</b> <i>Media Request And Order Allowing Camera Access To Court Proceedings.</i>
12/16/2015	 <b>Opposition to Motion</b> Filed By: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Parent-Intervenors' Response in Opposition to Plaintiffs' Motion for Expedited Discovery</i>
12/16/2015	 <b>Opposition to Motion</b> Filed By: Defendant Nevada State of <i>Defendants' Opposition to Plaintiffs' Motion for Expedited Discovery in Support of Plaintiffs' Motion for Preliminary Injunction</i>
12/16/2015	 <b>Order Shortening Time</b> Filed By: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Ex Parte Order Shortening Time for Hearing on Motion for Expedited Discovery</i>
12/16/2015	 <b>Application</b> Filed By: Other Nevada State Education Association <i>Application for Order in Chambers</i>
12/18/2015	 <b>Motion (9:30 AM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Bulla, Bonnie) <i>Motion for Expedited Discovery in Support of Plaintiff's Motion for Preliminary Injunction</i>
12/21/2015	 <b>Minute Order (7:30 AM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Johnson, Eric)
12/22/2015	 <b>Order Granting Motion</b> Filed By: Other Nevada State Education Association <i>Order Granting Nevada State Education Association and National Education Association's Motion for Leave to File Brief as Amici Curiae</i>
12/22/2015	 <b>Brief</b> Filed By: Other Nevada State Education Association <i>Brief for the Nevada State Education Association and the National Education Association as Amici Curiae in Support of Plaintiffs' Opposition to Motion to Dismiss</i>

DEPARTMENT 20  
**CASE SUMMARY**  
**CASE NO. A-15-723703-C**











12/23/2015	<b>CANCELED Motion to Associate Counsel (8:30 AM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Johnson, Eric) <i>Vacated - per Law Clerk</i> <i>Defendants' Motion to Associate Counsel</i>
12/23/2015	<b>CANCELED Motion to Associate Counsel (8:30 AM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Johnson, Eric) <i>Vacated - per Law Clerk</i>
12/23/2015	<b>CANCELED Motion (8:30 AM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Johnson, Eric) <i>Vacated - per Law Clerk</i> <i>Notice of Motion and Motion of Nevada State Education Association and National Education Association for Leave to File Brief as Amici Curiae in Support of Plaintiffs' Opposition to Motion to Dismiss</i>
12/30/2015	 <b>Motion to Associate Counsel</b> Filed By: Intervenor Defendant Allen, Lara <i>(Errata 1/5/16 Disgarded) Intervenor-Defendants' Motion to Associate Counsel</i>
12/31/2015	 <b>Reply to Opposition</b> Filed by: Intervenor Defendant Hairr, Aimee <i>Parent-Intervenors' Response in Opposition to Plaintiffs' Motion for Preliminary Injunction</i>
12/31/2015	 <b>Opposition to Motion</b> Filed By: Defendant Nevada State of <i>Defendants' Opposition to Plaintiffs' Motion for Preliminary Injunction</i>
01/05/2016	 <b>Errata</b> Filed By: Other Foundation for Excellence in Education <i>Errata to Motion to Associate Counsel</i>
01/05/2016	 <b>Motion to Associate Counsel</b> Filed By: Other Foundation for Excellence in Education <i>Motion to Associate Counsel</i>
01/07/2016	 <b>Minute Order (3:30 PM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Johnson, Eric)
01/08/2016	<b>CANCELED Status Check: Compliance (11:00 AM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Bulla, Bonnie) <i>Vacated</i>
01/08/2016	 <b>Reply in Support</b> Filed By: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Reply in Support of Plaintiffs' Motion for Preliminary Injunction</i>
01/12/2016	 <b>Objection</b> Filed By: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Plaintiffs' Partial Objection to Discovery Commissioner's Report and Recommendations</i>
01/13/2016	<b>CANCELED Motion for Preliminary Injunction (8:30 AM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Johnson, Eric) <i>Vacated - per Law Clerk</i> <i>Plaintiff's Motion for Preliminary Injunction and Supporting Memorandum</i>
01/13/2016	<b>CANCELED Motion to Associate Counsel (8:30 AM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Johnson, Eric) <i>Vacated - per Law Clerk</i> <i>Motion to Associate Counsel</i>
01/13/2016	<b>CANCELED Motion to Associate Counsel (8:30 AM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Johnson, Eric) <i>Vacated - per Law Clerk</i>

DEPARTMENT 20  
**CASE SUMMARY**  
**CASE NO. A-15-723703-C**












*Motion to Associate Counsel*

01/13/2016	<b>CANCELED Motion to Associate Counsel (8:30 AM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Johnson, Eric) <i>Vacated - per Law Clerk</i> <i>Motion to Associate Counsel</i>
01/13/2016	<b>CANCELED Motion to Associate Counsel (8:30 AM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Johnson, Eric) <i>Vacated - per Law Clerk</i> <i>Motion to Associate Counsel</i>
01/13/2016	 <b>Discovery Commissioners Report and Recommendations</b> Filed By: Defendant Nevada State of <i>Discovery Commissioners Report and Recommendation</i>
01/14/2016	 <b>Opposition</b> Filed By: Defendant Nevada State of <i>Opposition to Plaintiffs' Partial Objection to Discovery Commissioner's Report and Recommendations</i>
01/15/2016	 <b>Joinder To Motion</b> Filed By: Intervenor Defendant Hairr, Aimee <i>Parent-Intervenors' Joinder to Defendant State of Nevada's Opposition to Plaintiffs' Partial Objection to Discovery Commissioner's Report and Recommendations</i>
01/15/2016	 <b>Request</b> Filed by: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Plaintiffs' Request for a Status Conference</i>
01/19/2016	 <b>Response</b> Filed by: Defendant Nevada State of <i>Response to Plaintiffs' Request for a Status Conference</i>
01/19/2016	 <b>Reporters Transcript</b> <i>Reporter's Transcript of Proceedings 12/10/2015</i>
01/20/2016	 <b>Motion</b> Filed By: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Plaintiffs' Motion to Associate Counsel</i>
01/21/2016	 <b>Order Admitting to Practice</b> Filed By: Other Foundation for Excellence in Education <i>Order Admitting to Practice - Daniel Kearney</i>
01/21/2016	 <b>Order Admitting to Practice</b> Filed By: Other Foundation for Excellence in Education <i>Order Admitting to Practice - Kevin Gallagher</i>
01/21/2016	 <b>Order Admitting to Practice</b> Filed By: Other Foundation for Excellence in Education <i>Order Admitting to Practice - Daniel Hartman</i>
01/21/2016	 <b>Order Admitting to Practice</b> Filed By: Other Foundation for Excellence in Education <i>Order Admitting to Practice - Alyssa DaCunha</i>








DEPARTMENT 20  
**CASE SUMMARY**  
**CASE NO. A-15-723703-C**

01/26/2016	 Notice of Entry of Order Filed By: Other Foundation for Excellence in Education <i>Notice of Entry of Order Admitting to Practice</i>
01/26/2016	 Notice of Entry of Order Filed By: Other Foundation for Excellence in Education <i>Notice of Entry of Order Admitting to Practice</i>
01/26/2016	 Notice of Entry of Order Filed By: Other Foundation for Excellence in Education <i>Notice of Entry of Order Admitting to Practice</i>
01/26/2016	 Notice of Entry of Order Filed By: Other Foundation for Excellence in Education <i>Notice of Entry of Order Admitting to Practice</i>
02/01/2016	 <b>Minute Order (7:30 AM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Johnson, Eric)
02/03/2016	<b>CANCELED Motion to Associate Counsel (8:30 AM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Johnson, Eric) <i>Vacated</i> <i>Intervenor-Defendants' Motion to Associate Counsel</i>
02/04/2016	 <b>Minute Order (7:30 AM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Johnson, Eric)
02/09/2016	 Miscellaneous Filing Filed by: Intervenor Defendant Allen, Lara <i>Parent-Intervenors' Summary of Undisputed Factual Issues</i>
02/09/2016	 Response Filed by: Defendant Nevada State of <i>Defendants' Repsonse to Courts Order of February 1, 2016</i>
02/10/2016	<b>CANCELED Motion to Associate Counsel (8:30 AM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Johnson, Eric) <i>Vacated - per Law Clerk</i> <i>Motion to Associate Counsel: Todd Cornelius Zubler, Esq</i>
02/10/2016	 Miscellaneous Filing Filed by: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Plaintiffs' Submission for February 11, 2016 Status Conference</i>
02/11/2016	 <b>Minute Order (7:30 AM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Johnson, Eric)
02/11/2016	 <b>Status Check (8:00 AM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Johnson, Eric) <b>02/11/2016, 03/02/2016</b>
02/17/2016	 Notice of Entry of Order Filed By: Other Foundation for Excellence in Education <i>Notice of Entry of Order Admitting to Practice</i>
02/17/2016	 Order Admitting to Practice Filed By: Other Foundation for Excellence in Education <i>Order Admitting to Practice</i>
02/22/2016	

DEPARTMENT 20  
**CASE SUMMARY**  
**CASE NO. A-15-723703-C**

	 <b>Miscellaneous Filing</b> Filed by: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Plaintiffs' Court-Requested Submission on Factual and Discovery Issues</i>
02/24/2016	<b>CANCELED Motion to Associate Counsel (8:30 AM)</b> (Judicial Officer: Johnson, Eric) <i>Vacated - per Law Clerk</i>
02/29/2016	 <b>Miscellaneous Filing</b> Filed by: Defendant Nevada State of <i>Defendants' Response to Court's Order of February 11, 2016</i>
02/29/2016	 <b>Miscellaneous Filing</b> Filed by: Intervenor Defendant Hairr, Aimee <i>Parent-Intervenors' Response to Plaintiffs' Court Requested Submission on Factual and Discovery Issues</i>
03/01/2016	 <b>Miscellaneous Filing</b> Filed by: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Plaintiffs' February 29, 2016 Clarification</i>
03/04/2016	 <b>Media Request and Order</b> <i>Media Request And Order Allowing Camera Access To Court Proceedings.</i>
03/11/2016	 <b>Miscellaneous Filing</b> Filed by: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Plaintiffs' March 11, 2016 Submission on Factual and Discovery Issues</i>
03/11/2016	 <b>Miscellaneous Filing</b> Filed by: Defendant Nevada State of <i>Defendants' Response to Court's Order of March 2, 2016</i>
03/11/2016	 <b>Miscellaneous Filing</b> Filed by: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Plaintiffs' March 11, 2016 Submission on Appropriateness of Judicial Action on Plaintiffs' Motion for Preliminary Injunction</i>
03/11/2016	 <b>Miscellaneous Filing</b> Filed by: Intervenor Defendant Hairr, Aimee <i>Parent-Intervenors' Court-Requested Statement of Facts</i>
03/18/2016	 <b>Brief</b> Filed By: Defendant Nevada State of <i>Defendants' Brief on Jurisdiction</i>
04/08/2016	 <b>Order Admitting to Practice</b> Filed By: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Plaintiffs' Order Admitting to Practice Daniel Mach, Heather Weaver and Gregory Lipper</i>
04/08/2016	 <b>Order Admitting to Practice</b> Filed By: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Plaintiffs' Order Admitting to Practice Samuel Jacob, Anupam Sharma and Nitin Subhedar.</i>
04/08/2016	 <b>Order Admitting to Practice</b> Filed By: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby

DEPARTMENT 20  
**CASE SUMMARY**  
**CASE NO. A-15-723703-C**

	<i>Plaintiffs' Order Admitting to Practice Richard Katskee.</i>	
04/22/2016	 Miscellaneous Filing Filed by: Defendant Nevada State of <i>Defendant's Notice of Readiness and Request for Setting</i>	
04/27/2016	 Response Filed by: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Plaintiffs' Response to Defendants' Notice of Readiness and Request for Setting</i>	
05/06/2016	 Notice of Change of Address Filed By: Other Becket Funding For Religious Liberty <i>Notice of Change of Address</i>	
05/18/2016	 Order of Dismissal <i>Order on Defendant's Motion to Dismiss For Lack of Jurisdiction and Failure to State A Claim</i>	
05/18/2016	<b>Order of Dismissal With Prejudice</b> (Judicial Officer: Johnson, Eric) Debtors: Nevada State of (Defendant), Dan Schwartz (Defendant), Steve Canavero (Defendant) Creditors: Ruby Duncan (Plaintiff), Rabbi Mel Hecht (Plaintiff), Howard Watts, III. (Plaintiff), Leora Olivas (Plaintiff), Adam Berger (Plaintiff) Judgment: 05/18/2016, Docketed: 05/25/2016	
06/01/2016	 Notice of Entry of Order Filed By: Defendant Nevada State of <i>Notice of Entry of Order</i>	
06/17/2016	 Notice of Appeal Filed By: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Notice of Appeal</i>	
06/17/2016	 Case Appeal Statement Filed By: Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby <i>Appellants' Case Appeal Statement</i>	

DATE	FINANCIAL INFORMATION
	<b>Intervenor Defendant Allen, Lara</b> Total Charges 30.00 Total Payments and Credits 30.00 <b>Balance Due as of 6/22/2016 0.00</b>
	<b>Intervenor Defendant Espinoza, Aurora</b> Total Charges 30.00 Total Payments and Credits 30.00 <b>Balance Due as of 6/22/2016 0.00</b>
	<b>Intervenor Defendant Hairr, Aimee</b> Total Charges 223.00 Total Payments and Credits 223.00 <b>Balance Due as of 6/22/2016 0.00</b>
	<b>Intervenor Defendant Robbins, Elizabeth</b> Total Charges 30.00 Total Payments and Credits 30.00 <b>Balance Due as of 6/22/2016 0.00</b>
	<b>Intervenor Defendant Smith, Jeffrey</b>



DEPARTMENT 20  
**CASE SUMMARY**  
**CASE No. A-15-723703-C**

Total Charges	30.00
Total Payments and Credits	30.00
<b>Balance Due as of 6/22/2016</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Intervenor Defendant Smith, Trina</b>	
Total Charges	30.00
Total Payments and Credits	30.00
<b>Balance Due as of 6/22/2016</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Other Becket Funding For Religious Liberty</b>	
Total Charges	223.00
Total Payments and Credits	223.00
<b>Balance Due as of 6/22/2016</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Other Foundation for Excellence in Education</b>	
Total Charges	223.00
Total Payments and Credits	223.00
<b>Balance Due as of 6/22/2016</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Plaintiff Berger, Adam</b>	
Total Charges	30.00
Total Payments and Credits	30.00
<b>Balance Due as of 6/22/2016</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby</b>	
Total Charges	294.00
Total Payments and Credits	294.00
<b>Balance Due as of 6/22/2016</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Plaintiff Hecht, Rabbi Mel</b>	
Total Charges	30.00
Total Payments and Credits	30.00
<b>Balance Due as of 6/22/2016</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Plaintiff Olivas, Leora</b>	
Total Charges	30.00
Total Payments and Credits	30.00
<b>Balance Due as of 6/22/2016</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Plaintiff Watts, Howard, III</b>	
Total Charges	30.00
Total Payments and Credits	30.00
<b>Balance Due as of 6/22/2016</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Plaintiff Duncan, Ruby</b>	
Appeal Bond Balance as of 6/22/2016	<b>500.00</b>

## DISTRICT COURT CIVIL COVER SHEET A-15-723703-C

Clark  
County, Nevada

Case No. \_\_\_\_\_

XX

(Assigned by Clerk's Office)

**I. Party Information** (provide both home and mailing addresses if different)

Plaintiff(s) (name/address/phone): Ruby Duncan, Rabbi Mel Hecht, Howard Watts III, Leora Olivas, Adam Berger 601 South Rancho Dr. Suite B-11 Las Vegas, NV 89101 702-366-1536	Defendant(s) (name/address/phone): State of Nevada ex rel, the Office of the State Treasurer of Nevada, Nevada Department of Education Dan Schwartz, Nevada State Treasurer, Steve Carvero Interim Superintendent
Attorney (name/address/phone): ACLU of Nevada, Amy Rose 601 South Rancho Dr. Suite B-11 Las Vegas, NV 89106 702-366-1536	Attorney (name/address/phone): Attorney General for the State of Nevada 100 N. Carson St. Carson City, NV 89701

**II. Nature of Controversy** (please select the one most applicable filing type below)**Civil Case Filing Types**

<b>Real Property</b> <b>Landlord/Tenant</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Unlawful Detainer <input type="checkbox"/> Other Landlord/Tenant <b>Title to Property</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Judicial Foreclosure <input type="checkbox"/> Other Title to Property <b>Other Real Property</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Condemnation/Eminent Domain <input type="checkbox"/> Other Real Property	<b>Negligence</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Auto <input type="checkbox"/> Premises Liability <input type="checkbox"/> Other Negligence <b>Malpractice</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Medical/Dental <input type="checkbox"/> Legal <input type="checkbox"/> Accounting <input type="checkbox"/> Other Malpractice	<b>Torts</b> <b>Other Torts</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Product Liability <input type="checkbox"/> Intentional Misconduct <input type="checkbox"/> Employment Tort <input type="checkbox"/> Insurance Tort <input type="checkbox"/> Other Tort
<b>Probate</b> <b>Probate</b> (select case type and estate value) <input type="checkbox"/> Summary Administration <input type="checkbox"/> General Administration <input type="checkbox"/> Special Administration <input type="checkbox"/> Set Aside <input type="checkbox"/> Trust/Conservatorship <input type="checkbox"/> Other Probate <b>Estate Value</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Over \$200,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Between \$100,000 and \$200,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Under \$100,000 or Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> Under \$2,500	<b>Construction Defect &amp; Contract</b> <b>Construction Defect</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 40 <input type="checkbox"/> Other Construction Defect <b>Contract Case</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Uniform Commercial Code <input type="checkbox"/> Building and Construction <input type="checkbox"/> Insurance Carrier <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Instrument <input type="checkbox"/> Collection of Accounts <input type="checkbox"/> Employment Contract <input type="checkbox"/> Other Contract	<b>Judicial Review/Appeal</b> <b>Judicial Review</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Foreclosure Mediation Case <input type="checkbox"/> Petition to Seal Records <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Competency <b>Nevada State Agency Appeal</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Department of Motor Vehicle <input type="checkbox"/> Worker's Compensation <input type="checkbox"/> Other Nevada State Agency <b>Appeal Other</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal from Lower Court <input type="checkbox"/> Other Judicial Review/Appeal
<b>Civil Writ</b> <b>Civil Writ</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Writ of Habeas Corpus <input type="checkbox"/> Writ of Mandamus <input type="checkbox"/> Writ of Quo Warrant <input type="checkbox"/> Writ of Prohibition <input type="checkbox"/> Other Civil Writ		<b>Other Civil Filing</b> <b>Other Civil Filing</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Compromise of Minor's Claim <input type="checkbox"/> Foreign Judgment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Civil Matters

Business Court filings should be filed using the Business Court civil coversheet.

8/27/2015

Date

Signature of initiating party or representative

See other side for family-related case filings.

1     ORDR

2                                 EIGHTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT

3                                 CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA

4     RUBY DUNCAN an individual; RABBI MEL  
5     HECHT, an individual; HOWARD WATTS III,  
6     an individual; LEORA OLIVAS, an individual;  
7     ADAM BERGER, an individual,

8                                 Plaintiffs,

9                                 vs.

10     STATE OF NEVADA, ex rel. the Office of the  
11     State Treasurer of Nevada and the Nevada  
12     Department of Education; DAN SCHWARTZ,  
13     Nevada State Treasurer, in his official capacity;  
14     STEVE CANAVERO, Interim Superintendent  
15     of Public Instruction, in his official capacity,

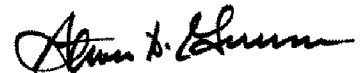
16                                 Defendants.

Case No. A-15-723703-C

Dept. No. XX

Electronically Filed

05/18/2016 12:49:54 PM



CLERK OF THE COURT

17                                 **ORDER ON DEFENDANT'S MOTION TO DISMISS FOR LACK OF JURISDICTION**  
18                                 **AND FAILURE TO STATE A CLAIM**

19             This matter concerning Defendant STATE OF NEVADA's Motion to Dismiss for Lack  
20     of Jurisdiction and Failure to State a Claim, filed October 19, 2015, joined by Parent-Intervenors  
21     on October 26, 2015, came on for hearing December 10, 2015 and February 11 and March 2,  
22     2016, before Department XX of the Eighth Judicial District Court, in and for Clark County,  
23     Nevada, with JUDGE ERIC JOHNSON presiding: Plaintiffs RUBY DUNCAN, RABBI MEL  
24     HECHT, HOWARD WATTS, III, LOERA OLIVAS and ADAM BERGER appeared by and  
   through their attorneys, AMY M. ROSE, ESQ. of the AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION  
   OF NEVADA, NITIN SUBHEDAR, ESQ. and SAMUEL EDWARDS, ESQ. of the law firm,  
   COVINGTON & BURLING, and GREGORY M. LIPPER, ESQ., Senior Litigation Counsel for  
   AMERICANS UNITED FOR SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE; Defendant STATE

1 OF NEVADA appeared by and through its attorney, LAWRENCE VANDYKE, ESQ, Deputy  
2 Attorney General; and Parent-Intervenors AIMEE HAIRR, AURORA ESPINOZA,  
3 ELIZABETH ROBBINS, LARA ALLEN, JEFFREY SMITH and TRINA SMITH appeared by  
4 and through their attorneys, TIMOTHY D. KELLER, ESQ. and KEITH E. DIGGS, ESQ. of the  
5 INSTITUTE FOR JUSTICE. Having reviewed the papers and pleadings on file herein,  
6 including but not limited to the parties' supplemental briefs filed March 11 and 18, 2016,  
7 respectively, and taken this matter under advisement, this Court makes the following Findings of  
8 Fact and Conclusions of Law.

9 **I. Introduction**

10 THIS MATTER involves a challenge to Nevada's new education savings account  
11 ("ESA") program. Plaintiffs Ruby Duncan, Rabbi Mel Hecht, Howard Watts III, Leora Olivas,  
12 and Adam Berger (collectively, "Plaintiffs") claim the ESA program violates the Nevada  
13 Constitution, specifically Article XI, section 2, requiring the Legislature to provide for a uniform  
14 public school system, and Article XI, section 10, prohibiting use of public funds for sectarian  
15 purposes. This matter currently comes before this Court on Defendants' Motion to Dismiss  
16 Plaintiffs' Complaint. After accepting as true the factual allegations of the Complaint for which  
17 Plaintiffs have standing to assert, and determining the scope of Article XI, sections 2 and 10, this  
18 Court finds Plaintiffs have not pled facts to demonstrate the ESA program is unconstitutional and  
19 to entitle them to declaratory relief. Therefore, this Court dismisses Plaintiff's Complaint  
20 challenging Senate Bill 302 ("SB 302") on constitutional grounds.

21 As a preliminary matter, the issues before this Court do not include the public policy  
22 merits of the ESA program. Whether Nevada's ESA program is wise educational or public  
23 policy is not a consideration germane to the narrow issues of Nevada constitutional law that are  
24 before this Court. In the absence of a constitutional violation, the desirability and efficacy of the

1 ESA program are matters to be resolved through the political/legislative process.

2 **II. Standard for Determining a Motion to Dismiss a Complaint**

3 The Court has considered Defendant State of Nevada's Motion to Dismiss, joined by  
4 Parent-Intervenors. The Court is "bound to accept all the factual allegations in the complaint as  
5 true," *Marcoz v. Summa Corp.*, 106 Nev. 737, 739 (1990), and must "construe[] the pleading  
6 liberally, drawing every inference in favor of the nonmoving party." *Citizens for Cold Springs v.*  
7 *City of Reno*, 125 Nev. 625, 629 (2009). However, in determining the factual allegations of the  
8 complaint on which a plaintiff relies to bring his or her causes of action, the Court is not bound  
9 to accept factual allegations for which the plaintiff does not have standing to assert to establish a  
10 cause of action. *See Doe v. Bryan*, 102 Nev. 523, 525, 728 P.2d 443, 444 (1986); *Blanding v.*  
11 *City of Las Vegas*, 52 Nev. 52, 280 P. 644, 650 (1929). Once the plaintiff's pled facts are  
12 assumed true, the Court must then "determine whether or not the challenged pleading sets forth  
13 allegations sufficient to make out the elements of a right to relief." *Edgar v. Wagner*, 101 Nev.  
14 226, 227 (1985). In making this determination, this Court must decide what the law requires to  
15 be made out to establish Plaintiffs' causes of action. If disputed by the parties, what the law  
16 means is not a factual question but a legal one the Court must determine. In making this  
17 decision, the Court does not need to presume Plaintiffs' interpretation of the law is correct for  
18 purposes of determining the Motion to Dismiss. In the instant case, in deciding Defendants'  
19 motion, this Court must assume Plaintiffs' factual allegations in their Complaint are true, and  
20 then resolve legal issues of statutory and constitutional construction to determine if the facts as  
21 alleged make out Plaintiffs' causes of action in their Complaint. "A claim should not be  
22 dismissed . . . unless it appears to a certainty that the plaintiff is not entitled to relief under any  
23 set of facts which could be proved in support of the claim." *Hale v. Burkhardt*, 104 Nev. 632,  
24 636 (1988). However, "[t]o survive dismissal, a complaint must contain some set of facts,

1 which, if true, would entitle [the plaintiff] to relief,” *In re Amerco Derivative Litig.*, 127 Nev.  
2 Adv. Op. 17, 252 P.3d 681, 692 (2011) (quotation marks omitted).

3 **III. Factual Summary of Plaintiff’s Complaint and Nevada ESA Program**

4 This Court invited the parties to submit proposed statements of facts to the Court for its  
5 consideration in entering any order on Defendants’ Motion to Dismiss or Plaintiffs’ Motion for  
6 Preliminary Injunction. All parties provided proposed statements of facts. The Court has  
7 reviewed the proposed statements, Plaintiffs’ Complaint and the statute and legislative history of  
8 the ESA program. Based on this review, the Court finds the following facts to have been alleged  
9 by the Plaintiffs or established by the record for purposes of deciding Defendants’ Motion to  
10 Dismiss.<sup>1</sup>

11 **A. Nevada’s Education Savings Account Program**

12 Senate Bill 302, adopted and approved by the Nevada Legislature and Governor Brian  
13 Sandoval in 2015, created Nevada’s ESA program. In passing SB 302, the Legislature sought to  
14 exercise its constitutional authority under Article XI, section 1 to encourage education by “all  
15 suitable means.” The purpose of the ESA program is to advance the education of all students  
16 throughout the State by offering Nevadans a broader array of educational opportunities. Under  
17 SB 302, Nevada parents may enter into agreements with the State Treasurer to open ESAs for  
18 their children. SB 302 §§ 7.1, 7.2. Any school age child who has attended a Nevada public or  
19 charter school for at least 100 consecutive school days is eligible to participate in the program.  
20 SB 302 § 7.1. The ESA program is far more extensive and will be far more encompassing than  
21 any other ESA or voucher program in the country. A parent who wishes to choose an alternative  
22 to a public school can apply for an ESA and a percentage of what the State funds for his or her  
23 child’s public education will be deposited into an account for that child. Once the ESA is

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24 <sup>1</sup> In view of this Court’s decision to grant Defendants’ Motion to Dismiss, the Court makes no ruling on Plaintiffs’  
Motion for Preliminary Injunction.

1 opened, “[t]he child will receive a grant, in the form of money deposited” into the account. SB  
2 302 § 7.1(b).

3 The money deposited into each student’s account is drawn from public funds,  
4 specifically the State of Nevada’s Distributive School Account (DSA), which is “financed by  
5 legislative appropriations from the State General Fund, a tax on out-of-state sales, a slot machine  
6 tax, mineral land lease income, and interest from investments of the State Permanent School  
7 Fund.” These funds may appropriately be categorized as public funds. Pls.’ Compl. ¶ 16, 18–19.  
8 Children from families with a household income less than 185% of the federal poverty level are  
9 eligible to receive 100% of the statewide average basic per-pupil support rate. All other children  
10 participating in the ESA program will receive 90% of the statewide average basic per-pupil  
11 support rate.

12 All funds deposited into ESAs established on behalf of children who reside in a given  
13 county must be deducted from the State’s DSA apportionment that would ordinarily be disbursed  
14 to that county. There is no limit on how many students may participate in the ESA program.  
15 Theoretically, there is no limit on the total amount of public funds that can be diverted from  
16 public to private schools and other educational providers under the ESA program.

17 Parents may only use the money deposited in ESA accounts for educational purposes  
18 and those purposes alone. SB 302 § 9. SB 302 enumerates eleven specific educational purposes  
19 on which ESA grants may be spent. These purposes include tuition, textbooks, tutoring, and  
20 special education. SB 302, § 9.1(a)-(k). Regulatory safeguards exist to ensure that ESA money  
21 is not used by parents or schools in ways inconsistent with SB 302’s educational purpose. For  
22 instance, the Treasurer has power to freeze or dissolve an account if he determines there has been  
23 “substantial misuse” of the account. SB 302, § 10.3. Each participating entity accepting  
24 payments from an ESA must provide receipts for those payments to the parents. *Id.* at § 11(4).

1 The Treasurer can also terminate participation by an entity that, for any reason, has “failed to  
2 provide any educational services required by law to a child receiving instruction from the entity.”  
3 *Id.* at § 11.5(b).

4  
5 **B. Non-Religious and Religious Education Services are Eligible to Participate in  
the ESA Program**

6 ESA grants may only be used at participating entities or eligible institutions, including  
7 private schools, colleges or universities within the Nevada System of Higher Education. SB 302  
8 § 3.5. The ESA program allows both religious and non-religious private schools to apply to  
9 serve as participating entities. Pls.’ Compl. ¶ 16. The majority of private schools that have  
10 applied to participate in the program are religious. In some counties, the only private schools  
11 eligible to participate are religious. As a result, there is no question ESA funds will be used to  
12 pay tuition at private religious schools. Parents’ use of ESA money for educational purposes  
13 must be documented. *Id.* at § 11(4).

14 Many religious private schools have religious mission statements and instruction, and  
15 promote particular religious beliefs. As long as participating private schools do not transgress  
16 other state or federal anti-discrimination laws that may be applicable, participating private  
17 religious schools may take religion and other characteristics into account in their admissions  
18 process and hiring practices. Pls.’ Compl. ¶ 6, 28, 69-79; *see also* SB 302 § 14. While those  
19 facilities applying for an exemption under NRS § 389.211 must attest they “provide[] equivalent  
20 instruction of the kind and amount approved by the State Board of Education,” private religious  
21 schools that will receive ESA funds are not required to follow the curriculum guidelines required  
22 in public schools as the State accepts as “equivalent” curricula which includes religious doctrine.  
23 There are no prohibitions on how private religious schools may use ESA program funds; SB 302  
24 states “nothing in the provisions of [this Act] shall be deemed to limit the independence or



1 autonomy of a participating entity.” SB 302 § 14, Pls.’ Compl. ¶ 27. Once parents use their  
2 participating students’ ESA funds to pay for an approved educational expense, such as tuition or  
3 textbooks, there is no prohibition on how participating entities may use those funds—so long as  
4 the participating entity provides the educational product or service for which it was paid. Pls.’  
5 Compl. ¶ 27, 38, 80; *see also* SB 302 § 1 1(5)(b). Private religious schools may comingle, and,  
6 consequently, spend ESA funds on religious activities entirely unrelated to students’ education.  
7 Compl. ¶¶ 27, 38, 84. Private religious schools that receive ESA funds will not be required to  
8 meet the same educational standards as public schools and are not subject to the same oversight  
9 by the State.

10 **C. Plaintiffs’ Factual Allegations for Which They Do Not Have Standing to**  
11 **Assert**

12 The above-stated facts are those allegations from the Complaint which the Court has  
13 determined Plaintiffs’ have standing to assert in making out causes of action challenging the  
14 constitutionality of the ESA program. Plaintiffs have alleged additional facts of which they have  
15 no personal involvement and interest, and are conjectural at this point in time at best.  
16 Consequently, these allegations do not establish actual controversies involving the Plaintiffs, and  
17 involve allegations, which, if proved true, should be brought by individuals who have actually  
18 suffered the alleged injuries. This Court finds Plaintiffs do not have standing to challenge the  
19 ESA program’s constitutionality on these facts. Specifically, Plaintiffs allege private schools  
20 receiving ESA funds will illegally discriminate in both admissions and hiring on the basis of  
21 religion and other circumstances and the State has no rule, regulation, or procedure in place to  
22 prevent such discrimination by private religious schools participating in the ESA program.  
23 Plaintiffs further assert some religious private schools will require students and/or their parents  
24 to sign statements of faith and comply with religious codes of conduct and will exclude students

1 and/or charge more for tuition based on the students' faith, or even the faith of their parents.  
2 Plaintiffs further allege private schools receiving ESA funds will not be required to comply with  
3 Nevada's Public Accommodations Law.<sup>2</sup> See NRS § 651 et seq.

4 In addition, Plaintiffs contend, because there is no limit on how many students may  
5 participate in the ESA program and on the total amount of public funds that can be diverted from  
6 public to private schools, the ESA program will irreparably harm the public schools by diverting  
7 funds from them and bolstering a system of competing private and religious schools. Plaintiffs  
8 contend there will be a drastic curtailment of funding to the public schools that is greater than the  
9 otherwise-occurring year-to-year variation in State funding. Plaintiffs' argue the loss of funding  
10 to the public school system as a result of the ESA program will negatively impact public school  
11 education, opportunities, and services, including the forced lay off of teachers at public schools.  
12 Plaintiffs predict the students who remain in the public schools will be disproportionately students  
13 of lower income, students with disabilities, and students who speak English as a second  
14 language, all of whom are more expensive to educate than the average pupil.

#### 15 **IV. Procedural History of Lawsuit**

16 On August 27, 2015, Plaintiffs filed their Complaint against the State of Nevada  
17 requesting injunctive relief and declaratory relief. On September 17, 2015, Aimee Hairr, Aurora  
18 Espinoza, Elizabeth Robbins, Lara Allen, and Jeffery and Trina Smith ("Parent-Intervenors")  
19 filed a Motion to Intervene as Defendants, which this Court granted. On October 19, 2015, the  
20

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21 <sup>2</sup> Parent-Intervenors dispute Plaintiffs' contention Nevada's Public Accommodation Law will not apply to religion  
22 affiliated schools in the ESA program, arguing in Nevada, "[a]ny nursery, private school or university or other place  
23 of education" is considered a "[p]lace of public accommodation." NRS 651.050(3)(k). Additionally, Nevada law  
24 states "[a]ll persons are entitled to the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges,  
advantages and accommodations of any place of public accommodation, without discrimination or segregation on  
the ground of race, color, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, sex, gender identity or expression."  
NRS 651.070. Nevada law also lays out the penalties, both civil and criminal, for violating the right to equal  
enjoyment of places of public accommodation. Because this Court finds Plaintiffs do not have standing to challenge  
the ESA program on these specific applied factual allegations, the Court does not reach the scope of the Public  
Accommodation Law under the ESA statute in any of the conjectural situations Plaintiffs suggest.

1 State of Nevada filed a Motion to Dismiss for Lack of Jurisdiction and Failure to State a Claim.  
2 On October 26, 2015, Parent-Intervenors filed a joinder to Defendants' Motion to Dismiss.  
3 Plaintiffs filed their Opposition to Defendants' Motion to Dismiss on November 10, 2015.  
4 Defendant and Parent-Intervenors' Replies followed on December 3, 2015.

5 During the course of this litigation concerning Defendants' Motion to Dismiss, numerous  
6 *amici curiae* briefs were received in support of both sides, including the Foundation for  
7 Excellence in Education,<sup>3</sup> the Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, Inc.,<sup>4</sup> and the  
8 Nevada State Education Association and the National Education Association.<sup>5</sup> Shortly after  
9 filing of Defendants' Motion to Dismiss, the State of Nevada also filed a Motion for an  
10 Expedited Decision Argument and Decision, requesting a hearing on the Motion to Dismiss for  
11 November 25, 2015. This Court set oral argument for the day requested, but later received a  
12 request from Plaintiffs' Counsel (and later a Stipulation from all parties) to continue the hearing  
13 for approximately a month, or until December 10, 2015. This Court heard oral argument on  
14 Defendants' Motion to Dismiss on December 10, 2015.

15 In the interim of the briefing for the Motion to Dismiss, Plaintiffs filed a Motion for  
16 Preliminary Injunction, seeking to enjoin disbursement of the ESA funds, as well as a Motion for  
17 Expedited Discovery in support of the Motion for Preliminary Injunction. The State filed an *ex*  
18 *parte* Motion to Extend Time to Respond to Plaintiffs' Motion for Preliminary Injunction and  
19 Motion for Expedited Discovery. Discovery Commissioner Bonnie Bulla ultimately held a  
20 hearing regarding Plaintiffs' Motion for Expedited Discovery on December 18, 2015 and made  
21 various discovery rulings surrounding the Motion for Preliminary Injunction, which she  
22 recommended this Court adopt. Both the State of Nevada and Parent-Intervenors filed their  
23

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24 <sup>3</sup> Filed on October 26, 2015 in support of Defendants' Motion to Dismiss.

<sup>4</sup> Filed on October 26, 2015 in support of Defendants' Motion to Dismiss.

<sup>5</sup> Filed on December 22, 2015, in support of Plaintiffs' Opposition to Defendants' Motion to Dismiss.

1 Oppositions to Plaintiffs' Motion for Preliminary Injunction on December 31, 2016.

2 Plaintiffs partially objected to Commissioner Bulla's Report and Recommendations on  
3 January 12, 2016, seeking additional interrogatories and other discovery against the Parent-  
4 Intervenors and third-parties, and challenging Commissioner Bulla's denial of all but one of  
5 Plaintiffs' Requests for Production. Both the State of Nevada and Parent-Intervenors opposed  
6 Plaintiffs' additional discovery requests.

7 These discovery disputes led this Court to set a status check for February 11, 2016. At  
8 that hearing, the Court ordered the parties to submit an outline of factual and discovery issues  
9 regarding the status of the case in light of the First Judicial District Court decision granting a  
10 preliminary injunction in a separate lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of the ESA statute.<sup>6</sup>  
11 After review of the supplemental briefings, the parties returned for a status check hearing on  
12 March 2, 2016, where the Court attempted to flush out the remaining issues necessary to make a  
13 final decision as to Plaintiffs' causes of action. After concluding the parties could not reach an  
14 agreement on the essential facts of the case to allow a final decision, this Court ordered the  
15 parties to provide proposed statements of facts for it to consider adopting for either an order on  
16 Defendant's Motion to Dismiss or Plaintiffs' Motion for Preliminary Injunction. The Court also  
17 requested additional briefing as to any jurisdiction issues concerning Plaintiffs' Motion for  
18 Preliminary Injunction in view of the First Judicial District Court's preliminary injunction. Final  
19 briefings from the parties were filed by March 18, 2016, at which time this Court took the matter  
20 under advisement.

21  
22 <sup>6</sup> The First Judicial District Court granted the injunction finding the Plaintiffs were likely to prevail in establishing  
23 the ESA statute as unconstitutional under Article XI, section 6 of the Nevada Constitution. The Court found Article  
24 XI, section 6 requires the Legislature to appropriate funds which must only be used for the operation of the public  
schools, but the ESA program would divert "some amount of general funds appropriated to fund...the public  
schools . . . to fund" the ESA program, including private school tuition and other uses. Plaintiffs in their instant  
complaint made no claim under Article XI, section 6. This Court invited Plaintiffs to amend their complaint to  
include such a claim. Plaintiffs did not amend their complaint and this Court makes no findings as to the  
constitutionality of the ESA program under Article XI, section 6.

1     **V.     Plaintiffs' Standing to Challenge the ESA Statute Under Article XI, Sections 2 and**  
2     **10**

3             Plaintiffs Ruby Duncan, Rabbi Mel Hecht, Howard Watts III, and Leora Olivas all reside  
4     in Southern Nevada and pay taxes in Nevada. Plaintiff Adam Berger is also a resident and  
5     taxpayer in Southern Nevada as well as a special-education teacher at a public school and the  
6     parent of a public-school student. Pls.' Compl. ¶ 12. Plaintiffs assert they have standing to  
7     challenge SB 302 because they object to the use of their tax dollars being disbursed through the  
8     ESA program to private schools, including religious ones, to pay for the enrollment of students  
9     in those academic facilities. Compl. ¶ 8-12. The Nevada Supreme Court has yet to rule whether  
10    taxpayer standing is available in Nevada. *See Pojunis v. Denis*, 2014 WL 7188221, at \*1 (Nev.  
11    Dec. 16, 2014) (unpublished opinion finding plaintiff lacked standing "even assuming that  
12    taxpayer standing is available in Nevada"). Plaintiff Berger also contends he has standing  
13    because the ESA program "would divert massive sums from the State's Distributive School  
14    Account, depriving school districts of a key source of funding, and thereby depleting the  
15    resources at the school that Plaintiff Berger's son attends and the one where he teaches."

16            Defendant State of Nevada, joined by Parent/Interveners, challenges the Court's  
17    jurisdiction to hear the instant matter, contending Plaintiffs lack standing to bring this action.  
18    Defendants argue Nevada law does not recognize taxpayer standing, citing primarily *Doe v.*  
19    *Bryan*, 102 Nev. 523, 525, 728 P.2d 443, 444 (1986) and *Blanding v. City of Las Vegas*, 52 Nev.  
20    52, 280 P. 644, 650 (1929); *cf. Citizens for Cold Springs v. City of Reno*, 125 Nev. 625, 630, 218  
21    P.3d 847, 850 (2009) (finding statutory standing). Additionally, Defendants argue in cases  
22    where plaintiffs seek declaratory relief or raise constitutional issues, the Nevada Supreme Court  
23    requires them "to meet increased jurisdictional standing requirements." *Stockmeier v. Nevada*  
24    *Dep't of Corr. Psych. Review Panel*, 122 Nev. 385, 393, 135 P.3d 220, 225-26 (2006).

1 In *Stockmeier*, the Nevada Supreme Court stated it has a “long history of requiring an  
2 actual justiciable controversy as a predicate to judicial relief.” 122 Nev. at 393, 135 P.3d at 225.  
3 The high court explained further that in matters such as the instant case, where plaintiffs seek a  
4 statute to be declared unconstitutional, it has “required plaintiffs to meet increased jurisdictional  
5 standing requirements.” *Id.* at 393, 135 P.3d at 225–26. Presumably, in making these statements,  
6 the Nevada Supreme Court was referencing the federal judiciary’s “case or controversy”  
7 requirement for standing. *Id.* at 392, 135 P.3d at 225. Under this standard, “the federal judiciary  
8 cannot declare the rights of individuals or ‘determine the constitutionality of legislative or  
9 executive acts’ without an ‘actual controversy’ between the parties.” *Id.* at 392–93, 135 P.3d at  
10 225 (quoting *Lujan v. Defenders of Wildlife*, 504 U.S. 555, 560–61 (1992)). However, the  
11 Nevada Supreme Court specifically rejected that state’s courts are bound by the federal “case or  
12 controversy” requirements, noting standing is “a self-imposed rule of restraint.” *Id.* at 393, 135  
13 P.3d at 225. The high court approved language allowing state courts to implement standing  
14 requirements in “favor of just and expeditious determination on the ultimate merits.” *Id.*  
15 (quoting 59 Am.Jur.2d *Parties* § 36, at 441–42 (2002)). The Nevada Supreme Court ultimately  
16 found the plaintiff had standing to bring an action seeking declaratory and injunctive relief  
17 concerning the “open meetings” law because the statute specifically provided for any person  
18 deprived a right under the statute to bring an action. *Id.* at 394–95, 135 P.3d at 226–27.

19 In *Doe v. Bryan*, the Nevada Supreme Court referenced the federal standing requirement  
20 of an actual controversy and again noted our State’s “long history of requiring an actual  
21 justiciable controversy as a predicate to judicial relief.” 102 Nev. 523, 525, 728 P.2d 443, 444  
22 (1986). Moreover, the high Court stated “litigated matters must present an existing controversy,  
23 not merely the prospect of a future problem.” *Id.* To define a justiciable controversy, the Nevada  
24 Supreme Court in *Doe v. Bryan* relied on *Kress v. Corey*, quoting: “(1) there must exist a

1 justiciable controversy; that is to say, a controversy in which a claim of right is asserted against  
2 one who has an interest in contesting it; (2) the controversy must be between persons whose  
3 interests are adverse; (3) the party seeking declaratory relief must have a legal interest in the  
4 controversy, that is to say, a legally protectable interest; and (4) the issue involved in the  
5 controversy must be ripe for judicial determination.” *Id.* (quoting *Kress v. Corey*, 65 Nev. 1, 26,  
6 189 P.2d 352, 364 (1948)). The Nevada Supreme Court also noted a party could not bring an  
7 action when the damage is merely apprehended or feared. *Id.* (citing *Kress*, 65 Nev. at 28-29,  
8 189 P.2d at 365).

9 In saying it generally requires an “actual justiciable controversy” for standing in  
10 particular in cases with a constitutional law dimension, the Nevada Supreme Court has indicated  
11 it generally looks to requirements of injury, causation, and redressability. *See Lujan v. Defenders*  
12 *of Wildlife*, 504 U.S. at 560–61. In *Lujan v. Defenders of Wildlife* the United States Supreme  
13 Court stated it has generally refrained from finding standing to challenge the constitutionality of  
14 legislation without an “actual controversy” between the parties. *Id.* The Court has generally  
15 refrained from finding standing to determine the constitutionality of legislation without an  
16 “actual controversy” between the parties. In *Blanding*, which both parties cite in support of their  
17 positions, the Nevada Supreme Court declined to find standing for taxpayers to maintain a suit to  
18 enjoin the municipality from closing a public road. 52 Nev. 52, 280 P. at 651. There, the  
19 plaintiffs alleged they would be harmed in various ways by the diversion of traffic the closure  
20 would cause. The high Court found a plaintiff did not have standing to challenge a  
21 municipality’s act “where he has not sustained or is not threatened with any injury peculiar to  
22 himself as distinguished from the public generally.” *Id.* at 651. Further, it concluded that to  
23 “entitle a property owner to injunctive relief against the vacation of a street or highway he must  
24 show that he will suffer a special or peculiar injury, and not merely such inconvenience as is cast

1 upon all other persons of that neighborhood.” *Id.* at 651 (quoting 13 R. C. L. at 75-76).

2 In discussing plaintiffs’ assertion of taxpayer standing, the Nevada Supreme Court in  
3 *Blanding* quoted 28 Cyc. pp. 1736, 1737, which provided a resident or taxpayer may sue to  
4 enjoin an unauthorized or illegal act of a municipality if the plaintiff has sustained a special  
5 injury different from that of the public. *Id.* at 650. Additionally, the Court quoted with approval:

6 And where it (the act of the municipality) is prejudicial to the rights of taxpayers,  
7 as such, as involving the levy of tax, creation of a municipal debt, or  
8 appropriation or expenditure of public funds, or in any way tending to increase  
9 the burden of taxation, the great weight of authority is that if such action be illegal  
or unauthorized, taxpayers may sue to restrain it, without showing any special  
injury different from that sustained by other taxpayers.

10 *Id.*

11 The high court found plaintiffs in their complaint failed to allege anything sufficient to  
12 suggest the municipality misused its power in vacating the street, engaged in fraud or abused its  
13 discretionary powers. Consequently, the Nevada Supreme Court held plaintiffs lacked standing  
14 as “the appellants are not specially injured in regard to their special vocations as alleged, and it  
15 does not otherwise appear that the act of the municipality vacating the present street and  
establishing the proposed street is unlawful or beyond its chartered powers.” *Id.*

16 The Nevada Supreme Court has rarely allowed parties to pursue litigation on behalf of  
17 the public’s interest as taxpayers and to preserve public funds. In *State Bar of Nev. v. List*, 97  
18 Nev. 367, 368, 632 P.2d 341, 342 (1981), the high Court held a private citizen could seek a writ  
19 of mandamus to compel a public officer to perform an act in view of statutory language  
20 authorizing the writ where “the law especially enjoins as a duty resulting from an office.” NRS  
21 34.160. The Court found “[m]andamus will therefore lie to compel the [public officer] to  
22 perform [a] duty at the suit of any citizen instituted to enforce compliance with the law.” *Id.*  
23 Likewise, in *Citizens for Cold Springs v. City of Reno*, the Court found standing existed for  
24 citizens to challenge a land annexation under NRS 268.668. 125 Nev. at 629-32, 218 P.3d 849-



1 52. There, like in *Stockmeier*, the Nevada Supreme Court noted the statute provided that "any  
2 person ... claiming to be adversely affected" by an annexation can challenge it. *Id.*

3 In *City of Las Vegas v. Cragin Indus. Inc.*, 86 Nev. 933, 935-37, 939-40, 478 P.2d 585,  
4 587-88, 589 (1970), the Nevada Supreme Court found standing for taxpayers to challenge the  
5 placement of above-ground power lines within their municipal taxing district. The high court  
6 declined to consider defendant's position that plaintiffs had to show special irreparable injury  
7 different in kind from that sustained by the general public to maintain an action challenging a  
8 particular use of a public street. Instead, the Supreme Court found the municipality's own  
9 ordinance required underground circuits, and, consequently, the power company and the city had  
10 entered into an agreement authorizing them to jointly violate the ordinance. The Nevada  
11 Supreme Court concluded this agreement was null, void, and against public policy. Under these  
12 facts, it found the ordinance was clear as to its limitations and could be changed only by a new  
13 enactment. The high court held any citizen of the municipality would have had standing to seek  
14 "injunctive relief, inasmuch as the relief sought is the abatement of unauthorized conduct. It was  
15 the only just, speedy and effective remedy available to the respondent." 86 Nev. at 939-40, 478  
16 P.2d at 589.

17 What *Blanding* and these cases suggest is to meet the standing requirement, a plaintiff  
18 generally must present an actual case or controversy to the court demonstrating a sustained or  
19 threatened injury peculiar to himself as distinguished from the public generally. Only in rare  
20 instances, such as when a taxpayer has a particularly close interest in a matter involving illegal  
21 conduct of a municipality, or when a statute specifically creates standing, has the Nevada  
22 Supreme Court granted standing for a party to maintain an action as a taxpayer or citizen.  
23 Additionally, in discussing standing due to the illegal conduct of a municipality, the high court  
24 also indicated allowing standing was appropriate even if the plaintiff did not suffer a particular

1 injury because there was no one else who could present an actual case or controversy. *See City*  
2 *of Las Vegas v. Cragin Indus. , Inc.*, 86 Nev. 933, 935-37, 939-40, 478 P.2d 585, 587-88, 589  
3 (1970).

4 Defendant contends the decisions where the Nevada Supreme Court has allowed taxpayer  
5 standing to challenge illegal conduct of municipalities are limited to municipalities. Defendant  
6 argues allowing taxpayer standing in such instances may be appropriate because of the close  
7 interest a taxpayer has to the expenditure of funds where he or she lives. Defendant suggests the  
8 holdings of *Doe* and *Stockmeier* indicate such standing is not appropriate when considering a  
9 challenge at the state level to a legislative statute and its constitutionality. Defendant asserts the  
10 close interest that may exist between a taxpayer and the municipality does not exist when  
11 considering the taxpayer's status on the state level. This Court is not persuaded the principles  
12 which allow taxpayers to bring an action against a municipality never have any application at the  
13 state level. While the immediate impact of a city's illegal decision may justify a taxpayer  
14 bringing suit in certain circumstances, the immediate impact of a Legislature's alleged illegal  
15 action in certain circumstances may also justify taxpayer standing. With some municipalities  
16 involving hundreds of thousands of residents, limiting taxpayer standing to illegal actions of  
17 municipalities and not to those of the State Legislature cannot be justified or distinguished.

18 The question to this Court then is whether Plaintiffs, in challenging the State's transfer of  
19 public funds into parents' ESAs under Article XI, sections 2 and 10, have a sufficiently close  
20 interest in a matter possibly involving illegal conduct of the Nevada Legislature, and whether  
21 there is anyone else better suited than Plaintiffs who could demonstrate an actual case and  
22 controversy through injury peculiar to themselves to challenge the ESA program. This approach  
23 allows the Court to permit taxpayer standing in "favor of a just and expeditious determination  
24 on the ultimate merits" in very limited instances where the taxpayer has a close interest in the

1 alleged illegal conduct of the governmental body. *See Stockmeier*, 122 Nev. at 393, 135 P.3d at  
2 225. However, in those instances where a plaintiff has a sufficiently close interest, but lacks a  
3 particular injury presenting a case or controversy, standing will be denied if another individual  
4 could suffer actual injury from the complained-of illegal conduct and bring an action. Limiting  
5 standing in such instances to those who can present an actual case and controversy challenging  
6 the illegal State conduct prevents the courts from being involved in entering advisory opinions  
7 and ensures the consideration of the legal issues under real life application of the State action,  
8 rather than in the context of hypotheticals.

9 In answering the question of whether Plaintiffs have a sufficient close interest as  
10 taxpayers to the challenged illegal State action in the instant case, this Court notes federal courts  
11 have accepted, in limited circumstances, a plaintiff's status as a taxpayer to find standing to  
12 enjoin unlawful appropriations. *Flast v. Cohen*, 392 U.S. 83 (1968). In its decision in *Flast*, the  
13 United States Supreme Court held, to have standing, a taxpayer must first demonstrate a "logical  
14 link" between his taxpayer status "and the type of legislative enactment attacked," and then "a  
15 nexus" between such taxpayer status and "the precise nature of the constitutional infringement  
16 alleged." 392 U.S., at 102, 88 S.Ct. 1942. In considering these two requirements together, the  
17 United States Supreme Court in *Flast* explained "individuals suffer a particular injury for  
18 standing purposes when, in violation of the Establishment Clause and by means of 'the taxing  
19 and spending power,' their property is transferred through the Government's Treasury to a  
20 sectarian entity." 392 U.S., at 105-106. "Such an injury," the Court found, is unlike "generalized  
21 grievances about the conduct of government" and so is "appropriate for judicial redress." *Id.*, at  
22 106. "The taxpayer's allegation in such cases would be that his tax money is being extracted and  
23 spent in violation of specific constitutional protections against such abuses of legislative power."  
24 *Id.*

1        This Court finds Plaintiffs have standing as taxpayers to facially challenge the ESA  
2 statute as violating Article XI, Section 10's prohibition on the use of public funds for sectarian  
3 purposes. Similar to what was presented in *Flast*, if Plaintiffs are correct in their assertions the  
4 ESA statute is unconstitutional, then they would suffer an injury by the transfer of their property  
5 through the State treasury to sectarian entities. Plaintiffs cannot demonstrate any peculiar injury  
6 to themselves from that suffered by any other taxpayer. However, at this time, no other taxpayer  
7 or potential claimant is in a better position than Plaintiffs to assert a case or controversy.  
8 Consequently, unless Plaintiffs are allowed to bring the facial challenge to the ESA statute, no  
9 one will be in a position to bring a challenge other than State executives charged with carrying  
10 out the program. Since the State executives are proponents of the ESA program, finding only the  
11 executives are in a position to bring an action would effectively mean no action would be  
12 brought.

13        The Court also finds the Plaintiffs have standing as taxpayers to facially challenge the  
14 ESA statute as violating Article XI, section 2's provisions concerning the Legislature's  
15 responsibility to provide a uniform system of public schools. In looking at federal precedent, the  
16 United States Supreme Court has never found taxpayer standing except in considering challenges  
17 under the Establishment Clause. *See Arizona Christian School Tuition Organization v. Winn*, 563  
18 U.S. 125, 139 (2011)(declining to lower the taxpayer standing bar in any other constitutional  
19 challenge apart from the Establishment Clause). However, providing education to Nevada  
20 citizens is a paramount responsibility of the Legislature. Nevada's Constitution requires the  
21 Legislature to budget and fund education before making any other appropriations. Nev. Const.  
22 Art XI, § 6. If Plaintiffs are correct in their assertion the ESA program exceeds the constitutional  
23 scope of section 2's required uniform public school system, then they would suffer an injury by  
24 the transfer of their property out of the uniform school system in "violation of specific

1 constitutional protections against such abuses of legislative power.” *Cf. Flast v. Cohen*, 392 U.S.  
2 at 106. Likewise, no other taxpayer or potential claimant is in a better position to assert a case or  
3 controversy, and thus, Plaintiffs should be allowed to bring the facial challenge to the statute.

4 This Court emphasizes that it finds the Plaintiffs as taxpayers only have standing to bring  
5 facial challenges to the ESA statute. Plaintiffs allege many of the schools that will receive  
6 disbursements from parents through their ESA accounts may engage in various forms of  
7 discrimination in hiring of staff and admitting of students. Likewise, Plaintiffs make assertions  
8 as to potential consequences to some schools from the possible loss of certain funding due to  
9 ESA accounts. Plaintiffs do not have standing to assert these potential specific applied injuries  
10 as challenges to the ESA program as they have not personally suffered any harm. There may be  
11 individuals who could assert the challenges on a specific case basis should injury actually occur.  
12 This will allow the Court to avoid providing advisory opinions and to consider such challenges  
13 under real life circumstances and better understand the nature and impact of the challenged  
14 conduct. Additionally, as most of these challenges would be unique to individual schools, the  
15 remedy for any particular challenged conduct would be against the school and its participation in  
16 the ESA program, and not the striking of the ESA program in its entirety.

17 **VI. ESA Program Does Not Violate Article XI, Section 2’s Uniform Public School**  
18 **System Provision**

19 Generally, for a complaint to “survive dismissal, a complaint must contain some set of  
20 facts, which, if true, would entitle [the plaintiff] to relief” *In re Amerco Derivative Litig.*, 127  
21 Nev. Adv. Op. 17, 252 P.3d 681, 692 (2011) (quotation marks omitted). This Court is mindful  
22 legislative acts are entitled to a “strong presumption” that “they are constitutional.” *Sheriff*  
23 *Washoe Cnty. v. Smith*, 91 Nev. 729, 731, 542 P.2d 440, 442 (1975). “Statutes are presumed to  
24 be valid, and the challenger bears the burden of showing that a statute is unconstitutional. In

1 order to meet that burden, the challenger must make a clear showing of invalidity.” *Tam v.*  
2 *Eighth Jud. Dist. Ct.*, 131 Nev. Adv. Op. 80, 358 P.3d 234, 237-38 (2015) (quoting *Silvar v.*  
3 *Eighth Judicial Dist. Court*, 122 Nev. 289, 292, 129 P.3d 682, 684 (2006)). “The Court will  
4 construe statutes, ‘if reasonably possible, so as to be in harmony with the constitution.” *Thomas*  
5 *v. Nevada Yellow Cab Corp.*, 130 Nev. Adv. Op. 52, 327 P.3d 518, 521 (2014) (quoting *State v.*  
6 *Glusman*, 98 Nev. 412, 419, 651 P.2d 639, 644 (1982)). Because this Court looks at the  
7 Complaint as a facial challenge to the ESA statute, Plaintiffs must “demonstrat[e] that there is no  
8 set of circumstances under which the statute would be valid.” *Deja Vu Showgirls v. Nevada*  
9 *Dep’t of Tax.*, 130 Nev. Adv. Op. 73, 334 P.3d 392, 398 (2014). Under Nevada Revised  
10 Statutes, section 0.020, “[i]f any provision of the Nevada Revised Statutes, or the application  
11 thereof to any person, thing or circumstance is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect the  
12 provisions or application of NRS which can be given effect without the invalid provision or  
13 application, and to this end the provisions of NRS are declared to be severable.” Consequently,  
14 if a law can be constitutionally applied, but is unconstitutional as to some of its provisions or  
15 applications, the statute’s lawful applications or provisions will be sustained if it appears the  
16 Legislature would have enacted the constitutional aspects of statute independently of the  
17 unconstitutional provisions or applications. See *Binegar v. Eighth Judicial Dist. Court In and*  
18 *For County of Clark*, 112 Nev. 544, 551–552, 915 P.2d 889, 894 (1996).

19 This Court first considers Plaintiffs’ claim that Article XI, section 2 limits the Legislature  
20 in encouraging education in Nevada to the only means of a uniform public school system and  
21 precludes it from adopting the ESA program. The Court looks at this issue first because if  
22 section 2 does not preclude the Legislature from creating the ESA program, and the program  
23 may be constitutionally established, then this Court can turn to the question whether the  
24 Legislature may permit schools with religious affiliations to participate. If the Legislature can

1 create an ESA program as a suitable means under Article XI, sections 1 and 2, then, at a  
2 minimum, non-religious schools and educational services can properly participate in the program  
3 and parents can set up ESA accounts and direct funds to such schools, home schooling or other  
4 education options. Consequently, the first issue is whether the Legislature may create the ESA  
5 program for anyone.

6 Plaintiffs contend Article XI, section 2, by directing the Legislature “shall provide for a  
7 uniform system of common schools,” prohibits the Nevada Legislature from providing for the  
8 education of Nevada school children by any other means. In this respect, Plaintiffs argue, that  
9 while Article XI, section 1 provides the Legislature shall encourage education “by all suitable  
10 means,” Article XI, section 2, and the subsequent sections of the article, define what are the  
11 “suitable means.” Consequently, Plaintiffs argue the specific directive of section 2 for a system  
12 of uniform public schools limits the Legislature from adopting the ESA program.

13 The Nevada Constitution articulates in two separate sections the duties of the Assembly  
14 in providing education opportunities in Nevada to school children. In Article XI, the framers set  
15 out in the first section that “[t]he legislature shall encourage by all suitable means the promotion  
16 of intellectual, literary, scientific, mining, mechanical, agricultural, and moral improvements... .”  
17 This language was used in the original constitution of 1864 and has remained unchanged through  
18 the last 150 years. In section 2, the framers further provided “[t]he legislature shall provide for a  
19 uniform system of common schools, by which a school shall be established and maintained in  
20 each school district at least six months in every year, and any school district which shall allow  
21 instruction of a sectarian character therein may be deprived of its proportion of the interest of the  
22 public school fund during such neglect or infraction, and the Legislature may pass such laws as  
23 will tend to secure a general attendance of the children in each school district upon said public  
24 schools.” Again, this language has remained unchanged since the enactment of the 1864

1 constitution.

2 In determining whether Article XI, section 1, permits the Legislature to create the ESA  
3 program as part of its duty to “encourage by all suitable means” education, and whether that duty  
4 is subsequently limited by the command of Article XI, section 2 that the “legislature shall  
5 provide for a uniform system of common schools,” this Court is mindful of the basic interpretive  
6 principal that the Nevada Constitution should be construed in its ordinary sense unless some  
7 apparent absurdity or unmistakable interest of its framers forbids such construction. *State ex rel.*  
8 *Lewis v. Doron*, 5 Nev. 399, 411 (1870). Consequently, where the language in the Nevada  
9 Constitution is plain and not ambiguous, it should be read in those plain and unambiguous terms.  
10 *State ex rel. Summerfield v. Clarke*, 21 Nev. 333, 31 P. 545, 546 (1982). These principles were  
11 recently reaffirmed by the Nevada Supreme Court in the context of interpreting Article II,  
12 section 9, explaining “we, like the United States Supreme Court, ‘are guided by the principle that  
13 “[t]he Constitution was written to be understood by the voters; its words and phrases were used  
14 in their normal and ordinary as distinguished from technical meaning.” *Strickland v. Waymire*,  
15 126 Nev. 230, 233, 235 P.3d 605, 608 (2010) (quoting *District of Columbia v. Heller*, 554 U.S.  
16 570, 577 (2008) (internal quotations omitted). Additionally, a constitutional provision should be  
17 construed to give meaning to its entirety. Generally, the Nevada Constitution should be read to  
18 give all provisions meaning and avoid any language being treated as superfluous. *See Harris*  
19 *Associates v. Clark County School Dist.*, 119 Nev. 638, 642, 81 P.3d 532, 534 (2003). This  
20 principle requires this Court whenever possible to interpret different provisions of the  
21 constitution in harmony with each other. *See Bowyer v. Taack*, 107 Nev. 625, 627, 817 P.2d  
22 1176, 1178 (1991). Consequently, the Court must first consider whether the language of Article  
23 XI, section 1, providing the “legislature shall encourage [education] by all suitable means,” in  
24 the normal and ordinary sense of its terms permits the Legislature to create the ESA program to



1 allow parents financial resources to educate their children outside the uniform public school  
2 system. The Court then must determine if this interpretation is inconsistent with any other  
3 provision of the constitution and can be read in harmony with other provisions, giving meaning  
4 to all.

5 By setting out in section 1, the Legislature shall encourage education by "all suitable  
6 means," with no specific reference to any other section, and then by setting out in a different  
7 section the Legislature's responsibility to create a uniform public school system, the framers  
8 indicated they intended to create two duties, a broad one to encourage education by "all suitable  
9 means," and a specific, but separate, one to create a uniform public school system. The framers'  
10 use of two different sections to set out the Legislature's responsibilities without reference in  
11 either section to the other plainly suggests the sections are separate and distinct. This distinction  
12 means the Legislature's duty "to encourage, by all suitable means, moral, intellectual, scientific,  
13 and agricultural improvement" is to be carried out *in addition to* the provision for the common  
14 school system. In considering similar language, the Indiana Supreme Court noted that while such  
15 constitutional language creates a duty that is "general and aspirational" and not well suited to  
16 judicial enforceability, . . . this by no means lessens the efficacy of the imperative." *Meredith v.*  
17 *Pence*, 984 N.E.2d 1213, 1222 (2013) (quoting *Bonner ex rel Bonner v. Daniels*, 907 N.E.2d  
18 516, 520 (Ind.2009)). In 1864, with less than 40,000 people living in our State comprised of  
19 over 110,000 square miles and with an economy based largely on mining, which historically was  
20 a boom and bust industry, the framers of Nevada's constitution had no idea what the future  
21 would hold in regard to population, land, economic and educational development. Because of  
22 this reality in 1864, the drafters of the Nevada Constitution reasonably intended to provide the  
23 Legislature broad powers going forward into the future to take whatever actions it believed  
24 appropriate to encourage education and the improvement of a population to take on any potential

1 new opportunities. By including the phrase “by all suitable means” in defining the Legislature’s  
2 responsibility to encourage education, the framers recognized the need for broad legislative  
3 discretion, and thus, left to the Nevada Legislature the sound discretion of determining the  
4 “method and means of fulfilling this duty.” *Meredith v. Pence*, 984 N.E.2d at 1222.

5 This Court agrees with Plaintiffs that Article XI, section 1’s use of the phrase “all  
6 suitable means” imposes limitations on the Legislature’s authority. The Legislature must use  
7 means suited for encouraging education, and as long as a means is suited for encouraging  
8 education, it is available for the Legislature to consider and use. However, the fact the phrase  
9 implicitly grants broad authority to the Legislature in choosing the means to accomplish the goal  
10 of encouraging education is in no way inconsistent with or overriding the other sections of  
11 Article XI.

12 Plaintiffs are correct “[t]he maxim ‘expressio Unius Est Exclusio Alterius’, the  
13 expression of one thing is the exclusion of another, has been repeatedly confirmed in this State,”  
14 *Galloway v. Truesdell*, 83 Nev. 13, 26, 422 P.2d 237 (1967), and applied to interpreting the  
15 Nevada constitution. *See State v. Arrington*, 18 Nev. 412, 4 P. 735, 737 (Nev. 1884). Plaintiffs  
16 are also correct the drafters when saying the Legislature may “use all suitable means,” did not  
17 say the Legislature could use any means. However, the Court disagrees with Plaintiffs’ position  
18 when they argue the Legislature is limited to the suitable means specifically required in section 2  
19 and the subsequent sections of Article XI. Such a reading would ignore the framers’ specific use  
20 of the word “all,” granting the Legislature the authority to use “all suitable means,” not just the  
21 ones stated in the subsequent sections of the article. If the framers wanted to limit the broad  
22 discretion they accorded the Legislature in Section 1, they could have easily and should have  
23 clearly stated it. Cf. *Strickland v. Waymire*, 126 Nev. 230, 235 P.3d 605, 611 (2010) (citing 3  
24 Norman J. Singer & J.D. Shambie Singer, *Sutherland Statutory Construction* 58:3, at 114-15

1 (7th ed. 2008) (discussing in the context of subsequent amendments to the constitution that if the  
2 Legislature and voters in passing an amendment intended to eliminate another right, the  
3 legislators and voters would have made “a direct statement and express language to that effect.”).  
4 Sections 1 and 2 are not inconsistent with each other. The Legislature’s broad authority under  
5 section 1 is not inconsistent with its baseline obligation to provide a uniform public school  
6 system in section 2. The Legislature can provide for a uniform system of common schools, free  
7 from religious instruction and open to general attendance by all Nevada children, and still adopt  
8 other suitable means to encourage education. To read section 2 and the other sections of Article  
9 XI as Plaintiffs seek to do, would make section 1 superfluous, without any meaning or purpose.  
10 In this Court’s view, in drafting the first section of Article XI to grant the Legislature authority to  
11 use all suitable means to encourage education, the framers in 1864 actually intended to give the  
12 Legislature that authority and did not intend the section to have no meaning. If the framers had  
13 intended such an interpretation, they could have easily said the Legislature had the authority to  
14 encourage education through the means included in Article XI. They did not, and the ordinary  
15 and normal reading of the language of the section clearly allows the Legislature to use any  
16 means suitable for encouraging education, not just those outlined in the remaining sections of the  
17 Article.

18 *Bush v. Holmes*, 919 So.2d 392 (Fla. 2006), which Plaintiffs cite, is the only State case  
19 suggesting a uniform school clause in a State constitution limits the Legislature’s authority to use  
20 other means to promote education. In *Bush*, the Florida Supreme Court found a Florida  
21 scholarship program violated section 1(a) of Article IX of the Florida constitution. Section 1(a)  
22 of Florida’s constitution provides in pertinent part it is “a paramount duty of the State to make  
23 adequate provision for the education of all children residing within its borders. Adequate  
24 provision shall be made by law for a uniform, efficient, safe, secure, and high quality system of

1 free public schools . . . .” Fla. Const. art. IX, § 1(a). The Court found the language making it a  
2 “paramount duty of the State to make adequate provision for the education of all children  
3 residing within its borders,” as requiring the Legislature to provide education for Florida school  
4 children through “adequate provision.” The Florida high Court then looked at the next sentence,  
5 which stated “[a]dequate provision shall be made by law for a uniform, efficient, safe, secure,  
6 and high quality system of free public schools,” and concluded the sentence defined what the  
7 drafters meant by “adequate provision.” The Court found this represented a restriction on the  
8 Legislature’s authority to create a separate voucher program.

9 In the instant case, the Nevada Constitution sets out the authority of the Legislature in  
10 two different sections with no reference to the other. This Court does not agree with the Florida  
11 Court’s *in pari materia* interpretation of its constitution. However, assuming the Florida Court’s  
12 correct interpretation of its own State Constitution, the consistent use of the term “adequate  
13 provision” that existed between the sentences of the Florida constitution section does not exist in  
14 Article XI, sections 1 and 2 of our State’s Constitution. This consistent use of terms between  
15 sentences was the basis the Florida Court used to limit the Legislature authority to make  
16 “adequate provision for education” to just “adequate provision for a uniform public school  
17 system.” Unlike the Florida constitution, Article XI, section 1 uses broad language granting the  
18 Nevada Legislature the authority to encourage education by all suitable means, and section 2  
19 makes no reference to suitable means or uses any other language suggesting a restriction of the  
20 Legislature’s authority under section 1.

21 Plaintiffs’ argue the ESA program runs afoul of section 2’s uniformity and general  
22 attendance requirements because it allows for the education of Nevada students through public  
23 funding of private schools with divergent admissions criteria, curricula, educational programs,  
24 academic-performance standards, teacher qualifications and training. These arguments are only

1 valid if a uniform public school system is the only means the Legislature may use to encourage  
2 education. However, as discussed above, section 1 directs the Legislature generally to encourage  
3 education in Nevada through all suitable means and this imperative is broader than and in  
4 addition to the responsibility under section 2 to provide for a uniform public school system. The  
5 Legislature may act under section 1 without reference to section 2. The ESA program does not  
6 alter the existence or structure of Nevada's public school system.

7 The Plaintiffs contend the ESA program theoretically could divert to private schools all  
8 of Nevada's school children, and by consequence, all funding for the uniform public school  
9 system. However, while theoretically almost all school children *may* be eligible for the ESA  
10 program and a significant number may enroll in this option, this does not mean there is "no set of  
11 circumstances under which the statute can be constitutionally applied." *Deja Vu Showgirls v.*  
12 *Nevada Dep't of Tax.*, 130 Nev. Adv. Op. 73, 334 P.3d at 398. This Court has no reason to  
13 believe and Plaintiffs have not proffered any factual allegations to suggest all parents of Nevada  
14 school children will enroll in the ESA program. Even assuming large numbers of parents do  
15 enroll their children in the program, so long as there is a "uniform" public school system," open  
16 to the "general attendance" of all, the Legislature has fulfilled the duty imposed by Article XI,  
17 section 2. Plaintiffs assert a potential damage resulting from the application of the ESA program  
18 which is, at best, "merely apprehended or feared." *See Doe v. Bryan*, 102 Nev. at 525, 728 P.2d  
19 at 444 (citing *Kress v. Corey*, 65 Nev. 1, 28-29, 189 P.2d 352, 365 (1948)). As discussed above,  
20 Plaintiffs lack standing to seek declarative relief for applied constitutional challenges. Plaintiffs  
21 do not have standing to assert these potential injuries as they have not personally suffered the  
22 harm and have no actual justiciable controversy. *See Doe v. Bryan*, 102 Nev. at 525, 728 P.2d at  
23 444. Plaintiff Berger's position as school teacher and parent of a student at a public school and  
24 his contention the ESA program will deprive school districts of funding, and deplete the

1 “resources at the school his son attends and the one where he teaches” is no less merely  
2 apprehended or feared than Plaintiffs’ wholesale contention all school children may enroll in the  
3 ESA program. The applied effect of the ESA program is yet to be determined and can ultimately  
4 be considered based on the impact it actually makes. If the impact causes an identifiable injury,  
5 individuals affected by such damages will have standing to bring an action. The ESA program  
6 provides parents with funding they may use to choose different educational opportunities for  
7 their children and does not replace the public school system. The Legislature has continued to  
8 meet its constitutional obligation of providing for public schools which are open to all Nevada  
9 school children as required by Article XI, section 2.

10 Plaintiffs argue the ESA program violates fundamental constitutional precepts of equality  
11 and fairness, and certain schools participating in the program will improperly discriminate in  
12 admissions, enrollment, and hiring based on religion and other protected characteristics under the  
13 United States and Nevada Constitutions and statutes. *Cf. e.g.*, NRS § 6 13.330; NRS § 651.070  
14 (statutes prohibiting discrimination in employment and public accommodations, including  
15 schools, on basis of religion, sexual orientation and gender identity). As this Court discussed  
16 above in considering Plaintiffs’ standing to bring this action, these contentions possibly may be  
17 relevant as to whether the funds the State provides parents may be used for certain schools which  
18 may act in violation of discrimination laws. However, these contentions are not determinative of  
19 whether the State has the authority to create the ESA program. While this Court has found  
20 Plaintiffs have standing to challenge the Legislature’s authority to create the ESA program under  
21 Article XI, sections 1 and 2, they do not have standing to challenge anticipated illegal  
22 discrimination of some schools as they have not suffered such injury. Individuals who suffer  
23 discrimination may challenge the inclusion of certain schools in the ESA program under the law.  
24 Whether illegal discrimination occurs and a school may participate under the program can be

1 dealt with in the specific context of the facts of an actual controversy rather than in the  
2 hypothetical.

3 This Court concludes Plaintiffs have not alleged facts establishing their claim the  
4 Legislature's creation of the ESA program violates the uniform school system provisions of  
5 Article XI, section 2. Plaintiffs' claim is therefore dismissed.

6  
7 **VII. ESA Program Does Not Violate Article XI, Section 10's Prohibition on Use of Public  
Funds for Sectarian Purposes**

8 This Court next turns to Plaintiffs' claim the ESA program violates Article XI, section 10  
9 of the Nevada constitution which provides "[n]o public funds of any kind or character whatever,  
10 State, County or Municipal, shall be used for sectarian purpose." Significantly, since this Court  
11 has found the Legislature had the constitutional authority to create the ESA program generally,  
12 Plaintiffs' constitutional challenge potentially affects only religious affiliated schools  
13 participation in the program. If any schools because of their religious affiliation constitutionally  
14 cannot participate in the program, they may be severed from participation and the ESA program  
15 can continue with the participation of other schools or education options in view of the  
16 Legislature's clear intent to provide Nevada parents with the broadest spectrum of educational  
17 options.

18 In determining the meaning of section 10 and its proscriptions on State action, this Court,  
19 as with the process of interpreting Article XI, sections 1 and 2, must first consider whether the  
20 language of Article XI, Section 10, providing "no public funds . . . shall be used for sectarian  
21 purpose," in the normal and ordinary sense of its terms, permits the Legislature to create ESAs  
22 which parents may use to educate their children through religion affiliated services. If the terms  
23 of section 10 on their face are not clear, this Court must consider the intent and goals of the  
24 Legislature and voters at the time of the section's adoption to construe it ""in line with what

1 reason and public policy would indicate the Legislature intended.””” *State ex rel. Harvey v.*  
2 *Second Judicial Dist. Court*, 117 Nev. 754, 770, 32 P.3d 1263, 1274 (2001)(quoting *McKay v.*  
3 *Bd. of Supervisors*, 102 Nev. 644, 649, 730 P.2d 438, 442 (1986) (quoting *Robert E. v. Justice*  
4 *Court*, 99 Nev. 443, 445, 664 P.2d 957, 959 (1983)).

5 In its simplest terms, section 10 says the Legislature cannot use any public funds for a  
6 sectarian purpose. The Nevada Supreme Court in *State v. Hallock*, 16 Nev. 373, 387 (1882),  
7 considering the meaning of the section only two years after its adoption, concluded that  
8 "sectarian" as used in section 10:

9 was used in the popular sense. A religious sect is a body or number of persons  
10 united in tenets, but constituting a distinct organization or party, by holding  
11 sentiments or doctrines different from those of other sects or people. In the sense  
intended in the constitution, every sect of that character is sectarian, and all  
members thereof are sectarians.

12 Consequently, "sectarian purpose" as used in section 10 would generally include any purpose in  
13 support of a specific religion or general groups holding similar religious tenets. The Nevada  
14 Supreme Court in *Hallock* probably expressed it best by stating the section was intended that  
15 public funds should not be used for the purpose of "building up of any sect." *Id.*

16 The purpose *Hallock* defines for section 10, avoiding State action to build up a sect,  
17 parallels largely the purpose of the federal Establishment Clause. In *Everson v. Board of Educ.*  
18 *of Ewing*, 330 U.S. 1, 15-16 (1947), the United States Supreme Court stated the Establishment  
19 Clause was intended to accomplish, as Thomas Jefferson described, a "wall of separation  
20 between Church and State." The Court found the clause precluded State practices that "aid one  
21 religion . . . or prefer one religion over another," as well as practices that "aid all religions" and  
22 consequently endorse the idea of religion over nonreligion. *Everson*, 330 U.S. at 15. The Court  
23 has gone on to explain in a series of cases starting with *Flast v. Cohen*, 392 U.S. 83, (1968), that  
24 the Establishment Clause prevents governments from spending public money "in aid of



1 religion.” *DaimlerChrysler Corp. v. Cuno*, 547 U.S. 332, 348 (2006)). The Court in *Flast* traced  
2 the history of the Establishment Clause in part to James Madison’s contention that “government  
3 should not “force a citizen to contribute three pence only of his property for the support of any  
4 one establishment.”” *Arizona Christian School Tuition Organization v. Winn*, 563 U.S. 125  
5 (2011) (quoting *Flast*, 392 U.S. at 103)(quoting 2 Writings of James Madison 183, 186 (G. Hunt  
6 ed.1901)). The Court identified Madison’s view as a “specific evil” the Establishment Clause  
7 was intended to protect against. *Id.*

8 Plaintiffs note the federal Establishment Clause uses language different from Article XI,  
9 section 10. Compare Nev. Const. art. XI, § 10 (“No public funds of any kind or character  
10 whatever, State, County or Municipal, shall be used for sectarian purpose.”) with U.S. Const.  
11 amend. I (“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion”). They contend  
12 that, on its face, Section 10 sets a higher bar than the Establishment Clause.

13 This Court does not concur with Plaintiffs’ logic in interpreting whether Nevada’s  
14 Legislature and voters in approving section 10 sought to set a higher bar to the use of public  
15 funds for aid of religions than the Establishment Clause. It is important to remember at the time  
16 section 10 was amended, Nevada’s constitution had few provisions limiting the State  
17 government from passing any law respecting a particular religion. The Establishment Clause of  
18 the First Amendment had not yet been applied to the states through the Due Process clause of the  
19 Fourteenth Amendment. The First Amendment was not applied to the states until 1925 when the  
20 United States Supreme Court applied the freedoms of speech and press to the states through the  
21 Due Process Clause. *Gillow v. New York*, 268 U.S. 652 (1925). The Establishment Clause was  
22 not applied to the states until 1947. *Everson v. Board of Education*, 220 U.S. 1 (1947). Article I,  
23 section 4 of the Nevada constitution provides for “[t]he free exercise and enjoyment of religious  
24 profession and worship without discrimination or preference shall forever be allowed in this

1 State . . .,” and Article XI, Sections 2 and 9 precluded sectarian education in public schools.  
2 Consequently, in 1879, before section 10 was ratified, few restrictions rested on the State  
3 Government in regard to legislation which might promote the establishment of religion. Because  
4 of this circumstance, when the Nevada Legislature and voters approved Section 10 in 1879,  
5 which provided “[n]o public funds of any kind or character whatever, State, County or  
6 Municipal, shall be used for sectarian purpose,” it is not clear the Legislature intended something  
7 more than the federal Establishment Clause which then precluded Congress from making any  
8 “law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.”

9 Defendants attack Section 10 as a “Blaine Amendment,” which is a term used to denote a  
10 series of State constitutional amendments from approximately 1875 to 1900 which limited  
11 through various language State governments from providing funding to religious schools.  
12 Defendants suggest these amendments, including Nevada’s, were the result of anti-Catholic  
13 bigotry arising at the time from the growth of parochial schools. However, as Justice William  
14 Brennan explained in his dissent in *Lemon v. Kurtzman*, the inclusion of limitations in State  
15 constitutions on public support of religious schools was an ongoing process beginning soon after  
16 the formation of the federal government and its inclusion of the Establishment Clause in the Bill  
17 of Rights. *See Lemon v. Kurtzman*, 403 U.S. 602, 645-50 (1971)(Brennan, J., dissenting).<sup>7</sup>

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19 <sup>7</sup> While undoubtedly dislike of another’s religion as compared to one’s own may encourage one to preclude public  
20 funds be given to a competing religion, it is this concern that no religion should be given governmental preference  
21 over another that led to the creation of the Establishment Clause in the first place and the subsequent state  
22 limitations on support of religions. In its history on the adoption of section 10, the Nevada Supreme Court in  
23 *Hallock* identified the State’s appropriation of funds to the Catholic affiliated orphanage as the only appropriation  
24 prior to the adoption of the section to an arguably sectarian organization. The Court looked at the legislative history  
surrounding the appropriation for guidance as to the scope of the section and what the Legislature and voters  
considered to be a sectarian purpose. *Hallock*, 16 Nev. at 381. In looking at the first request for the appropriation  
in 1866, the Court noted that in addition to the request for an appropriation in support of the Catholic affiliated  
orphanage, there was also a request for an appropriation for the support of an Episcopal affiliated orphanage. Both  
appropriation requests failed to pass. The Court considered the report of the Senate Ways and Means Committee in  
the 1866 session, which reported against the passage of the two appropriation requests at that time. The Committee  
reported the appropriations sought were intended to:

enable them to train up children in the tenets or religious belief of the respective churches, without

1 Section 10 does no more than preclude the Legislature from supporting specific religions  
2 or religion in general, the principle of which was enshrined in the Establishment Clause of the  
3 federal Bill of Rights. Nevada, as well as most other states over the course of United States  
4 history, separately acted in view of the void that existed in its own constitution to limit State  
5 support of religion. As the Nevada Supreme Court in *Hallock* explained: "People of nearly all  
6 nationalities and many religious beliefs established our State. They met on common ground, and

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8 regard to the question of religious opinions of the relatives of such children, which is  
9 commendable zeal for the progress of those denominations, as the right training of the children is  
10 the best way to build up churches. But if the state contribute twenty thousand dollars towards  
11 building up and strengthening those churches, and making provision thus for future increase of  
12 Episcopal pastors and laymen and Catholic priests, nuns, and laymen, other denominations, such  
13 as Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, and Unitarians, will feel equally entitled to similar  
14 appropriations; and thus the revenues of the state might be absorbed to such an extent as to  
15 endanger its ability to pay its bonds, interest, and other obligations, for which its faith is already  
16 pledged, or which may be necessary for ordinary current expenses."

17 *Id.* at 381. The Court noted the appropriation request for the Catholic affiliated charity was made in subsequent  
18 sessions prior to 1879, with the appropriation being approved in some sessions. Based on this history, the Court  
19 concluded that the voters in adopting section 10 sought to prevent the "use of public funds for the benefit of  
20 petitioner and kindred institutions." *Id.* at 383. The Court concluded that sectarian as used in section 10:

21 was used in the popular sense. A religious sect is a body or number of persons united in tenets, but  
22 constituting a distinct organization or party, by holding sentiments or doctrines different from  
23 those of other sects or people. In the sense intended in the constitution, every sect of that character  
24 is sectarian, and all members thereof are sectarians. The framers of the constitution undoubtedly  
considered the Roman Catholic a sectarian church. (Const. Debates, 568 *et seq.*) The people  
understood it in the same sense when they ratified it.

25 *Id.* at 386-87. While defendants may be correct that the impetuous for the section was concern with providing  
26 public support to Catholic parochial schools, the section does no more than preclude the Legislature from supporting  
27 a specific religion, which principle was enshrined in the Establishment Clause of the federal Bill of Rights and  
28 separately acted upon by states in view of the void that existed in their own constitutions to limit state support of  
29 religions. The section does not prohibit any one or religious order from practicing their beliefs and is consequently  
30 unlike the municipal law struck down in *Church of the Lukumi Babalu Aye, Inc. v. City of Hialeah*, 508 U.S. 520  
31 (1993), which was clearly intended to proscribe a religion's particular rite. Neither the United States Supreme Court,  
32 nor any other court, has ever struck down a state constitutional provision which limits state support of sectarian  
33 interests and is neutral in its limitation. See *Locke v. Davey*, 540 U.S. 712 (2004). The history of section 10 as  
34 outlined by the Nevada Supreme Court in *Hallock* and its own terms, very different from the federally proposed  
Blaine Amendment and other state amendments focused on public support of sectarian schools and education,  
convvinces this Court that section 10 is not unconstitutional under the First Amendment and is a proper exercise of  
Nevada citizens' right to limit support of specific religions or of religion generally. The issue is certainly not ripe at  
this point in view of the myriad of legislative histories, speeches and news articles all parties have provided for a  
determination on a motion to dismiss. This Court finds the best explanation of section 10 and the reasons for its  
adoption to be the one the Nevada Supreme Court in *Hallock* expressed: "People of nearly all nationalities and many  
religious beliefs established our state. They met on common ground, and in the most solemn manner agreed that no  
sect should be supported or built up by the use of public funds. It is a wise provision and must be upheld." *Hallock*,  
16 Nev. at 387.

1 in the most solemn manner agreed that no sect should be supported or built up by the use of  
2 public funds. It is a wise provision and must be upheld." *Hallock*, 16 Nev. at 387.

3 The question remains, however, what is the scope of Section 10 and was it intended to  
4 exceed the limitations of the Establishment Clause to make no law in support of a religion. The  
5 proposed "Blaine Amendment" to the United States Constitution sought to impose an  
6 Establishment Clause upon the states which at that time were under no such restrictions. The  
7 language of the proposed amendment provided: "No State shall make any law respecting an  
8 establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; and no money raised by  
9 taxation in any State for the support of public schools, or derived from any public fund therefor,  
10 nor any public lands devoted thereto, shall ever be under the control of any religious sect; nor  
11 shall any money so raised or lands so devoted be divided between religious sects or  
12 denominations" See [https://ballotpedia.org/Blaine\\_Amendment](https://ballotpedia.org/Blaine_Amendment). Significantly, the proposed  
13 amendment applied only to the states and did not impose any new limitations on the federal  
14 government. If the drafters of the amendment had perceived the federal Establishment Clause as  
15 permitting federal public expenditures in support of religious schools, they would have been  
16 expected to have specifically precluded the federal government along with the states from  
17 making such expenditures. Conversely, the inclusion of the additional language in the proposed  
18 amendment arguably suggests the drafters were adding further limitations beyond the scope of  
19 the Establishment Clause. However, in the context of the times, the drafters may have sought to  
20 insure clarity rather than the creation of a higher bar beyond the Establishment Clause.  
21 Education at the time the Blaine Amendment was proposed was a specific province of the states  
22 and local governments, and such governments had a history of providing public support to  
23 religious schools. *Lemon v. Kurtzman*, 403 U.S. at 645-50 (Brennan, J., dissenting).  
24 Consequently, the inclusion of the specific language in the proposed amendment prohibiting

1 funding of religious schools does not necessarily suggest the drafters sought to make limitations  
2 beyond what was required in the Establishment Clause as opposed to clarifying the scope of the  
3 limitations of the Establishment Clause in the context and history of State educational systems.

4 The plain terms of Section 10 also suggest it does not place greater limitations on the  
5 Legislature than the Establishment Clause. Section 10 prohibits the Legislature from using  
6 public funds for a "sectarian purpose." Unlike the proposed federal Blaine Amendment and  
7 many other State "no-aid" amendments enacted after it, which specifically precluded money  
8 from being appropriated to religious schools, section 10 simply precludes the Legislature from  
9 having a sectarian purpose in the appropriation of any money. Consequently, in this Court's  
10 view, the drafters contemplated the Legislature could make expenditures which might impact  
11 upon a religion as long as the Legislature's purpose in making the appropriation was not to build  
12 up any religion. Such an approach, if truly the intent of Nevada's drafters, would be a logical  
13 one in view of the impracticality of an expansive prohibition of "any and all government  
14 expenditures from which a religious or theological institution derives a benefit—for example,  
15 fire and police protection, municipal water and sewage service, sidewalks and streets, and the  
16 like. Certainly religious or theological institutions may derive relatively substantial benefits from  
17 such municipal services. But the primary beneficiary is the public, both the public affiliated with  
18 the religious or theological institution, and the general public." *Meredith v. Pence*, 984 N.E.2d  
19 1213, 1227 (Ind. 2013). Other courts considering State provisions limiting public expenditures  
20 for sectarian purposes have regularly concluded that the provisions do not preclude  
21 appropriations for non-sectarian/secular purposes which have an incidental benefit to a church  
22 related institution. *See, e.g., Embry v. O'Bannon*, 798 N.E.2d 157 (Ind. 2003) (State Constitution  
23 prohibited drawing money "from the treasury, for the benefit of any religious or theological  
24 institution"; upholding dual-enrollment program providing public school corporations with

1 additional funds to provide secular educational services to parochial school students also  
2 enrolled in public school); *State ex rel. Warren v. Nusbaum*, 55 Wis.2d 316, 198 N.W.2d 650  
3 (Wis.1972) (State Constitution prohibited use of public funds “for the benefit of religious  
4 societies, or religious or theological seminaries”; court approved State contract with a church-  
5 related university for dental education services as it did not have the primary effect of advancing  
6 religion); *State ex rel. Warren v. Nusbaum*, 64 Wis.2d 314, 219 N.W.2d 577  
7 (Wis.1974)(approving school boards contracting education services for exceptional needs  
8 children in religious schools as a secular purpose); *Advisory Opinion re Constitutionality of*  
9 *P.A.1970, No. 100*, 384 Mich. 82, 180 N.W.2d 265 (Mich. 1970)(approving teachers paid with  
10 public funds teaching secular subjects in private schools as serving a public purpose). These  
11 cases and their conclusions support the view Nevada’s Article XI, section 10 with its limitation  
12 on the use of public funds for sectarian purposes was not intended to preclude any expenditure  
13 that has an incidental benefit to religion, where such is made for a primary secular purpose. The  
14 drafters of the Nevada constitution and Section 10 seem to have allowed the Legislature  
15 flexibility in its actions so long as its purpose in its actions is not to build up a religious sect.

16 This Court believes this history of Section 10 and its language supports the consideration  
17 of the United States Supreme Court’s interpretation of the Establishment Clause in considering  
18 the scope of section 10. These decisions concerning the Establishment Clause focus for the most  
19 part on the underlying purpose of the challenged State action, just as the language of Section 10  
20 focuses on whether an expenditure of public funds is for a sectarian purpose. “The  
21 Establishment Clause of the First Amendment, applied to the States through the Fourteenth  
22 Amendment, prevents a State from enacting laws that have the ‘purpose’ or ‘effect’ of advancing  
23 or inhibiting religion.” *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris*, 536 U.S. 639, 648-49 (2002) (quoting  
24 *Agostini v. Felton*, 521 U.S. 203, 222–223 (1997)).

1           The Supreme Court in *Agostini v. Felton*, 521 U.S. 203, 222–223, (1997), explain that in  
2 evaluating the constitutionality of a State action under the Establishment Clause, the question to  
3 be asked is “whether the government acted with the purpose of advancing or inhibiting religion  
4 [and] whether the aid has the ‘effect’ of advancing or inhibiting religion.” *Id.* at 222–23 (citations  
5 omitted). This Court finds Plaintiffs have failed to allege any facts disputing the ESA program  
6 was enacted for the valid secular purpose of providing financial assistance to parents to take  
7 advantage of educational options available to Nevada children. The legislative history for the  
8 statute demonstrates the Legislature considered the implementation of the ESA program  
9 important in view of what it perceived was the limited achievement of the public school system.  
10 As in *Zelman* and *Agostini*, the question is whether the ESA program has “the forbidden ‘effect’  
11 of advancing or inhibiting religion.” *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris*, 536 U.S. at 648–49.

12           The United States Supreme Court’s “decisions have drawn a consistent distinction  
13 between government programs that provide aid directly to religious schools, and programs of  
14 true private choice, in which government aid reaches religious schools only as a result of the  
15 genuine and independent choices of private individuals.” *Id.* at 649 (citations omitted). Where a  
16 school aid program, such as the ESA program, is neutral with respect to religion, and provides  
17 assistance available directly to a wide spectrum of citizens, or as in this case, essentially all  
18 parents of Nevada school children, who, in turn, direct the financial assistance to religion  
19 affiliated schools “wholly as a result of their own genuine and independent private choice, the  
20 program is not readily subject to challenge under the Establishment Clause.” *Id.* This Court  
21 concludes the ESA program does not violate Article XI, section 10, as the State is not using  
22 public funds for a sectarian purpose, but for a non-sectarian/secular one, of providing parents a  
23 broad range of educational options for their children. The ESA program “permits government  
24 aid to reach religious institutions only by way of the deliberate choices of numerous individual

1 recipients. The incidental advancement of a religious mission, or the perceived endorsement of a  
2 religious message, is reasonably attributable to the individual recipient, not to the government,  
3 whose role ends with the disbursement of benefits.” *Zelman*, 536 U.S. at 652.

4 As provided under the provisions of the ESA statute, the funds the State deposits in each  
5 student’s savings account are reserved for educational purposes, and not for any sectarian  
6 purpose. The State has no influence or control over how any parent makes his or her genuine  
7 and independent choice to spend his or her ESA funds. Consequently, the State cannot be  
8 deemed to be using the funds for a sectarian purpose as the parents, and not the State, direct  
9 through their own independent decision the funds to religious education schools. Parents, if they  
10 choose to use the ESA program, must expend the ESA funds for secular education goods and  
11 services, even if they choose to obtain these services from religion affiliated schools. As  
12 discussed above, since the United States Supreme Court’s 1993 decision in *Mueller v. Allen*, the  
13 federal courts interpreting the Establishment Clause, which, like Article 11, Section 10, prohibits  
14 government action for the purpose of supporting or building up of religion, have concluded  
15 student assistance programs allowing participants to use their benefits at religious schools further  
16 a secular, not sectarian purpose. *See, e.g., Zelman v. Simmons-Harris*, 536 U.S. at 648-49;  
17 *Zobrest v. Catalina Foothills School Dist.*, 509 U.S. 1 (1993); *Witters v. Washington Dept. of*  
18 *Servs. for Blind*, 474 U.S. 481 (1986); *Mueller v. Allen*, 463 U.S. 388 (1983).

19 This Court agrees the ESA program as provided in the statute does not restrict any public  
20 funds for use at any religion affiliated school. The program provides funds through ESAs to  
21 parents to pay for education choices the parents may choose for their children. Indeed, the  
22 Legislature in creating the program provided a wide range of options to parents for use of ESA  
23 funds. Consequently, under the plain terms of section 10, the Legislature is not using public  
24 funds for a “sectarian purpose.” Other courts considering their State constitutional provisions



1 restricting the use of public funds to sectarian schools or for sectarian purposes have found such  
2 provisions do not preclude the State from offering education financial aid to parents who, in turn,  
3 independently spend the aid with religious affiliated schools for education services. See, e.g.,  
4 *Oliver v. Hofmeister*, 2016 WL 61400 (Okla. Feb. 16, 2016); *Niehaus v. Huppenthal*, 310 P.3d  
5 983, 988, (Ariz. Ct. App. 2013); *Meredith v. Pence*, 984 N.E.2d 1213, 1229 (Md. 2013);  
6 *Simmons-Harris v. Goff*, 711 N.E.2d 203, 212 (Ohio 1999); *Jackson v. Benson*, 578 N.W.2d 602,  
7 621 (Wis. 1998).

8 Plaintiffs contend the Nevada Supreme Court's decision in *State v. Hallock* precludes  
9 public funds from being passed through the ESA program to religion affiliated schools. In  
10 *Hallock*, the Nevada Supreme Court considered what was clearly a direct appropriation of public  
11 funds to an orphanage that provided religious instruction and was affiliated with a specific  
12 religion. The Court did not consider whether the State could provide money to the orphanage for  
13 the purely secular costs of care and feeding of the orphans. The Court noted this argument was  
14 made that the appropriation, if "paid, would not be used for sectarian purposes, but for the  
15 physical necessities of the orphans." However, the Court specifically found the appropriation  
16 was intended to be a "mere charity" and a "contribution only" to the orphanage. *State v. Hallock*,  
17 16 Nev. at 388. Consequently, the *Hallock* Court was faced only with considering the  
18 constitutionality of a direct appropriation to a religion affiliated orphanage. While it expressed  
19 the intent of section 10 was "that public funds should not be used, directly or indirectly, for the  
20 building up of any sect," the Court provided no guidance as to what would be considered  
21 "indirect" support because it specifically found that it was dealing with a direct charitable  
22 contribution.<sup>8</sup>

23  
24 <sup>8</sup> Plaintiffs contend various Attorney General Opinions support their view of section 10's prohibition on public funds for sectarian purposes. The Court has reviewed these opinions, which are not binding on the Court. Defendants also have cited Attorney General Opinions which they contend support the use of public funds as

1 In contrast, in *Murrow Indian Orphans Home v. Childers*, 171 P.2d 600, 603 (Okla.  
2 1946), the State Board of Affairs, acting under legislative authority, made a contract with a  
3 Baptist affiliated orphanage to care for certain orphan and dependent children. Plaintiffs  
4 challenged this contract under the "no aid" clause of the Oklahoma Constitution, Article II, § 5,  
5 which provides: "No public money or property shall ever be appropriated, applied, donated, or  
6 used, directly or indirectly, for the use, benefit, or support of any sect, church, denomination, or  
7 system of religion, or for the use, benefit or support of any priest, minister or other religious  
8 teacher or dignitary, or sectarian institution as such." Considering the issue the Nevada Supreme  
9 Court left open in *Hallock*, whether the State could provide funds to a sectarian institution for a  
10 secular purpose, in this instance the contracting of care of State wards, the Oklahoma Supreme  
11 Court held the State, in making the contract, was "fulfilling a duty to needy children. The  
12 institution can render a service that goes far toward the fulfillment of this duty, and for  
13 compensation that is a matter of contract and public record. The matter of the wisdom of the

14 provided under the ESA program. In none of the cited opinions were the facts before the Attorney General similar  
15 to the circumstances before this Court and none of the Attorney General's opinions clearly support one side or the  
16 other. While in 65-276 Op. Nev. Att'y Gen. (Nov. 6, 1965), the Attorney General opined that school districts may  
17 receive federal funds and use the funds to assist both public and religious school students as required by federal law,  
18 he also stated the federal funds had to be kept separate from the state public school funds to avoid violating section  
19 10. As defendants note, the Attorney General subsequently reversed his opinion in Opinion No. 65-278 (Nov. 15,  
20 1965), and found children enrolled in parochial schools could enroll in public school classes not offered in the  
21 parochial school. 74-158 Op. Nev. Att'y Gen. (Jan. 24, 1974). In 41-B-40 Op. Nev. Att'y Gen. (Feb. 11, 1941), the  
22 Attorney General was asked whether the state could provide funds to a sectarian hospital for the care of crippled  
23 children. The Attorney General concluded "[w]e do not believe that [section 10], strict as it seems, was intended to  
24 prevent necessary hospitalization in sectarian hospitals." However, in reaching his opinion, the attorney general goes  
on to emphasize "no sectarian instruction of any kind was imparted." In 63-67 Op. Nev. Att'y Gen. (Sept. 5, 1963),  
the Attorney General concluded the "holding of divine services at state [prison] institutions by the various  
preceptors of religious faiths, and where attendance is not compulsory, does not violate any constitutional  
prohibition, and that compliance . . . does not contravene the prohibition of Article XI, Section 10, of the  
Constitution of Nevada." However, the Attorney General in reaching the conclusion considered the inmates' rights  
under Article 1, section 4, allowing Nevada citizens to freely exercise their religions. He did not consider the issue  
of whether the state could support such religious services as part of an expenditure for secular purposes. In 70-688  
Op. Nev. Att'y Gen. (June 16, 1970), the Attorney General did recognize that some courts had concluded that state  
"aid" to provide secular services to children in religious schools "accrues to the child and not to the religious order,  
and is so far removed from religious connotations that no problem is presented." However, while the Attorney  
General concluded the state could provide secular television programing to religious schools, the state was charging  
for the programing at the same rate it charged public schools and there was arguably no issue involving the use of  
public funds. Indeed, Article XI, section 10 is not even referenced in the opinion. Consequently, this Court has  
found the Attorney General Opinions referenced in the parties' filings to be of limited application in deciding the  
issue before it.

1 terms of these contracts is for the Legislature and the agency upon which it thrusts the  
2 performance of its commands, and so long as they involve the element of substantial return to the  
3 State and do not amount to a gift, donation, or appropriation to the institution having no  
4 relevancy to the affairs of the State, there is no constitutional provision offended.” While there  
5 were a number of factual distinctions between the orphanage in *Hallock* and the one in *Childer*,  
6 this Court finds the Oklahoma decision persuasive in defining the scope of Section 10’s  
7 limitations on the use of public funds for sectarian purposes. *See also* 41-B-40 Op. Nev. Att’y  
8 Gen. (Feb. 11, 1941) (State may contract and pay religion affiliated hospital for care of crippled  
9 children if religious indoctrination is not required of the patients). The Court concludes the  
10 Nevada Supreme Court’s decision in *Hallock* precluding a direct payment of public funds as a  
11 charitable contribution to a religious affiliated orphanage does not preclude the Legislature from  
12 providing funds to ESA accounts for the secular purpose of education, even if the funds are used  
13 to contract the secular education through a religion affiliated school.

14 To the degree Article XI, Section 10, arguable precludes the State from making a direct  
15 payment to a religion affiliated school, under the ESA program, the State deposits funds into an  
16 account from which parents may draw to purchase services. While Plaintiffs argue the State’s  
17 contention that ESA accounts are individual ones of the parents is more form than substance,  
18 with the State limiting the use of the accounts, continuing some oversight of the accounts and  
19 maintaining a right to unused funds, the accounts as provided by statute are accounts under the  
20 control of the parents who can use the funds to pay for a wide-range of education options.  
21 Consequently, this Court finds the form the State has chosen to provide parents with financial  
22 assistance, does not result in direct payments from the State to any preordained or particular  
23 destination.

24 This Court accepts the funds parents may direct from ESA accounts to religion affiliated

1 schools will be comingled with other tuitions and other funds. These comingled funds will be  
2 used to provide education to children and may be used to provide religious instruction or  
3 services. The Plaintiffs assert, absent any requirement that participating schools segregate the  
4 public funds for secular education, the funds will be used to further religious activities that take  
5 place in these schools. Plaintiffs argue this use of comingled funds, in part in furtherance of  
6 religious activities, amounts to a direct use of public funds for a sectarian purpose. Again, this  
7 Court disagrees as "the principal actors and direct beneficiaries under the voucher program are  
8 neither the State nor program-eligible schools," but Nevada families with school-age children.  
9 *See Meredith v. Pence*, 984 N.E.2d at 1228. As the Indiana Supreme Court found when faced  
10 with a similar argument, the "direct beneficiaries under the voucher program are the families of  
11 eligible students and not the schools selected by the parents for their children to attend. The  
12 voucher program does not directly fund religious activities because *no* funds may be dispersed to  
13 *any* program-eligible school without the *private, independent selection by the parents of a*  
14 *program-eligible student*. . . . Any benefit to program-eligible schools, religious or non-  
15 religious, derives from the private, independent choice of the parents of program-eligible  
16 students, not the decree of the State, and is thus ancillary and incidental to the benefit conferred  
17 on these families." *Id.* at 1228-29 (Emphasis in original).

18 Plaintiffs emphasize the likelihood that large amounts of aid will be diverted from the  
19 public schools to religion affiliated schools. However, the United States Supreme Court has  
20 emphasized the amount of government aid channeled to religious institutions by individual aid  
21 recipients is not relevant to the Establishment Clause inquiry, and this Court does not see it as  
22 relevant to the Article IX, section 10 inquiry. Either the ESA program's likely potential to divert  
23 public funds through parent choice to some religion-affiliated schools is constitutional or it is  
24 not. The amount of funds diverted does not affect the inquiry or the outcome. *Zelman v.*

1 *Simmons-Harris*, 536 U.S. 639, 648-49 (citing *Mueller v. Allen*, 474 U.S., at 490-491, (Powell,  
2 J., joined by Burger, C. J., and REHNQUIST, J., concurring) (citing *Mueller, supra*, at 398-  
3 399,); 474 U.S., at 493, 106 S.Ct. 748 (O'CONNOR, J., concurring in part and concurring in  
4 judgment); *id.*, at 490, (White, J., concurring)). This Court's decision rests not on whether few  
5 or many recipients chose to expend government aid at a religious school but, rather, on whether  
6 recipients generally were empowered to direct the aid to schools or institutions of their own  
7 choosing. *Id.*

8         The Plaintiffs contend the ESA program could theoretically divert to private schools all  
9 of Nevada's school children, and, by consequence, all funding for the uniform public school  
10 system. However, that almost all school children *may* be eligible for the ESA program and a  
11 significant number may enroll in this option does not mean there is "no set of circumstances  
12 under which the statute can be constitutionally applied." *Deja Vu Showgirls v. Nevada Dep't of*  
13 *Tax.*, 130 Nev. Adv. Op. 73, 334 P.3d at 398. As discussed before, this Court has no reason to  
14 believe and Plaintiffs have not proffered any factual allegations to suggest all parents of Nevada  
15 school children are going to enroll in the ESA program. As noted above, even if large numbers  
16 of parents enroll in the program, so long as there is a "uniform" public school system," open to  
17 the "general attendance" of all, the Legislature has fulfilled the duty imposed by Article XI,  
18 section 2. Plaintiffs assert a potential damage resulting from the application of the ESA program  
19 which is, at best, "merely apprehended or feared." *See Doe v. Bryan*, 102 Nev. at 525, 728 P.2d  
20 at 444 (citing *Kress v. Corey*, 65 Nev. 1, 28-29, 189 P.2d 352, 365 (1948). What the applied  
21 impact of the ESA program will be is yet to be determined and can be considered based on the  
22 impact it actually makes. If the impact causes an identifiable injury, individuals affected by such  
23 damages will have standing to bring an action. The ESA program provides parents with funding  
24 they may use to choose different educational opportunities for their children and does not replace

1 the public school system. The Legislature has continued to meet its constitutional obligation of  
2 providing for public schools which are open to all Nevada schoolchildren as required by Article  
3 XI, section 2.

4 As with its uniform public schools claim, Plaintiffs also argue the ESA program violates  
5 Article XI, Section 10's prohibition on the use of funds for sectarian purpose because certain  
6 schools participating in the program will improperly discriminate in admissions, enrollment, and  
7 hiring based on religion and other protected characteristics under the United States and Nevada  
8 constitutions and statutes. *Cf. e.g.*, NRS § 6 13.330; NRS § 651.070 (statutes prohibiting  
9 discrimination in employment and public accommodations, including schools, on basis of  
10 religion, sexual orientation and gender identity). Again as this Court has previously held,  
11 Plaintiffs' contentions may be possibly relevant as to whether the funds the State provides  
12 parents may be used for certain schools which may act in violation of discrimination laws.  
13 However, these contentions are not determinative of whether the State has the authority to create  
14 the ESA program or whether the program may be used by parents to direct funds to religion  
15 affiliated schools. While this Court has found Plaintiffs have standing to challenge the  
16 Legislature's authority to create the ESA program under Article XI, section 10, they do not have  
17 standing to challenge anticipated illegal discrimination of some schools as they have not suffered  
18 such injury. Again, as stated above, individuals who suffer discrimination may challenge the  
19 inclusion of certain schools in the ESA program under the law. Whether illegal discrimination  
20 occurs and a school may participate under the ESA program can be dealt with in the specific  
21 context of the facts of an actual controversy rather than in the hypothetical. *See Doe v. Bryan*,  
22 102 Nev. at 525, 728 P.2d at 444.

23 This Court concludes Plaintiffs have not alleged facts establishing its claim that the  
24 Legislature's creation of the ESA program violates Article XI, section 10, prohibiting the use of

1 public funds for a sectarian purpose. Plaintiffs' claim is dismissed.

2 **VIII. Conclusion**

3 This Court holds the Nevada program, the Choice Scholarship Program, is within the  
4 Legislature's power under Article XI, Sections 1 and 2, and the enacted program does not violate  
5 Section 10's prohibition on the use of funds for sectarian purposes. The Court finds Plaintiffs  
6 are not entitled to relief under any set of facts alleged in their complaint. The Court grants  
7 Defendants' Motion to Dismiss and dismisses Plaintiffs' Complaint pursuant to NRCP 12(b)(5).

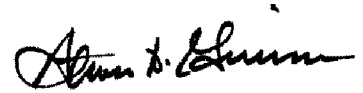
8 DATED this 18th day of May, 2016.

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ERIC JOHNSON  
11 DISTRICT COURT JUDGE  
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CLERK OF THE COURT

**NEOJ**

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**DISTRICT COURT  
CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA**

RUBY DUNCAN, an individual; RABBI MEL  
HECHT, an individual; HOWARD WATTS III,  
an individual; LEORA OLIVAS, an individual;  
ADAM BERGER, an Individual

Plaintiffs,

vs.

STATE OF NEVADA, ex rel. the Office of the  
State Treasurer of Nevada and the Nevada  
Department of Education; DAN SCHWARTZ,  
Nevada State Treasurer, in his official capacity;  
STEVE CANAVERO, Interim Superintendent of  
Public Instruction, in his official capacity,

Defendants.

Case No. A-15-723703-C

Dept. No. XX

**NOTICE OF ENTRY OF ORDER**

TO: Plaintiffs Ruby Duncan et al.;

///

///



1 YOU ARE HEREBY GIVEN NOTICE that an Order on Defendant's Motion to Dismiss for  
2 Lack of Jurisdiction and Failure to State a Claim was entered in the above-entitled matter on the 18<sup>th</sup>  
3 day of May, 2016. A copy of said Order is attached as Exhibit A.

4 DATED this 1<sup>st</sup> day of June, 2016.

5 ADAM PAUL LAXALT  
6 Attorney General

7 By: /s/ Lawrence VanDyke  
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9 *Solicitor General*  
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**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I hereby certify that I electronically filed the foregoing document with the Clerk of the Court by using the electronic filing system on the 1<sup>ST</sup> day of June, 2016.

The following participants in this case are registered electronic filing systems users and will be served electronically:

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/s/ JANICE M. RIHERD  
An employee of the Office of the Attorney General

# “EXHIBIT A”

Ruby Duncan et al.  
v.  
State of Nevada et al.

Case No. A-15-723703-C

Exhibit to:  
Notice of Entry of Order

# “EXHIBIT A”

1 ORDER

2 EIGHTH JUDICIAL DISTRICT COURT

3 CLARK COUNTY, NEVADA

4 RUBY DUNCAN an individual; RABBI MEL  
5 HECHT, an individual; HOWARD WATTS III,  
an individual; LEORA OLIVAS, an individual;  
6 ADAM BERGER, an individual,

7 Plaintiffs,

8 vs.

9 STATE OF NEVADA, ex rel. the Office of the  
State Treasurer of Nevada and the Nevada  
Department of Education; DAN SCHWARTZ,  
10 Nevada State Treasurer, in his official capacity;  
STEVE CANAVERO, Interim Superintendent  
11 of Public Instruction, in his official capacity,

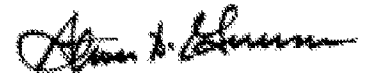
12 Defendants.

Case No. A-15-723703-C

Dept. No. XX

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CLERK OF THE COURT

13 **ORDER ON DEFENDANT'S MOTION TO DISMISS FOR LACK OF JURISDICTION**  
14 **AND FAILURE TO STATE A CLAIM**

15 This matter concerning Defendant STATE OF NEVADA's Motion to Dismiss for Lack  
16 of Jurisdiction and Failure to State a Claim, filed October 19, 2015, joined by Parent-Intervenor  
17 on October 26, 2015, came on for hearing December 10, 2015 and February 11 and March 2,  
18 2016, before Department XX of the Eighth Judicial District Court, in and for Clark County,  
19 Nevada, with JUDGE ERIC JOHNSON presiding: Plaintiffs RUBY DUNCAN, RABBI MEL  
20 HECHT, HOWARD WATTS, III, LOERA OLIVAS and ADAM BERGER appeared by and  
21 through their attorneys, AMY M. ROSE, ESQ. of the AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION  
22 OF NEVADA, NITIN SUBHEDAR, ESQ. and SAMUEL EDWARDS, ESQ. of the law firm,  
23 COVINGTON & BURLING, and GREGORY M. LIPPER, ESQ., Senior Litigation Counsel for  
24 AMERICANS UNITED FOR SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE; Defendant STATE

1 OF NEVADA appeared by and through its attorney, LAWRENCE VANDYKE, ESQ, Deputy  
2 Attorney General; and Parent-Intervenor AIMEE HAIR, AURORA ESPINOZA,  
3 ELIZABETH ROBBINS, LARA ALLEN, JEFFREY SMITH and TRINA SMITH appeared by  
4 and through their attorneys, TIMOTHY D. KELLER, ESQ. and KEITH E. DIGGS, ESQ. of the  
5 INSTITUTE FOR JUSTICE. Having reviewed the papers and pleadings on file herein,  
6 including but not limited to the parties' supplemental briefs filed March 11 and 18, 2016,  
7 respectively, and taken this matter under advisement, this Court makes the following Findings of  
8 Fact and Conclusions of Law.

9 **I. Introduction**

10 THIS MATTER involves a challenge to Nevada's new education savings account  
11 ("ESA") program. Plaintiffs Ruby Duncan, Rabbi Mel Hecht, Howard Watts III, Leora Olivas,  
12 and Adam Berger (collectively, "Plaintiffs") claim the ESA program violates the Nevada  
13 Constitution, specifically Article XI, section 2, requiring the Legislature to provide for a uniform  
14 public school system, and Article XI, section 10, prohibiting use of public funds for sectarian  
15 purposes. This matter currently comes before this Court on Defendants' Motion to Dismiss  
16 Plaintiffs' Complaint. After accepting as true the factual allegations of the Complaint for which  
17 Plaintiffs have standing to assert, and determining the scope of Article XI, sections 2 and 10, this  
18 Court finds Plaintiffs have not pled facts to demonstrate the ESA program is unconstitutional and  
19 to entitle them to declaratory relief. Therefore, this Court dismisses Plaintiff's Complaint  
20 challenging Senate Bill 302 ("SB 302") on constitutional grounds.

21 As a preliminary matter, the issues before this Court do not include the public policy  
22 merits of the ESA program. Whether Nevada's ESA program is wise educational or public  
23 policy is not a consideration germane to the narrow issues of Nevada constitutional law that are  
24 before this Court. In the absence of a constitutional violation, the desirability and efficacy of the

1 ESA program are matters to be resolved through the political/legislative process.

2 **II. Standard for Determining a Motion to Dismiss a Complaint**

3 The Court has considered Defendant State of Nevada's Motion to Dismiss, joined by  
4 Parent-Intervenors. The Court is "bound to accept all the factual allegations in the complaint as  
5 true," *Marcoz v. Summa Corp.*, 106 Nev. 737, 739 (1990), and must "construe[] the pleading  
6 liberally, drawing every inference in favor of the nonmoving party." *Citizens for Cold Springs v.*  
7 *City of Reno*, 125 Nev. 625, 629 (2009). However, in determining the factual allegations of the  
8 complaint on which a plaintiff relies to bring his or her causes of action, the Court is not bound  
9 to accept factual allegations for which the plaintiff does not have standing to assert to establish a  
10 cause of action. *See Doe v. Bryan*, 102 Nev. 523, 525, 728 P.2d 443, 444 (1986); *Blanding v.*  
11 *City of Las Vegas*, 52 Nev. 52, 280 P. 644, 650 (1929). Once the plaintiff's pled facts are  
12 assumed true, the Court must then "determine whether or not the challenged pleading sets forth  
13 allegations sufficient to make out the elements of a right to relief." *Edgar v. Wagner*, 101 Nev.  
14 226, 227 (1985). In making this determination, this Court must decide what the law requires to  
15 be made out to establish Plaintiffs' causes of action. If disputed by the parties, what the law  
16 means is not a factual question but a legal one the Court must determine. In making this  
17 decision, the Court does not need to presume Plaintiffs' interpretation of the law is correct for  
18 purposes of determining the Motion to Dismiss. In the instant case, in deciding Defendants'  
19 motion, this Court must assume Plaintiffs' factual allegations in their Complaint are true, and  
20 then resolve legal issues of statutory and constitutional construction to determine if the facts as  
21 alleged make out Plaintiffs' causes of action in their Complaint. "A claim should not be  
22 dismissed . . . unless it appears to a certainty that the plaintiff is not entitled to relief under any  
23 set of facts which could be proved in support of the claim." *Hale v. Burkhardt*, 104 Nev. 632,  
24 636 (1988). However, "[t]o survive dismissal, a complaint must contain some set of facts,

1 which, if true, would entitle [the plaintiff] to relief,” *In re Amerco Derivative Litig.*, 127 Nev.  
2 Adv. Op. 17, 252 P.3d 681, 692 (2011) (quotation marks omitted).

3 **III. Factual Summary of Plaintiff’s Complaint and Nevada ESA Program**

4 This Court invited the parties to submit proposed statements of facts to the Court for its  
5 consideration in entering any order on Defendants’ Motion to Dismiss or Plaintiffs’ Motion for  
6 Preliminary Injunction. All parties provided proposed statements of facts. The Court has  
7 reviewed the proposed statements, Plaintiffs’ Complaint and the statute and legislative history of  
8 the ESA program. Based on this review, the Court finds the following facts to have been alleged  
9 by the Plaintiffs or established by the record for purposes of deciding Defendants’ Motion to  
10 Dismiss.<sup>1</sup>

11 **A. Nevada’s Education Savings Account Program**

12 Senate Bill 302, adopted and approved by the Nevada Legislature and Governor Brian  
13 Sandoval in 2015, created Nevada’s ESA program. In passing SB 302, the Legislature sought to  
14 exercise its constitutional authority under Article XI, section 1 to encourage education by “all  
15 suitable means.” The purpose of the ESA program is to advance the education of all students  
16 throughout the State by offering Nevadans a broader array of educational opportunities. Under  
17 SB 302, Nevada parents may enter into agreements with the State Treasurer to open ESAs for  
18 their children. SB 302 §§ 7.1, 7.2. Any school age child who has attended a Nevada public or  
19 charter school for at least 100 consecutive school days is eligible to participate in the program.  
20 SB 302 § 7.1. The ESA program is far more extensive and will be far more encompassing than  
21 any other ESA or voucher program in the country. A parent who wishes to choose an alternative  
22 to a public school can apply for an ESA and a percentage of what the State funds for his or her  
23 child’s public education will be deposited into an account for that child. Once the ESA is

24 .....  
<sup>1</sup> In view of this Court’s decision to grant Defendants’ Motion to Dismiss, the Court makes no ruling on Plaintiffs’  
Motion for Preliminary Injunction.

1 opened, "[t]he child will receive a grant, in the form of money deposited" into the account. SB  
2 302 § 7.1(b).

3 The money deposited into each student's account is drawn from public funds,  
4 specifically the State of Nevada's Distributive School Account (DSA), which is "financed by  
5 legislative appropriations from the State General Fund, a tax on out-of-state sales, a slot machine  
6 tax, mineral land lease income, and interest from investments of the State Permanent School  
7 Fund." These funds may appropriately be categorized as public funds. Pls.' Compl. ¶ 16, 18-19.  
8 Children from families with a household income less than 185% of the federal poverty level are  
9 eligible to receive 100% of the statewide average basic per-pupil support rate. All other children  
10 participating in the ESA program will receive 90% of the statewide average basic per-pupil  
11 support rate.

12 All funds deposited into ESAs established on behalf of children who reside in a given  
13 county must be deducted from the State's DSA apportionment that would ordinarily be disbursed  
14 to that county. There is no limit on how many students may participate in the ESA program.  
15 Theoretically, there is no limit on the total amount of public funds that can be diverted from  
16 public to private schools and other educational providers under the ESA program.

17 Parents may only use the money deposited in ESA accounts for educational purposes  
18 and those purposes alone. SB 302 § 9. SB 302 enumerates eleven specific educational purposes  
19 on which ESA grants may be spent. These purposes include tuition, textbooks, tutoring, and  
20 special education. SB 302, § 9.1(a)-(k). Regulatory safeguards exist to ensure that ESA money  
21 is not used by parents or schools in ways inconsistent with SB 302's educational purpose. For  
22 instance, the Treasurer has power to freeze or dissolve an account if he determines there has been  
23 "substantial misuse" of the account. SB 302, § 10.3. Each participating entity accepting  
24 payments from an ESA must provide receipts for those payments to the parents. *Id.* at § 11(4).



1 The Treasurer can also terminate participation by an entity that, for any reason, has "failed to  
2 provide any educational services required by law to a child receiving instruction from the entity."  
3 *Id.* at § 11.5(b).

4  
5 **B. Non-Religious and Religious Education Services are Eligible to Participate in  
the ESA Program**

6 ESA grants may only be used at participating entities or eligible institutions, including  
7 private schools, colleges or universities within the Nevada System of Higher Education. SB 302  
8 § 3.5. The ESA program allows both religious and non-religious private schools to apply to  
9 serve as participating entities. Pls.' Compl. ¶ 16. The majority of private schools that have  
10 applied to participate in the program are religious. In some counties, the only private schools  
11 eligible to participate are religious. As a result, there is no question ESA funds will be used to  
12 pay tuition at private religious schools. Parents' use of ESA money for educational purposes  
13 must be documented. *Id.* at § 11(4).

14 Many religious private schools have religious mission statements and instruction, and  
15 promote particular religious beliefs. As long as participating private schools do not transgress  
16 other state or federal anti-discrimination laws that may be applicable, participating private  
17 religious schools may take religion and other characteristics into account in their admissions  
18 process and hiring practices. Pls.' Compl. ¶ 6, 28, 69-79; *see also* SB 302 § 14. While those  
19 facilities applying for an exemption under NRS § 389.211 must attest they "provide[] equivalent  
20 instruction of the kind and amount approved by the State Board of Education," private religious  
21 schools that will receive ESA funds are not required to follow the curriculum guidelines required  
22 in public schools as the State accepts as "equivalent" curricula which includes religious doctrine.  
23 There are no prohibitions on how private religious schools may use ESA program funds; SB 302  
24 states "nothing in the provisions of [this Act] shall be deemed to limit the independence or

1 autonomy of a participating entity." SB 302 § 14, Pls.' Compl. ¶ 27. Once parents use their  
2 participating students' ESA funds to pay for an approved educational expense, such as tuition or  
3 textbooks, there is no prohibition on how participating entities may use those funds—so long as  
4 the participating entity provides the educational product or service for which it was paid. Pls.  
5 Compl. ¶ 27, 38, 80; *see also* SB 302 § 1 I(5)(b). Private religious schools may commingle, and,  
6 consequently, spend ESA funds on religious activities entirely unrelated to students' education.  
7 Compl. ¶¶ 27, 38, 84. Private religious schools that receive ESA funds will not be required to  
8 meet the same educational standards as public schools and are not subject to the same oversight  
9 by the State.

10 **C. Plaintiffs' Factual Allegations for Which They Do Not Have Standing to**  
11 **Assert**

12 The above-stated facts are those allegations from the Complaint which the Court has  
13 determined Plaintiffs' have standing to assert in making out causes of action challenging the  
14 constitutionality of the ESA program. Plaintiffs have alleged additional facts of which they have  
15 no personal involvement and interest, and are conjectural at this point in time at best.  
16 Consequently, these allegations do not establish actual controversies involving the Plaintiffs, and  
17 involve allegations, which, if proved true, should be brought by individuals who have actually  
18 suffered the alleged injuries. This Court finds Plaintiffs do not have standing to challenge the  
19 ESA program's constitutionality on these facts. Specifically, Plaintiffs allege private schools  
20 receiving ESA funds will illegally discriminate in both admissions and hiring on the basis of  
21 religion and other circumstances and the State has no rule, regulation, or procedure in place to  
22 prevent such discrimination by private religious schools participating in the ESA program.  
23 Plaintiffs further assert some religious private schools will require students and/or their parents  
24 to sign statements of faith and comply with religious codes of conduct and will exclude students

1 and/or charge more for tuition based on the students' faith, or even the faith of their parents.  
2 Plaintiffs further allege private schools receiving ESA funds will not be required to comply with  
3 Nevada's Public Accommodations Law.<sup>2</sup> See NRS § 651 et seq.

4 In addition, Plaintiffs contend, because there is no limit on how many students may  
5 participate in the ESA program and on the total amount of public funds that can be diverted from  
6 public to private schools, the ESA program will irreparably harm the public schools by diverting  
7 funds from them and bolstering a system of competing private and religious schools. Plaintiffs  
8 contend there will be a drastic curtailment of funding to the public schools that is greater than the  
9 otherwise-occurring year-to-year variation in State funding. Plaintiffs' argue the loss of funding  
10 to the public school system as a result of the ESA program will negatively impact public school  
11 education, opportunities, and services, including the forced lay off of teachers at public schools.  
12 Plaintiffs predict the students who remain in the public schools will be disproportionately students  
13 of lower income, students with disabilities, and students who speak English as a second  
14 language, all of whom are more expensive to educate than the average pupil.

#### 15 **IV. Procedural History of Lawsuit**

16 On August 27, 2015, Plaintiffs filed their Complaint against the State of Nevada  
17 requesting injunctive relief and declaratory relief. On September 17, 2015, Aimee Hairr, Aurora  
18 Espinoza, Elizabeth Robbins, Lara Allen, and Jeffery and Trina Smith ("Parent-Intervenors")  
19 filed a Motion to Intervene as Defendants, which this Court granted. On October 19, 2015, the  
20

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21 <sup>2</sup> Parent-Intervenors dispute Plaintiffs' contention Nevada's Public Accommodation Law will not apply to religion  
22 affiliated schools in the ESA program, arguing in Nevada, "[a]ny nursery, private school or university or other place  
23 of education" is considered a "[p]lace of public accommodation." NRS 651.056(3)(k). Additionally, Nevada law  
24 states "[a]ll persons are entitled to the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges,  
advantages and accommodations of any place of public accommodation, without discrimination or segregation on  
the ground of race, color, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, sex, gender identity or expression."  
NRS 651.070. Nevada law also lays out the penalties, both civil and criminal, for violating the right to equal  
enjoyment of places of public accommodation. Because this Court finds Plaintiffs do not have standing to challenge  
the ESA program on these specific applied factual allegations, the Court does not reach the scope of the Public  
Accommodation Law under the ESA statute in any of the conjectural situations Plaintiffs suggest.

1 State of Nevada filed a Motion to Dismiss for Lack of Jurisdiction and Failure to State a Claim.  
2 On October 26, 2015, Parent-Intervenors filed a joinder to Defendants' Motion to Dismiss.  
3 Plaintiffs filed their Opposition to Defendants' Motion to Dismiss on November 10, 2015.  
4 Defendant and Parent-Intervenors' Replies followed on December 3, 2015.

5 During the course of this litigation concerning Defendants' Motion to Dismiss, numerous  
6 *amicus curiae* briefs were received in support of both sides, including the Foundation for  
7 Excellence in Education,<sup>3</sup> the Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice, Inc.,<sup>4</sup> and the  
8 Nevada State Education Association and the National Education Association.<sup>5</sup> Shortly after  
9 filing of Defendants' Motion to Dismiss, the State of Nevada also filed a Motion for an  
10 Expedited Decision Argument and Decision, requesting a hearing on the Motion to Dismiss for  
11 November 25, 2015. This Court set oral argument for the day requested, but later received a  
12 request from Plaintiffs' Counsel (and later a Stipulation from all parties) to continue the hearing  
13 for approximately a month, or until December 10, 2015. This Court heard oral argument on  
14 Defendants' Motion to Dismiss on December 10, 2015.

15 In the interim of the briefing for the Motion to Dismiss, Plaintiffs filed a Motion for  
16 Preliminary Injunction, seeking to enjoin disbursement of the ESA funds, as well as a Motion for  
17 Expedited Discovery in support of the Motion for Preliminary Injunction. The State filed an *ex*  
18 *parte* Motion to Extend Time to Respond to Plaintiffs' Motion for Preliminary Injunction and  
19 Motion for Expedited Discovery. Discovery Commissioner Bonnie Bulla ultimately held a  
20 hearing regarding Plaintiffs' Motion for Expedited Discovery on December 18, 2015 and made  
21 various discovery rulings surrounding the Motion for Preliminary Injunction, which she  
22 recommended this Court adopt. Both the State of Nevada and Parent-Intervenors filed their  
23

24 <sup>3</sup> Filed on October 26, 2015 in support of Defendants' Motion to Dismiss.

<sup>4</sup> Filed on October 26, 2015 in support of Defendants' Motion to Dismiss.

<sup>5</sup> Filed on December 22, 2015, in support of Plaintiffs' Opposition to Defendants' Motion to Dismiss.

1 Oppositions to Plaintiffs' Motion for Preliminary Injunction on December 31, 2016.

2 Plaintiffs partially objected to Commissioner Bulla's Report and Recommendations on  
3 January 12, 2016, seeking additional interrogatories and other discovery against the Parent-  
4 Intervenors and third-parties, and challenging Commissioner Bulla's denial of all but one of  
5 Plaintiffs' Requests for Production. Both the State of Nevada and Parent-Intervenors opposed  
6 Plaintiffs' additional discovery requests.

7 These discovery disputes led this Court to set a status check for February 11, 2016. At  
8 that hearing, the Court ordered the parties to submit an outline of factual and discovery issues  
9 regarding the status of the case in light of the First Judicial District Court decision granting a  
10 preliminary injunction in a separate lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of the ESA statute.<sup>6</sup>  
11 After review of the supplemental briefings, the parties returned for a status check hearing on  
12 March 2, 2016, where the Court attempted to flush out the remaining issues necessary to make a  
13 final decision as to Plaintiffs' causes of action. After concluding the parties could not reach an  
14 agreement on the essential facts of the case to allow a final decision, this Court ordered the  
15 parties to provide proposed statements of facts for it to consider adopting for either an order on  
16 Defendant's Motion to Dismiss or Plaintiffs' Motion for Preliminary Injunction. The Court also  
17 requested additional briefing as to any jurisdiction issues concerning Plaintiffs' Motion for  
18 Preliminary Injunction in view of the First Judicial District Court's preliminary injunction. Final  
19 briefings from the parties were filed by March 18, 2016, at which time this Court took the matter  
20 under advisement.

21  
22 <sup>6</sup> The First Judicial District Court granted the injunction finding the Plaintiffs were likely to prevail in establishing  
23 the ESA statute as unconstitutional under Article XI, section 6 of the Nevada Constitution. The Court found Article  
24 XI, section 6 requires the Legislature to appropriate funds which must only be used for the operation of the public  
schools, but the ESA program would divert "some amount of general funds appropriated to fund...the public  
schools . . . to fund" the ESA program, including private school tuition and other uses. Plaintiffs in their instant  
complaint made no claim under Article XI, section 6. This Court invited Plaintiffs to amend their complaint to  
include such a claim. Plaintiffs did not amend their complaint and this Court makes no findings as to the  
constitutionality of the ESA program under Article XI, section 6.