

BOARD OF REGENTS
BRIEFING PAPER
Energy and Sustainability Policy

BACKGROUND & POLICY CONTEXT OF ISSUE:

The 22nd Special Session of the Nevada Legislature approved Assembly Bill 3 (Chapter 2, *Statutes of Nevada 22nd Special Session*), which among various provisions concerning energy conservation provides that each occupied public building whose construction is sponsored or financed by the State of Nevada must, when completed, meet the requirements to be certified at or meet the equivalent of the base level or higher standard for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) green building rating system or an equivalent standard. Constructing buildings that meet these standards is commonly referred to as “green building.” To that end, the NSHE Department of Budget and Finance, in coordination with the Business Officers, recommends the adoption of a policy mandating the development of detailed guidelines and procedures concerning green building, energy and water conservation, and alternative methods of transportation.

Background – AB3 Resolution statements concerning Green Building

WHEREAS, The construction and operation of the buildings in which we live, work and play require enormous amounts of energy, water and materials and create large amounts of waste, and the location of and how these buildings are built not only affect the ecosystem around us, but the buildings themselves create new indoor environments that present new environmental problems and challenges; and

WHEREAS, With the threat of rising energy costs, increases in population and numerous environmental concerns, the State of Nevada is already developing and encouraging the use of alternative energy from geothermal, wind and solar resources, and the State should also consider the possibility of encouraging “greener” building requirements; and

WHEREAS, Green building is a field that uses environmentally sustainable materials to construct buildings that conserve resources and provide a healthy living and working space; and

WHEREAS, The many elements of green building include energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy, water efficiency, the use of building materials that have a minimal effect on the environment, reduction of waste, and the design and operation of buildings that are healthy for the occupants of such buildings; and

WHEREAS, The Nevada Legislature encourages a sound financial economy, the reduction of usage and demand of fossil fuels, and a reduction of harmful emissions; and

WHEREAS, The Nevada Legislature encourages the construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of buildings in this State in such a manner as to promote better environmental standards, improve energy efficiency and increase generation of energy through renewable and clean-energy technologies, and to improve the health and productivity of building occupants by meeting advanced criteria for indoor environmental quality

SPECIFIC ACTIONS BEING RECOMMENDED OR REQUESTED:

Amend Title 4, Chapter 10 by inserting a new Section 26 providing that the Chancellor shall develop procedures and guidelines applicable to all NSHE institutions that will address LEED green building standards or an equivalent, energy conservation, and alternative transportation methods. (See attached policy proposal.)

IMPETUS (WHY NOW?):

This policy proposal is brought forward in an effort to conform with the provisions of Assembly Bill 3 (Chapter 2, *Statutes of Nevada 22nd Special Session*).

BULLET POINTS TO SUPPORT REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:

The proposed policy will enable the System to develop guidelines and procedures concerning green building, clean energy standards, and sustainable transportation practices, that will in turn enable NSHE institutions to:

- Meet the mandate of state law concerning green building standards;
- Reduce the usage and demand of fossil fuels; and
- Use environmentally sustainable materials to construct buildings that conserve resources and provide a healthy living and working space.

POTENTIAL ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:

None have been brought forward.

ALTERNATIVE(S) TO WHAT IS BEING REQUESTED/RECOMMENDED:

Develop the procedures and guidelines in accordance with state law absent a specific mandate from the Board.

COMPLIANCE WITH BOARD POLICY:

- Consistent With Current Board Policy: Title # _____ Chapter # _____ Section # _____
- Amends Current Board Policy: Title #4 Chapter #10 Section #26 (*new*)
- Other: _____
- Fiscal Impact: Yes _____ No _____
Explain: _____

PROPOSED AMENDMENT

Title 4, Chapter 10

Section 26. NSHE Energy and Sustainability Policy

- 1. The Board of Regents is committed to protecting the environment, reducing the System's dependence on non-renewable energy sources, and promoting the construction, maintenance, and renovation of buildings that are environmentally responsible, economically feasible, and healthy spaces to work and live. Therefore, the Chancellor shall develop procedures and guidelines applicable to NSHE institutions that will address matters including, but not limited to:
 - a.) Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Green building rating system or an equivalent standard adopted by the Director of the Office of Energy;*
 - b.) Energy and water conservation including the minimized use of non-renewable energy sources and the use of local renewable energy sources;
and*
 - c.) Alternative methods of transportation.**
- 2. The procedures and guidelines developed under subsection 1 must be approved by the Board of Regents.*