

Good afternoon Chair and Committee members

My name is Andrea Martinez (spell name), former Chairman and Tribal Citizen of the Walker River Paiute Tribe.

Nevada has a long history of imposing barriers to voting for Tribal nations. Following a lawsuit, in 2016 *"The Walker River Paiute Tribe v. Mineral County and Secretary of State along with the Pryamid Lake Paiute Tribe"* the state has taken steps to address these injustices, particularly through the laws passed last session. Now, every Tribe wanting a polling place or dropbox has one. In 2024, there were 20 reservation-based polling places across the state, up from 0 in 2016, with 3 new polling places in 2024. We should be proud of this progress.

While this was a great step forward, SB421 addresses a few lingering issues. Previously, county clerks and Tribes met to determine who would recruit the poll workers, but the vague language in the law often left this responsibility unclear. As a result, many polling places lacked adequate staffing. Various short-term solutions were used, including staffing by the Secretary of State's office and, in at least one case, a Tribe contributing \$5000 to increase poll worker pay. No other community bears these kinds of burdens to staff their polling places.

To fix this, SB421 explicitly assigns county clerks the responsibility of ensuring that Tribal polling places are fully staffed, just as they do for all other polling locations.

Additionally, the bill addresses another key barrier: the requirement that potential poll workers travel long distances to the county office for in-person training, which has led to recruited poll workers dropping out. SB421 mandates that clerks provide training in-person at the Tribal nation or virtually to eliminate this barrier.

Due to the laws passed last session, I believe we have the best Tribal voting laws in the country and we are a model for other states. These small but crucial changes will help ensure that Tribal polling places are properly staffed and fully operational.

We thank Senator Ohrenschall for sponsoring this bill and for his continued support of Tribal nations.