

IT ADDS UP

By Bryan Wachter

WHILE ITS UNLIKELY THAT THE LEGISLATURE IS

going to make any attempt to dramatically change the tax structure in Nevada, the cost of doing business in Nevada is almost certain to go up.

Bills and bill draft requests calling for substantial changes in employment have been introduced and proposed in both houses.

Bills like: AB90 which calls for changes on how employees can use sick time, or AB101, which calls for legal changes for private rights of action, also AB132 which would make it a crime to use a positive test for marijuana to deny employment for any classification of employee.

Returning this session will also be a new version of 2017's SB397, which called for an increase in authority to the Nevada Equal Rights Commission and could award back pay up to two years prior to when the complaint was filed as well as all attorney's fees.

Included in these changes to employment practices are changes to Nevada's workers compensation laws. For instance, AB119 begins to

change the standards of proof for workers' compensation claims for certain first responders. Further, it makes changes to the definition of occupational diseases.

Legislation is expected to be introduced that will make similar changes to private employees by shifting the burden of proof to the employer to show evidence that an accident was not work-related. This could represent a shift away from Nevada's current no-fault state.

Still several known proposals have yet to even be found in draft form. Expected to return is a bill from last session redefining a whole new system for paid sick leave that continues to threaten the viability of many small businesses that can't absorb the increased employee cost.

Finally, now all that exists on minimum wage are rumors. The only public comment has been Governor Sisolak's statement to the Nevada Indy that he'd like to see \$11.00 or \$12.00 an hour. Many new legislators campaigned on a promise of \$15.00 an hour, but no formal language has been drafted.

It's very likely that the

total costs in administrative time, and increased compensation in sick pay and how its used, an increase in legal fees on extraordinary fines for employment discrimination, and increases in premiums in workers' compensation insurance are going to have more than a significant impact on small retailers. As legislation becomes more available, a clearer picture of the impact to any business will be revealed. In the meantime the retail community remains concerned that too many fiscal impacts at once could lead to unintended consequences. ■

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CEO's Corner

ORGANIZED RETAIL CRIME – IT'S NOT YOUR AVERAGE SHOPLIFTING

SHOPLIFTING HAS BEEN A PROBLEM FOR MERCHANTS, consumers and law enforcement since the early days of bazaars in common gathering places. Crimes of shoplifting have been treated differently over the centuries from loss of limb to imprisonment, and so have the results of such theft including higher prices for consumers.

The continuing dialog on retail theft has resulted in changes to how flea markets are conducted and how burglary statutes are interpreted. In a walk down memory lane, long-time retail members will remember the massive problem of gangs stealing everything from soup to nuts so to speak. The most problematic were shelf thefts and also cargo thefts of over-the-counter drugs and baby formula. These items would show up in flea markets, uncared for and often times polluted.

It was Speaker Barbara Buckley who, in 2007, assisted in the passage of the flea market legislation.

As is always the case, the criminals became known for sophisticated, fencing-on-line, and increasingly skillful "boosting" capabilities. In responding to that increase of activity, the Nevada Legislature passed a statute that defined "organized retail theft" (ORC) (NRS 205.08345) (Added to NRS by 2007, 682, A 2011, 161; 2013, 425).

National Retail Federation (NRF) in their magazine "STORES" had two very interesting articles regarding Organized Retail Crime. NRF included data from a national retail security survey conducted by NRF that reported a loss by US retailers during the year 2017 in the amount of \$47 billion dollars.

Part of the efforts to combat this criminal activity includes the use of data gathering, tags, lock and key displays, packaging, RFID, door alarms, cameras, ad infinitum. Tags haven't worked out so well as clerks and customers get used to hearing the alarms go off and they

tend to be ignored. Door alarms haven't inhibited what is known as "grab-and-go" theft. RFID and packaging have both been vilified but do help. Key locked displays, my personal favorite, have created a whole new community of expert lock-picks, there are even specially-lined booster bags now that plastic-bag use has encouraged "take home" bags.

All of the above do help to various degrees and loss prevention personnel within the retail industry work closely with various police departments in an effort to combat this growing menace. Andy Peterson, a Vice President of Retail Association of Nevada has recently been working with SNORCA. Southern Nevada Organized Crime Association (yes, there's a Northern Nevada counterpart NNORCA).

The various police departments meet with these organizations, compare notes, work together and generally are on the fighting line.

An interesting expansion of efforts to combat this crime is being utilized in the United Kingdom (UK.) Tyco (most people know for alarms) has a subsidiary known as Tyco Retail Solutions. This company has rolled out a big data security program – via Tyco's Shrink Management tool, which replaces old tag removal and alarm set-offs (my term) with more sophisticated technology that includes more information on trends and allows the retailer to make adjustments for scheduling, camera placement and so forth.

Patterns are shown, Cloud-based and SMaaS (their technology) connected. Retailers are in constant need to refine their loss prevention methods, while also responding to consumer needs, self-bagging, carry and return consumer bags, bag and go services, on-line shopping and pick-up.

The convenience trend continues as it should. The 2019 Legislative Session is also facing a

Continued on page 4



KELVIN ATKINSON SENATE MAJORITY LEADER

IT WAS A STORMY JANUARY MORNING WHEN SENATE MAJORITY LEADER

Kelvin Atkinson strode into the Senate Leadership offices in the Legislative Building in Carson City.

While the Legislature wouldn't go into session until February 4, Ways & Means in the Assembly and Senate Finance were getting an early start on the budget and leadership was getting organized.

His staff had messages for him and the huge number of decisions he would have to make was just beginning.

"I had worked with Majority Leader Ford in the 2017 Session," he recalled, "so I was familiar with all the basics, but the majority leader has to make decisions on hundreds of items that you don't really think about. No, there is no handbook."

He chuckled, "thank goodness Claire (Senate Chief Clerk) stepped in and asked if I wanted any help. She's been wonderful and is an example of how important the staff is to legislators."

First elected to the Assembly in 2002, Atkinson was then a Clark County employee. Over the years

he took on chairmanships in the Assembly finally running for the State Senate in 2012. His years of experience paid off as he assumed the Chairmanship of the Senate Commerce Committee and passed a major energy bill.

Since that time, Atkinson has left the county job and opened up his own Las Vegas business – The Urban Lounge.

"It's an upscale lounge downtown; has a bar, gaming and an atmosphere where people can just enjoy themselves. But what a learning experience! I couldn't believe what a small business has to go through to get started. It's different licenses on different days due each week. It's more complicated for a bar, but what it takes to get something done is incredible!" he exclaimed.

"My perspective on small businesses has really changed. I had people calling me to consult – for \$50,000 – I said no thank you, I'll learn this myself. And that's why I'm so glad that we're going to have the small business advocacy in the Lt. Governor's office. I was so thankful Governor Sisolak got right behind it and is



Kelvin Atkinson

supporting it. It will have three people to begin with and people will have some place to go. For instance, 70% of new bars don't make it in their first year.

"Has my perspective changed? Yes on small businesses and it's different when it's your name on the check and people have to feed their families," he quietly added.

As Majority Leader, Atkinson knows one of his primary duties is to help get the Governor's agenda through the Legislature. To that end they've had numerous meetings.

"The Governor has been a pleasure to work with. And I see a huge responsibility to the 13 members of my caucus and my main job is to ensure they're successful. They all have districts with constituents who voted for

them for certain reasons and they have to take those accomplishments and successes back home. It's what the people voted for," he explained.

His zeal for green energy has not diminished.

"I know we have a ballot question to raise the use of renewable energy to 50%, but I've already requested a bill draft to go much higher. We'll see, after all with all this sunshine and natural resources we should be leading the Nation!"

Personally Atkinson expressed deep concern for the homeless, especially the LGBT homeless.

"This is such a big issue in this state and as the first LGBT Majority Leader, it's my duty to help out. The numbers in my Senate district are huge and there's quite a large number in Clark County and Washoe too. Something has to be done.

Kelvin Atkinson has always gotten along with Minority Leader James Settlemeyer and looks forward to working with him.

"We should be able to come up with some bipartisan legislation," he said, "unlike other sessions

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WORKFORCE LEGISLATION

By Andy Peterson

BELOW IS A PARTIAL LIST OF BILLS AND/OR BILL draft requests (BDRs) of potential significance.

EMPLOYMENT

AB 90 – Provides certain employees with the right to use sick leave to assist certain family members with medical needs.

Existing law requires a private employer to pay an employee certain minimum compensation and to provide certain benefits, including overtime compensation and meal and rest breaks, with certain exceptions. (NRS 608.018, 608.019, 608.250) Section 1 of this bill requires a private employer that provides employees with sick leave to allow an employee to use accrued sick leave for an absence due to an illness, injury, medical appointment or other authorized medical need of a member of the employee's immediate

family. Additionally, section 1 authorizes such an employer to limit the amount of sick leave an employee may use for these purposes. Section 1 also requires the Labor Commissioner to prepare and post a bulletin setting forth an explanation of the provisions of this bill and requires a private employer that provides employees with sick leave to post the bulletin in the workplace.

Section 2 of this bill requires the Labor Commissioner to enforce the provisions of section 1, and section 3 of this bill makes a violation of the provisions of section 1 a misdemeanor and authorizes the Labor Commissioner to impose, in addition to any other remedy or penalty, a penalty of up to \$5,000 for each violation. (NRS 608.180, 608.195). This bill is sponsored by the Assembly Committee on Commerce and Labor.

BDR 18-5 – Makes various changes relating

to pay equity. This BDR is sponsored by Senator Pat Spearman.

BDR 53-29 – Revises provisions governing employment practices. This BDR is sponsored by Assembly Woman Dina Neal.

BDR 28-66 – Revises provisions relating to employment. This BDR is sponsored by Senator Nicole Cannizzaro.

BDR 39-104 – Revises provisions relating to wages. This BDR is sponsored by Senator Nicole Cannizzaro.

BDR S-249 – Revises provisions relating to employment. This BDR is sponsored by Senator Heidi Seevers-Gansert.

BDR 53-528 – Revises provisions relating to the classification of persons as employees or independent contractors. This BDR was sponsored by former Senator "Tick" Segerblom.

The BDR can become a bill if it is picked up by another legislator.

BDR 53-723 – Revises provisions relating to employment practices. This BDR is sponsored by Senator Yvanna Cancela. **BDR 23-789** – Revises the definition of the term "supervisory employee." This BDR is sponsored by Senator Dallas Harris. **BDR 869** – Revises provisions governing employment practices. This BDR is sponsored by Assemblyman William McCurdy.

CHILD SUPPORT

BDR 11-630 – Provisions relating to child support. This BDR is sponsored by Senator Keith Pickard.

PLASTIC BAGS

BDR 752 – Revises provisions relating to recycling. This BDR is sponsored by Senator Melanie Scheible.

ORGANIZED RETAIL CRIME *Continued from page 2*

session where prison systems and sentencing guidelines are in need of reform. To date, and to our knowledge, no offenders

have been sentenced under the ORC statute but instead have been pled down to burglary offenses. These statutory changes

will be monitored closely and RAN looks forward to working with all interested parties to insure that retailers' concerns are kept

in mind and consumers prices for "shrinkage" (stolen merchandise) are part of the consideration. ■

Mary Lau



NRF STUDY SAYS MORE ONLINE SHOPPERS WANT FREE SHIPPING

CONSUMERS INCREASINGLY EXPECT FREE DELIVERY OF items they buy online and are also embracing new options like picking up their online purchases at a local store, according to the latest issue of the quarterly Consumer View report released today by the National Retail Federation (NRF).

“Consumers want free delivery, and they’re willing to meet retailers halfway to get it,” NRF Vice President for Research Development and Industry Analysis Mark Mathews said. “If we can get their purchase to the store, they’ll come pick it up if that’s what it takes to avoid a delivery charge. And once they’re in the store, they are very open to seeing what else the retailer has to offer. This is part of the growing evidence that consumers see retail as retail regardless of how they make their purchases and get them.”

“As the realms of physical and digital shopping converge, retailers

are offering more choices than ever in terms of how and when shoppers receive their purchases,” the report said. “And consumers are embracing these new fulfillment options – as long as they’re free.”

The report found that 75 percent of consumers surveyed expect delivery to be free even on orders under \$50, up from 68 percent a year ago.

Baby boomers (born 1946-1964) demand free shipping the most, with 88 percent expecting it. That compares with 77 percent for Generation X (1965-1980), 61 percent for millennials (1981-1994) and 76 percent for Generation Z (1995 and later).

Many consumers now consider shipping costs even before getting to the checkout page, with 65 percent saying they look

up free-shipping thresholds before adding items to their online shopping carts. Consumers also want their products fast, with 39 percent expecting two-day shipping to be free, and 29 percent have backed out of a purchase because two-day shipping wasn’t free.

The survey found that 70 percent of consumers who are aware of buying online and picking up

in store had tried it, and the top reason for doing so was to avoid paying for shipping. Picking up at the cash register is still the most frequent practice, done by 83 percent of those who have bought online and picked up in-store. But as options grow, 63 percent would like to be able to use curbside pickup (tried so far by only 27 percent), 56 percent want merchandise delivered to the trunk of their cars (tried by 19 percent) and 50 percent want to retrieve purchases

from a locker (tried by 16 percent).

Whether they are in a store to pick up an online purchase or there to shop, consumers are attracted by special events. The survey found 58 percent are interested in going to retail events, with 87 percent saying they would come in for a sale or early/exclusive access to items, 81 percent for a party, 80 percent for a product demonstration, 71 percent for a game or competition, and 69 percent to interact with a product expert or to visit a pop-up shop.

Consumer View is a quarterly report issued by NRF that gauges consumer behavior and shopping trends related to stores, online channels, customer loyalty, technology and other topics. Toluna Analytics surveyed 3,002 U.S. adults 18 or older for NRF October 23 through November 30, 2018. The consumer poll has a margin of error of plus or minus 2 percentage points. ■



KELVIN ATKINSON *Continued from page 3*

where the leadership didn’t get along, I’m hopeful we can work things out. I know that since we’re one vote shy of

a super majority, there will be issues where we’ll need a Republican vote. I don’t want us to be fractured like D.C. and our job

is to be the buffer for our folks,” he mused.

The biggest difference in being Majority Leader? “When I was not so

important, I didn’t have to come up to Carson City until after the Super Bowl!” ■



Nevada Notes

LOCKERS COMBAT 'PORCH PIRATES'

With shoppers increasingly buying online, the threat of "porch pirates" stealing packages off your doorstep is only rising.

A new housing development in Summerlin is poised to have lockers that, backers say, will keep deliveries safe.

The lockers, which weigh almost 200 pounds each, will be built into the homes and have three compartments of different sizes, each with its own door. Outside, the courier unlocks a compartment by scanning it or entering a code, and the resident, who is notified of the delivery via text message or other ways, picks up the parcel from inside the house.

Lockers in Mesa Ridge's homes will be built into the side of the garage. It's unclear how widespread porch piracy is in Southern Nevada. The Metropolitan Police Department does not track package theft from homes, indicating that such crimes, depending on the item's value, could

be classified under the broader categories of petty or grand larceny.

But according to a nationwide survey commissioned by telecommunications giant Comcast, which announced the results in November, nearly one in four people was a victim of package theft, and almost half knew someone who was.

LVRJ

LAS VEGAS DRAWING APPAREL SHOWS, BUT NOT JOBS

For two weeks each year, Las Vegas joins the likes of New York City and Paris as one of the world's greatest fashion hubs.

The biannual MAGIC fashion convention draws in nearly 78,000 industry experts from across the globe for one of the world's largest fashion trade shows.

Las Vegas is "not really known" for its apparel industry.

The educational division at UNLV does offer a fashion design certificate program, but it's the only one of its kind in the state.

Nevada's apparel manufacturing has been on the decline in

recent years, according to data from the Nevada Department of Education, Training and Rehabilitation.

In 2017, the average employment rate in this sector was less than one-sixth of what it was in 2006.

According to a report from Los Angeles-based research company IBISWorld, Nevada made up only 0.1 percent of cut and sew manufacturers in the U.S. last year, while California accounted for 59 percent.

Landlocked Nevada's lack of seaport access is putting it at a disadvantage.

A growing apparel manufacturing industry in Las Vegas could be a major source of job growth; one manufacturer said he would need to hire at least 50 people just at the factory level.

California's new annual regulations cause price hikes, which might make it feasible to open a production line in Las Vegas.

LVRJ

MAYA CINEMAS, RETAIL TO OPEN IN NORTH LAS VEGAS

Maya Cinemas will

open its doors in North Las Vegas. Its developer hopes the movie megaplex will boost the economy.

In the next few years, he plans to add restaurants and shops. Building the theater alone created 200 construction jobs.

Once all is said and done, this development could employ up to 700 people.

After the recession, North Las Vegas struggled to rebuild. But Esparza knew what he wanted. He bought 32 acres of land to build Maya Cinemas along with restaurants and retail.

Maya Cinemas will show the latest Hollywood films along with "art films, foreign films, documentaries.

With more job openings and families moving in, Middleton said a theater is coming at the perfect time.

FOX News

APPLE FINISHES RENO WAREHOUSE, ANNOUNCES NORTHERN NEVADA EXPANSION

Apple officials visited Reno to announce

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National Notes

PURCHASES WITH PLASTIC GET COSTLIER FOR MERCHANTS

Visa and Mastercard are raising certain debit- and credit-card fees. Visa's move is expected to cost U.S. merchants at least an additional \$570 million through April 2020, according to one estimate.

Credit-card companies are increasing a range of fees that U.S. merchants will pay to process transactions, a move likely to inflame already fractious relations between many businesses and card networks.

Visa Inc. V 1.22% and Mastercard Inc., MA 1.05% the two biggest U.S. card networks, are preparing increases to certain existing fees that will kick in this April, according to people familiar with the matter.

Some of the changes relate to so-called interchange fees. Card networks set the price of these fees, which merchants pay to banks when consumers shop with the cards they issue. Also due to rise are fees that card networks charge financial institutions for

processing card payments on behalf of merchants.

Merchants often increase the prices consumers pay following such fee increases, in an attempt to protect their own profits. Roughly 1% to 2.5% of prices for goods and services go to cover card fees, according to people familiar with merchant pricing.

Consumers often pay for those fees whether they pay with cash or card. While big in the aggregate—merchants pay tens of billions of dollars in card fees annually—per-transaction charges are often minuscule and so go largely unnoticed by consumers.

A Visa spokeswoman said "Visa's network fees are paid by our financial institution clients and used to enhance the safety, efficiency and innovation of our platform, and are set based on market conditions and to reflect the value we deliver." She said the new price changes impact fees that Visa hasn't adjusted in at least three years.

A Mastercard spokesman declined to comment.

Separately, returned merchandise purchased using Mastercard debit cards will in some cases become more expensive for stores, according to a person familiar with the matter. In some transactions, merchants won't be reimbursed for the interchange fee that was paid on the initial transaction. WSJ

SENATE LETTER SENT

The National Association of Chain Drug Stores (NACDS) and the National Community Pharmacists Association (NCPA) today praised a bipartisan Senate letter to Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar.

The letter thanked the Secretary for concepts in the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' (CMS) proposed rule, Modernizing Part D and Medicare Advantage to Lower Drug Prices and Reduce Out-of-Pocket Expenses, that would reduce patients' out-of-pocket drug costs through reform of pharmacy direct and indirect remuneration (DIR) fees in the Medicare Part D program.

The policy outlined

in the proposed rule would provide needed relief from the impact pharmacy DIR fees have had on patients' out-of-pocket costs and community pharmacies.

The Senators point to the staggering increase in pharmacy DIR fees on pharmacies participating in the Part D program, which have increased by "more than 45,000 percent between 2010 and 2017."

The Senators explain that these retroactive fees, which are taken back from pharmacies months later rather than at the point of sale, cause a reimbursement uncertainty that jeopardizes pharmacies. Loopholes in the method of calculating patients' copayments are such that the fees inflate the patients' financial responsibility as well.

"We appreciate the Senators' support on this vital issue, which urgently needs to be resolved. The increase in pharmacy DIR fees has caused higher costs for patients, which lead to reduced medication adherence and poorer patient health outcomes," said NCPA

Continued on page 11



NRF SAYS 'STATE OF THE ECONOMY IS SOUND' AND FORECASTS RETAIL SALES WILL GROW BETWEEN 3.8 AND 4.4 PERCENT

WASHINGTON—THE NATIONAL RETAIL FEDERATION

forecast that retail sales during 2019 will increase between 3.8 percent and 4.4 percent to more than \$3.8 trillion despite threats from an ongoing trade war, the volatile stock market and the effects of the government shutdown.

"We believe the underlying state of the economy is sound," NRF President and CEO Matthew Shay said. "More people are working, they're making more money, their taxes are lower and their confidence remains high.

The biggest priority is to ensure that our economy continues to grow and to avoid self-inflicted wounds. It's time for artificial problems like trade wars and shutdowns to end, and to focus on prosperity not politics."

"We believe the underlying state of the economy is sound..."

NRF President and CEO Matthew Shay

Preliminary estimates show that retail sales during 2018 grew 4.6 percent over 2017 to \$3.68 trillion, exceeding NRF's forecast of at least 4.5 percent growth. The number includes online and other non-store sales, which were up 10.4 percent at \$682.8 billion. That met NRF's forecast of 10-12 percent online growth, and online is expected to grow in the same 10-12 percent

range again this year. The numbers exclude automobile dealers, gasoline stations and restaurants.

Growth of between 3.8 percent and 4.4 percent would result in total 2019 retail sales of between \$3.82 trillion and \$3.84 trillion. Based on growth



of 10-12 percent, online sales would total between \$751.1 billion and \$764.8 billion, which are included in the total.

Kleinhenz said inflation and interest rates are expected to remain low this year and that retail sales have been helped by recent reductions in gasoline prices.

Retailers so far have been able to largely mitigate the impact of new tariffs on steel, aluminum and goods from China imposed in the past year.

It has been difficult

to measure the impact of the recently ended government shutdown.

Government workers will be paid retroactively but some spending and expenses such as dining out or entertaining have been lost and government contractors will not receive back pay, Kleinhenz said.

A key issue is how quickly the Internal Revenue Service will be able to process a potential backlog of tax returns, which would affect first-quarter spending, he said. ■



WOMEN OF THE NEVADA LEGISLATURE, 2019

On Monday, Feb. 4th Nevada's statehouse began its legislative session and became the first state in the nation to have a female-majority state legislature. Female lawmakers outnumber their male counterparts, with women holding 50.8 percent of the 63 seats in both the Assembly and Senate.



APPOINTMENTS/NEW HIRES BY GOVERNOR SISOLAK

KRISTINA SWALLOW
appointed Nevada Department of Transportation director

She replaces Rudy Malfabon, who leaves the department after 31 years.

Swallow has nearly 25 years experience in civil engineering including most recently as a program engineer in the Las Vegas Department of Public Works.

COMMISSIONER BONNIE A. BULLA
appointed to the Nevada Court of Appeals

Bulla currently serves as discovery commissioner for the Eighth Judicial District Court.

DR. JONATHAN MOORE
appointed as Acting Superintendent Of Public Instruction of the Nevada Department of Education

Dr. Moore has served as

the deputy superintendent of student achievement at the Department of Education since November 2018.

STAFF APPOINTMENTS

LA NIESHA DAWSON – *Director of Boards and Commissions.*

Prior to joining Governor Sisolak's office, Dawson served as deputy state

director of For Nevada's Future.

JESSICA DISS as *Senior Policy Analyst.*

Diss has served as assistant general counsel to the Public Utilities Commission of Nevada for nearly two years. Diss also served in the Washington, D.C. office of former Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid.



Important Information for SIG Members

*NRS requires all existing members of a self-insured group to be notified of all new members.
NRNSIG new members are listed below.*

EZTrans LLC

Heli Parts Nevada LLC

Helicopter Services of Nevada LLC

K2 Pilates LLC

Snow Snail LLC dba Big O Tire

Snow Snail LLC dba Taco Time

Stepping Stones Childrens Academy LLC dba Stepping Stones Childrens Academy LLC 3

Twelve Twelve LLC

Yim's Product & Seafood LLC

CREDIT CARD PAYMENTS

The Retail Association of Nevada is happy to announce that you can now pay your annual membership dues by credit card on our website: www.rannv.org.

Please contact Piper Brown if you have any questions, 775-882-1700.



NRNSIG members who wish to register a negative vote on a new group member, please write NRNSIG at 575 S. Saliman Road, Carson City, NV 89701, indicating which member and the reason(s) for the negative vote.



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MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION: Find out more about RAN's self insured group. Call Pro Group, **800-859-3177**,



NEVADA NOTES *Continued from page 6*

crews have completed construction on the company's downtown warehouse, in addition to announcing completion of the east campus at its Northern Nevada Data Center east of town.

Further, the mega company announced plans for new construction for a west campus at its data center

in Sparks, as well as partnering on expanding a solar power project for the region.

These expansions, according to a statement, will up the data center's footprint to 1.2 million square feet.

According to Apple, the new facilities are part of the company's five-year, \$10 billion

investment in U.S. data centers announced last year, and join more than 4 million square feet of existing centers in five states.

Construction of the solar power facility is part of an effort to expand the nearby Turquoise Solar Project, located at 21905 Reno Technology Parkway East in Reno. Once fully

operational, the project is expected to generate 60 MW of solar energy.

Further, the project aims to deliver a workforce composed of 80 percent Nevada residents and is committed to hiring veterans first, with up to 20 percent veterans.

N. Nevada Business View

NATIONAL NOTES *Continued from page 7*

CEO B. Douglas Hoey, pharmacist, MBA. "As CMS has noted, revising the structure of these fees could result in billions of dollars in savings for patients." *Press Release*

CVS INTRODUCES NEW CONCEPT STORE

Someday soon you may walk into your local CVS Pharmacy with your prescription in one hand and your yoga mat in the other.

That's because CVS Health is testing a new concept store format as the company plans to shift more of its floor space to health care services.

The drug store chain, one of America's largest retailers, is debuting three HealthHUB locations

in Houston as it heads toward a future with less space devoted to retail goods like seasonal items.

Part of the concept store is closed-off space for classes, such as yoga, as well as expanded space for health treatments.

More than 20 percent of the floor space at the concept stores is devoted to health care services, including wellness products and personalized care. Pharmacists in the HealthHUB will also make regular calls and in-person consultations with certain patients to help them stay on track with their prescription drug plans.

USA Today

WALMART IS CHANGING ITS SICK LEAVE POLICY

Walmart is changing its paid time off policies for its employees, and will start paying bonuses to workers who limit their absences.

The goal is to give incentives to workers who show up every day, while building in protections for people who have no choice but to miss work.

Currently, hourly workers can miss up to 9 days every six months for unexpected absences.

Walmart is cutting that to 5 under the new policy. The policy around vacation days is not changing.

On top of the 5 days every six months, workers will start receiving up to 6 days a year of "protected PTO." Those days can be

used to cover illnesses and emergencies, such as a flat tire or taking care of sick kids or family members.

The difference is the protected PTO won't count against workers' attendance records. Even workers who take all 6 days can be eligible for the new attendance bonus. They won't get the bonus, however, if they dip into the pool of 5 additional days every six months.

For example, an entry-level Walmart sales associate making the company's \$11-an-hour minimum wage could mean an additional \$550 at the end of a quarter. Hourly store supervisors could make up to \$900.

CNN Business



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RETAILERS RESPOND TO 2019 STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

WASHINGTON: THE NATIONAL RETAIL

Federation issued the following statement from President and CEO Matthew Shay on President Donald Trump's State of the Union address.

"Retailers agree that the state of the U.S. economy is sound and expect American consumers to continue to drive growth in the year

ahead. Our top priority is for Congress to focus on areas of common ground in order to keep the economy moving forward.

"Rebuilding the nation's crumbling infrastructure, modernizing North American trade, advancing commonsense immigration reform, protecting consumer privacy, fostering innovation and promoting workforce development are all areas

where Republicans and Democrats can reach across the aisle and get things done — while keeping the government's lights on.

"We commend the president for his efforts to restore balanced trade relationships, and we hope the U.S. and China will continue to move toward a deal and avoid further escalation. Achieving structural reforms, ending existing

tariffs and putting an end to the trade war would provide much-needed certainty and relief for American businesses and families. We encourage the administration to continue to focus on the end goal, and for Congress to restore rather than further neglect its role in trade policy.

"The state of the union is indeed strong, and we have an opportunity to make it even stronger. Let's take it." ■