



RAN
Retail Association of Nevada

February 2021

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NEVADA NEWS

SISOLAK'S STATE OF THE STATE AND HIS OPTIMISTIC BUDGET PROJECTIONS

By Bryan Wachter

I N HIS STATE OF THE STATE ADDRESS ON JANUARY 19TH, NEVADA GOVERNOR

Steve Sisolak outlined his budget for the upcoming biennium, and at no surprise to anyone, his budget will favor Nevada's public employees and unions.

This budget raises red flags, but so far will rely on federal stimulus funds, and not additional tax dollars, to make it balance.

The proposed general fund budget is \$8.69 billion for the next two years, a two percent decrease from the previous biennium, and the overall budget is \$27.1 billion, which is up \$1.3 from the previous budget.

In his budget, Governor Sisolak has made sure the public sector will be kept whole while Nevada's private sector is struggling. His plan will eliminate state worker furloughs, provide raises for teachers and additional money for state employee



Bryan Wachter

retirement contributions, including expanded benefits for public employees to include a new low deductible co-pay option.

The plan includes little help for Nevada's struggling private sector. With the exception of one-shot funding for immediate small business assistance, all additional spending reversed many of the cuts that were taken during the interim.

This support is miniscule when compared to the amount of funding allocated

for a new medical school at UNLV and new programs for K-12.

Overall, the budget is optimistic. It adjusts projections considering December 2020 revenues exceeded expectations, and it relies heavily on federal

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VALENTINE'S DAY SPENDING TO TOTAL \$21.8 BILLION

JUST OVER HALF (52%) OF U.S. ADULTS PLAN TO CELEBRATE

Valentine's Day this year, spending a total of \$21.8 billion, according to the annual survey released today by the National Retail Federation and Prosper Insights & Analytics.

Nearly three-quarters (73%) of consumers celebrating Valentine's Day this year feel it is important to do so given the current state of the pandemic. It is clear the virus is still front and center, with 74% indicating it will directly impact their plans for the holiday. Those celebrating can still expect the classic candy, cards and flowers,

but there is a significant decline in the number of consumers who will plan for an evening out. Less than one-quarter (24%) of consumers plan to gift their loved one with an evening out, the lowest in the survey's history. Even still, 41% say they will plan a special dinner or celebration in the comfort of their own home.

Because of these altered plans, it is no surprise that spending on Valentine's Day gifts this year has dropped. Those celebrating plan to spend an average \$164.76, down \$32 on average per person, from a record \$196.31 in 2020 right before the pandemic hit.

With consumers

planning fewer evenings out, spending on significant others saw the biggest drop this year, down an average of \$13 year over year.

Further proof of COVID-19's impact on spending plans is the decrease in spending on teachers, classmates and co-workers, as many continue to social distance. Consumers say they will spend an average of \$10.77 on their children's classmates and teachers, down from \$14.45 last year. Additionally, they plan to spend an average of \$8.47 on colleagues, down from \$12.96 in 2020.

"Consumers still feel it's important to spoil their loved ones in light of the pandemic," Prosper Insights

Executive Vice President of Strategy Phil Rist said. "This year's total and average spending figures are near record highs, as the second highest in the survey's history."

This year, online is the most popular Valentine's Day shopping destination, visited by 39%, followed by department stores (29%), discount stores (28%) and local small businesses and specialty stores tied (17%).

This year is the first time consumers listed small businesses as a top five shopping destination since the question was added to the survey in 2015. ■

SISOLAK'S STATE OF THE STATE *Continued from page 1*

funding. According to his office, K-12 and higher education are expected to receive significant support from the federal government; however, those numbers and federal guidance have not yet been made available and were not included in the budget.

According to the Governor's Office of Finance, federal dollars are projected to make

up 40% of the total state spending, with a majority of that money being used for Medicaid, the largest single budget in the state, followed by education.

This budget is nothing new. In fact, it too misses the opportunity for there to be a critical and necessary conversation of how Nevada will emerge from this crisis.

The budget, with federal support, may be

solvent for this biennium, but there is no preparation being made for Nevada's post-COVID future where gaming and tourism have yet to return to their prior levels.

As the legislative rumor mill fires up, we are hearing the Democratic leadership is keeping tax hikes on the table to fund spending priorities.

Now more than ever the governor and

legislative leadership need to thoughtfully review whether there are better ways of doing business instead of ratcheting up the rates of existing taxes. RAN is continuing to monitor and encourage the governor and legislature to look at ways we can better use our existing tax base without heavy reliance on more federal stimulus. ■



RETAIL IS AN ECONOMIC DRIVER

By Andy Peterson

WHEN THINKING ABOUT ECONOMIC

drivers few members of the general public think about the retail industry. They should; the retail industry is our nation's largest private employer.

According to the National Retail Federation, the industry contributes \$3.9 trillion dollars to our annual gross domestic product, and it employs 52 million Americans. Retail is a quiet giant most take for granted. Whatever one may or may not think of the retail industry, it supplies everything we use from day to day. Without it we would have limited access to food, medicines, clothing, and any number of necessities that support our lives.

In many ways the industry itself serves as a barometer for the health of the economy itself. Recently, the National Retail Federation released the holiday sales numbers. It was somewhat surprising that year over year numbers increased by 8.3% to \$789.4 billion in the time of a worldwide pandemic.

Had the numbers been



Andy Peterson

underwater there may have been a collective shudder that sent investors fleeing and the rest of us wondering what kind of economic uncertainty might be headed our direction.

However, the numbers have served as a comfortable sense of optimism that the economy will continue to perform. Few other industries offer such platforms for gaging the health of country.

Most can be assured the "near future" economy to be stable. The barometer has given some assurance of forward growth and increased economic activity.

Unforeseen events can still surprise us all. Witness the recent worldwide pandemic that quickly

turned over the apple cart and upset markets. Yet, even in times of great uncertainty – such as we experienced in late second quarter of 2020 – retail led the world back to certainty.

Other industries took their cues from the resilience, creativity, and leadership of those in the retail industry. When more people get vaccinated, as will surely happen in time, it is likely we'll experience stronger economic growth.

Interestingly, ten of the top 100 retailers in the U.S. operate in Nevada. Eight of them are RAN members. These include Walmart (\$523.96 billion), Amazon (\$250.0 billion), Kroger Co. (\$122.28 billion), Walgreens Boots Alliance (\$136.86 billion), Home Depot (\$110.54 billion), CVS (\$88.51), Target (\$77.13 billion), and Lowe's (\$72.15 billion).

This is not to discount the hundreds of thousands of small businesses which have carved a niche out and have made a go of it. These "mom & pops" should be complimented for providing jobs and contributing to the economy in a manner which can only be described as substantial.

Given Retail's heft, it's ability to predict near term economic certainty, and its large private employment base, considerable consideration ought to be given on several fronts.

This includes prioritizing vaccinations for retail employees and legislative consideration in the 2021 session.

Governor Sisolak has already given legislators priority access to vaccinations — they were given vaccination priority over retail workers who have been tireless in making sure the general public has access to goods and service throughout the pandemic. Secondly, the legislature ought to resist over regulating the industry as our neighbor to the west has done. Last session there were bills introduced which would have moved us in California's direction.

This session, sensitivity should be administered to both retail employer and employee.

Retail is a big deal in America, and it's a big deal in Nevada. Its time we all give it the respect it deserves. ■



LEGISLATIVE SESSION: BI-PARTISAN COOPERATION GIVES BEST OUTCOMES

By *Lindsay Knox, McDonald Carano Law Firm*



Government Affairs & Advocacy Group

WITH LESS THAN TWO WEEKS UNTIL THE

2021 legislative session gavels in, it is already shaping up to be unlike any session in Nevada’s history, as early indications point to a predominately virtual process with limited to no access to the legislative building for the lobbying core or the general public.

However, what we are still lacking is a formalized plan laying out how session will be conducted, which has left many to rely solely on rumors. We know public access to the building will follow Governor Sisolak’s directive of only 25% capacity during the beginning of session, which will be reached by legislators and staff.

There is hope the public will be allowed back in the building as the session progresses, even if it’s with limited capacity once more vaccines have

been distributed.

During the two special sessions held over last summer, the lack of access to the legislative building and lawmakers was devastating to the legislative process.

What may have been overlooked is the core responsibility of lobbyists. Lobbyists play a critical role in representing client interests and advocating for their cause, however it also the responsibility of lobbyists to educate legislators.

Yes, you read that correctly. Lobbyists educate legislators and staff on specific policies and budgetary items important to their clients as well as provide subject matter experts to discuss how policies can positively or negatively impact specific industries, regions, or groups.

Legislators rely on the knowledge of lobbyists and their clients to make informed decisions on the policies they will be voting on. As we move



Lindsay Knox

into the upcoming session it should be the hope of everyone that lobbyists and the public have access to legislators and staff in order to provide timely information on the matters in front of them. Without the insight of experts, policy is made with a narrowed lens which inevitably leads to policy that negatively impacts Nevadans.

If we have learned anything over the past year, its unity is needed now more than ever and what has happened at the federal level has no room in our state.

The Nevada Legislature has a long and successful history of working in a bipartisan fashion. It is behooved of all Nevadans – whether Republican, Democrat, or Non-Partisan – to bridge the gap of partisan issues and recognize the best decisions are made when we see ourselves not as a party but as a Nevadan.

It would be an unrealistic expectation to think Republicans and Democrats will agree on every issue brought forward, but what should be expected is open dialogue and a resounding commitment from lawmakers to bettering the state. It has been said countless times, the best policies are both created by and disliked by both parties.

The Economic Forum originally estimated the state’s biennium budget would have a \$1.8-billion shortfall. After the release of Governor Sisolak’s proposed budget, the

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NRF STATEMENT REGARDING RIOTS IN WASHINGTON DC

THE NATIONAL RETAIL FEDERATION TODAY ISSUED

the following statement from President and CEO Matthew Shay regarding the attacks on the U.S. Capitol as Congress was meeting to certify Joe Biden's win in the 2020 presidential election.

"For more than two centuries we have prided

ourselves as Americans on our democratic principles, our nation of laws and the unique experience of peaceful transfers of power from one administration to the next, regardless of party affiliation."

"This is a sad and distressing day for our country. For more than two centuries we have prided ourselves

as Americans on our democratic principles, our nation of laws and the unique experience of peaceful transfers of power from one administration to the next, regardless of party affiliation.

"Our retailers, the millions of associates they employ and the communities they serve across the country want and need our elected

officials to focus on the priorities that ensure faith in our government through stability. Today's riots are repugnant and fly in the face of the most basic tenets of our constitution, and the Administration must move quickly to provide the leadership that will end this affront to our democracy." ■

BI-PARTISAN COOPERATION

Continued from page 4

state's monetary shortfall does not seem as daunting as before and with the anticipation of President Biden's \$1.9-trillion package being introduced and passed, Nevada may be breathing a little easier.

The continued focus to diversify Nevada's economy will be a driver not only during the legislative session but as the state moves forward in creating a more robust economy.

During Governor Sisolak's State of the State, he announced his plan to create more than 165,000 permanent jobs over the next decade through five new initiatives:

- Passing a bold energy bill this upcoming session to increase transmission, storage and distribution of

- all forms of clean energy. This includes lithium mining, an important aspect in electricity storage, and Nevada is already home to the most successful lithium reserves in North America.

- Creation of "Innovation Zones" to help attract groundbreaking technologies to the state, without having to use tax abatements or public financing. Companies such as Blockchains LLC are committed to investing in "smart cities" in northern Nevada which will run solely on Blockchain technology and will operate outside of the typical county parameters.

- Preparing Nevada's workforce for the new

- emerging economy. This includes the creation of a "Nevada Job Force," a private-sector job training work program for people who have lost their jobs during the pandemic, or because of automation. Governor Sisolak also called for the creation of a "Remote Work Resource Center" to help workers find remote work opportunities, and announced plans to transition Nevada's community colleges out from under the authority of the Nevada System of High Education (NSHE) to a new, independent authority.

- Building of infrastructure by launching the State Infrastructure Bank through \$75

- million set aside in the budget which will help leverage outside capital to fund projects that will include rural broadband, renewable energy, and road improvements.

- Making government work better, including improvements to Nevada's Department of Employment, Rehabilitation and Training, which was found to be woefully flawed after the COVID-19 pandemic created a massive unemployment claim burden. The Department, which typically addressed on average 20,000 claims a week, jumped to 370,000 claims a week virtually overnight. ■



Nevada Notes

TAX AMNESTY PROGRAM

In last summer's special session, the legislature passed a tax amnesty program aimed at bringing in past due taxes. Ostensibly, the program would help resolve some of the state's budget problems while providing overdue taxpayers relief regarding penalties and interest. Should taxpayers take advantage they would only owe the overdue taxes supposedly helping both taxpayer and the cash strapped state. The program was part of a \$1 billion dollar budget balancing measure.

Details of the program were recently announced and applies to monthly tax returns due on or before June 30, 2020, and to quarterly returns due on or before April 30, 2020. The program runs from February 1st to May 1st. The amnesty program does not include the lodging tax, real property transfer tax and locally assessed property tax. It also does not apply to businesses or individuals who have a compromise or settlement agreement with the Department of Taxation or Nevada Tax Commission regarding unpaid tax.

NVIndy

COVID-19 VACCINATION DISTRIBUTION PLAN CHANGES

Governor Steve Sisolak,

in response to one of the worst vaccination rates of all fifty states, has changed course in how vaccinations will be distributed. To date, only front-line medical workers and senior citizens living in a group situation. The new approach will include a new "dual lane" strategy which continues to vaccinate essential workers, senior citizens, and people who may have an underlying medical condition.

Sisolak News Conference

SISOLAK EXTENDS THE "PAUSE"

On January 11th Governor Sisolak extended the "Pause." The pause is in reflection to rising

The pause has been in effect since late November and it was hoped it would slow the rate of infection. However, rates have remained elevated and hospitalizations remain a concern. Under the continued "statewide pause," businesses including restaurants, bars and gyms are restricted to 25 percent capacity, and retail establishments will remain at 50 percent capacity.

Sisolak News Conference

STATE LAWMAKER RESIGNS AMID INVESTIGATION

State Assemblyman, Alex Assefa, resigned amid controversy. Assefa

tendered his resignation to Governor Sisolak last month. Assefa resigned due to an investigation he improperly used campaign finance monies and to questions that he did not actually live in the district he represented.

Assefa's wife's home and his condominium were raided last May by law enforcement. No charges have been filed.

News 4

STATE SENATOR YVONNE CANCELA RESIGNS TO SERVE IN BIDEN ADMINISTRATION

State Senator Yvonne Cancela resigned her position last month in order to join the Biden Administration in Washington DC. The move was anticipated as Cancela served on Biden's Campaign in Nevada. She has served the 10th district since 2017.

Las Vegas Review Journal

STATE BUDGET SHRINKS

If Governor Sisolak has his way the state budget will shrink by 2 percent in the next biennium. This is due to COVID-19. The reduction is far less than initially feared when the state shut down.

The budget starts in July 2021 and is not expected to include any new taxes.

Of note, neither the state senate or assembly have a super majority and so any proposal to raise taxes is

a likely non-starter.

The proposed general fund budget of nearly \$8.7 billion is \$187 million less than the current plan, amended in special session last year in response to a \$1.2 billion budget impact from the pandemic.

The overall state budget, including money received from the federal government and other sources, tops \$27 billion, an increase of 5.1 percent. Following are a few drivers of the state budget:

- \$15.2 billion for health and human services, an increase of \$2.6 billion over the current biennium. Medicaid costs, which account for two-thirds of that budget, are up nearly \$1.6 billion.

- The budget includes \$342 million in supplemental appropriations for the current fiscal year, the largest of which is \$331 million for K-12 education to offset state and local revenue shortfalls caused by the pandemic.

- Education for the 2021-23 biennium for both K-12 and higher education is budgeted at \$7 billion, a decrease of \$130 million over the current biennium.

- K-12 will see a \$30 million reduction and higher education an \$80 million reduction. The total K-12 expense is \$6.6 billion, including

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National Notes

U.S. REMAINS BIGGEST RETAIL MARKET; WIDENS LEAD AGAINST CHINA

The U.S. remains the largest retail market in the world. This in reflection of U.S. stimulus efforts and the resilience of American consumers.

Sales will rise 0.8% reaching \$5.506 trillion according to eMarketer. The increase represents \$612.20 billion more in sales than eMarketer had expected (and a \$41.20 billion increase over 2019).

It was initially thought China may overcome the U.S. as the biggest consumer market due to pandemic forces. However, the scenario has not played out as anticipated. China's retail market is now forecast to fall by 2.9% (compared with a previous forecast for a 4.0% decline). China's retail sales in 2020 are expected to reach \$5.130 trillion in 2020, down from \$5.283 trillion in 2019.

Chain Store Age

ORGANIZED RETAIL CRIME CONTINUES TO RISE

Dollars lost to organized retail crime (ORC) topped the key \$700,000 per \$1 billion in sales threshold for the fifth year in a row, according to the newly released 16th annual ORC study from the National Retail Federation. Seventy-five percent of surveyed loss prevention executives at a

cross-section of large and mid-sized retail companies said ORC activity had increased in the past year, up 10% from 68% in 2019.

The study also found that ORC losses averaged \$719,548 per \$1 billion in sales during 2020, up 2% from 2019 and up nearly 60% from the \$453,940 per \$1 billion average reported in 2015.

The top five cities for ORC in the past year in order were Los Angeles, Chicago, Miami, New York and San Francisco.

Many states have raised the threshold of what constitutes a felony, which have allowed criminals to steal more prior to being charged with a felony.

Among retailers surveyed, 64% have seen an increase in average ORC case values in states where that has happened, up 25% from 51% who said the same each of the past two years.

Chain Store Age

SPEED IS FOCUS OF HOME DEPOT'S NEWEST DISTRIBUTION CENTER

Home Depot's newest distribution center is designed for speed. The new distribution center will support faster replenishment to stores across the Southeast region.

The 657,600-sq.-ft. center, located in Locust Grove, Ga., opened on Dec. 14. It features innovative enhancements to save time, increase output and efficiency, and promote environmental sustainability, the company said.

"Our ability to adapt and scale to this high-demand environment is a testament to both the investments we've made in the business, as well as our associates' focus on our customers," said Paul Larkin, VP of supply chain.

The new facility includes a zero-emission hydrogen fuel cell charging station, described as a sustainable and more efficient way to power material handling equipment, automated trailer check-in and wider conveyors to help the building move high volumes of products faster than ever before.

The center is part of the retailers plan to update many of its distribution centers.

Chain Store Age

TARGET OFFERS COVID-19 ACCESS TO PAID LEAVE

Target is trying to help workers in time of COVID-19 by offering an additional \$2 dollars per hour until May 2nd, and for team members aged 65 or older, team members who are pregnant, and those with underling medical condition access to 30 days paid leave.

Additionally, 20,000 hourly team leads will receive bonuses which range from \$250 to \$1,500.

Lastly, Target will commit \$1 million to the Target Team Member Giving Fund, and they will donate \$9 million to relief and assistance to organizations aiding in responding to the virus.

Chain Store Age

CVS ADMINISTERS 1ST COVID-19 VACCINES IN LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES

CVS has begun to administer Pfizer's vaccine in 12 states. In addition, CVS plans to administer the vaccine to staff and residents to four million residents and staff in 40,000 facilities.

Teams from CVS Pharmacy will be on hand to make three visits to each facility, ensuring residents and staff receive the initial vaccine, as well as a booster.

The overall plan is to have staff and residents vaccinated between three to four weeks after the initial visit, the company said.

States that will be receiving the vaccination before January include Connecticut, Florida, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Nevada, New Hampshire, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon and Vermont.

An additional 36 states, including the District of Columbia will begin their vaccinations on Dec. 28.

Chain Store Age

HALF OF ALL U.S. STATES RAISING MINIMUM WAGE IN 2021

Half of all U.S. states raising minimum wage in 2021 – here is the list:

- Alaska: Up to \$10.34 per hour, based on a 1.4% increase in the cost of living.
- Arizona: Up to \$12.15

Continued on page 11



DESPITE UNPRECEDENTED CHALLENGES, CONSUMERS AND RETAILERS DEMONSTRATED INCREDIBLE RESILIENCE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

RETAIL SALES DURING 2020'S NOVEMBER-DECEMBER

holiday season grew an unexpectedly high 8.3% over the same period in 2019 to \$789.4 billion, exceeding the National Retail Federation's holiday forecast despite the economic challenges of the coronavirus pandemic, NRF said today. The numbers include online and other non-stores sales, which were up 23.9% at \$209 billion.

"Despite unprecedented challenges, consumers and retailers demonstrated incredible resilience this holiday season," NRF President and CEO Matthew Shay said. "Faced with rising transmission of the virus, state restrictions on retailers and heightened political and economic uncertainty, consumers chose to spend on gifts that lifted the spirits of their families and friends and provided a sense of normalcy given the challenging year. We believe President-elect

Biden's stimulus proposal, with direct payments to families and individuals, further aid for small businesses and tools to keep businesses open, will keep the economy growing."

NRF Chief Economist Jack Kleinhenz said consumers shifted into high gear in December, giving the holiday season a strong finish that could be a good sign for the continuing recovery of the economy this year.

The 8.3% holiday season increase was more than double the 3.5% average holiday increase over the previous five years, including 2019's 4% gain.

"There was a massive boost to most consumer wallets this season," Kleinhenz said. "Consumers were able to splurge on holiday gifts because of increased money in their bank accounts from the stimulus payments they received earlier in the year and the money they saved by not traveling, dining out or attending entertainment events.

Some families are still struggling, as are some retail sectors. But the promise of a new round of stimulus checks after a deal was struck before Christmas helped increase consumer confidence. Consumers were also encouraged by the news of COVID-19 vaccines becoming available, which helped offset concerns about increased infection rates and state restrictions on activity."

Kleinhenz said holiday-related spending picked up in the third and fourth weeks of December, after it was too late to expect delivery of online purchases by Christmas. Consumers turned to quick in-and-out trips to stores and took advantage of buy online, pick up in-store/curbside services retailers have perfected over the past several months.

NRF had forecast that sales during the 2020 holiday season – defined as November 1 through December 31 – would increase between 3.6% and 5.2% over 2019 to a total between \$755.3 billion and

\$766.7 billion. The forecast called for online sales to increase between 20% and 30% to between \$202.5 billion and \$218.4 billion. The numbers exclude automobile dealers, gasoline stations and restaurants.

Retail sales during December were down 1.6% seasonally adjusted from November but were up 8.6 unadjusted year-over-year. That built on a year-over-year gain of 8% in November despite November's month-over-month decline of 0.9% from October. As of December, the three-month moving average was up 8.9% over the same period in 2019.

NRF's numbers are based on data from the U.S. Census Bureau, which said today that overall December sales – including auto dealers, gas stations and restaurants – were down 0.7% seasonally adjusted from November but up 2.9% unadjusted year-over-year.

The holiday season saw year-over-year gains

Continued on next page



2021 STANDING COMMITTEE SCHEDULE

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
S. Commerce and Labor	8am		8am		8am
A. Commerce and Labor	1:30pm		1:30pm		1:30pm
S. Education	1pm		1pm		1pm
A. Education		1:30pm		1:30pm	
S. Finance	8am	8am	8am	8am	8am
A. Ways and Means	8am	8am	8am	8am	8am
S. Government Affairs	3:30pm		3:30pm		3:30pm
A. Government Affairs	8am	8am	8am	8am	8am
S. Growth and infrastructure	3:30pm		3:30pm		3:30pm
A. Growth and Infrastructure		1:30pm		1:30pm	
S. Health and Human Services		3:30pm		3:30pm	
A. Health and Human Services	1:30pm		1:30pm		1:30pm
S. Judiciary	1pm	1pm	1pm	1pm	1pm
A. Judiciary	8am	8am	8am	8am	8am
S. Leg Ops and Elections		3:30pm		3:30pm	
A. Leg Ops and Elections		4pm		4pm	
S. Natrual Resources	4pm		4pm		
A. Natural Resources		3:30pm		3:30pm	
S. Rev and Economic Development		1pm		1pm	
A. Revenue		4pm		4pm	

DESPITE UNPRECEDENTED CHALLENGES... *Continued from page 8*

in six out of nine retail categories, led by double-digit increases for online sales, building materials stores and sporting goods stores. Specifics from key retail sectors during the November-December

- holiday period, all unadjusted year-over-year, include:
 - Online and other non-store sales, up 23.9%
 - Building materials and garden supply stores, up 19%

- Sporting goods stores, up 15.2%
- Grocery and beverage stores, up 9.6%
- Health and personal care stores, up 5.4%
- Furniture and home furnishings stores, up 2.2%

- General merchandise stores, down 0.1%
- Electronics and appliance stores, down 14.4%
- Clothing and clothing accessory stores, down 14.9%



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.

Amy's Eden Assisted Homes LLC

Avalon Oak LLC

Evolution Builders LLC

Lovelock Highspeed

Onecare Hospice LLC

Happy Valentine's Day!

Valentine's Day is the second most popular day of the year for sending cards. Christmas is the first.

Worldwide, over 50 million roses are given for Valentine's Day each year.

Approximately 27 percent of those who buy flowers on Valentine's Day are women. Only 73% are men.

Cupid is said to be the symbol of valentines. Cupid is the son of Venus. Venus is the Roman god of love and beauty.

The heart is associated with Valentine's Day as it is considered the source of all human emotions.

Girls of medieval times ate bizarre foods on St. Valentine's Day to make them dream of their future husband.

220,000 is the average number of wedding proposals on Valentine's Day each year.

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.



RAN
Retail Association of Nevada

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

10 ♦ or the RAN office at **775-882-1700** (toll free in Nevada 800-690-5959). Don't forget to check out our website, www.RANNV.org.



NEVADA NOTES *Continued from page 6*

\$4.9 billion in state funds. Higher education funding is projected at \$2 billion. *Information drawn from the Las Vegas Review Journal.*

GOVERNOR SISOLAK'S STATE OF STATE ADDRESS

Due to Covid-19, Governor Sisolak released a video of his State of the State address. In the video the governor spoke to the success of the administration to date.

These included giving raises to teachers, ending surprise billing wherein people are billed out of system, banned insurance companies from excluding pre-existing conditions and meeting the challenges of the pandemic.

Sisolak went on to outline the state's continuing challenges. These include the pandemic and getting shots into the arms of

Nevadans. As well, he outlined new initiatives to improve the lives of all Nevadans. These include the creation of Innovation Zones to promote such things as blockchain technology, a new Energy Economy which would focus on green energy storage, a new NV Economy wherein the state would enlist private companies to help train

employees in new areas of work, a Remote Work Resource Center which would help employees engage remotely with companies throughout the world, and Infrastructure Fast Track which would work to forward stalled infrastructure.

Information drawn from Las Vegas Review Journal and the speech text released by Governor's office.

NATIONAL NOTES *Continued from page 7*

per hour starting in 2021 based on the Consumer Price Index..

- Arkansas: Up to \$11.00 per hour.
- California: Up to \$14.00 per hour, for businesses with 26 or more employees; \$13.00 for smaller employers.
- Colorado: Up to \$12.32 per hour. Denver's local government is increasing the minimum wage to \$14.77 with another increase to \$15.87 happening in 2022.
- Connecticut: Up to \$12.00 per hour, scheduled to increase to \$13.00 on August 1, 2021
- Florida: Up to \$8.65 per hour increasing to \$10.00 on September 30, 2021.
- Illinois: \$11.00 per hour, from \$10.00.
- Maine: Up to \$12.15 per hour, from \$12.00.
- Maryland: In 2021, the minimum wage is \$11.75 for

- large employers and \$11.60 for small employers.
- Massachusetts: Up to \$13.50 per hour, an increase of 75 cents.
- Minnesota: Up to \$10.08 per hour (from \$10.00) for employees of large employers with an annual gross volume of sales not less than \$500,000. Small employers must pay employees a minimum wage of at least \$8.21 per hour (up from \$8.15).
- Montana: Up to \$8.75 per hour, up 10 cents.
- Nevada: For employees who do not receive health benefits, minimum wage to increase to \$9.75 on July 1, 2021. For employees who do receive health benefits applies, to increase to \$8.75 on July 1, 2020.
- New Jersey: Up to \$12.00 per hour for most employees, from \$11.00 per hour.

- New Mexico: Up to \$10.50 per hour, from \$9.00.
- New York: The state of New York will increase its standard minimum wage to \$12.50 in 2021, except for fast-food workers in the state, whose minimum wage will be increased to \$15.00 on July 1, 2021. Also, tiered/rates vary by region: \$15.00 per hour in New York City; \$14.00 per hour in Nassau, Suffolk and Westchester counties (then \$1.00 each year after, reaching \$15.00 on December 31, 2021); \$11.80 per hour in remainder of the state.
- Ohio: Up to \$8.80 per hour, up 10 cents from \$8.70 per hour, based on a 1.4% increase in the cost of living. Wage rates are adjusted annually based on inflation.
- Oregon: The state minimum wage is tiered, with the highest rate in the Metro Portland area at \$13.25 per

- hour (\$14.00 effective July 1, 2021), the lowest in rural (non-urban) areas at \$11.50 per hour (\$12.00 effective July 1, 2021), and a minimum wage of \$12.00 per hour (\$12.75 effective July 1, 2021) in the rest of the state.
- Pennsylvania: \$7.25 per hour, but \$13.50 for employees under Governor's jurisdiction, up from \$13.00.
- South Dakota: Up to \$9.45 per hour, up 15 cents
- Vermont: Up to \$11.75 per hour, a 79-cent scheduled increase over the \$10.96 per hour 2020 rate.
- Washington: Up to \$13.69 per hour, for employees who have reached the age of 18. Workers under 16 years old can be paid 85% of the adult minimum wage, or \$11.64 per hour, in 2021.



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NACDS: “WE’RE TRUSTED, WE’RE LOCAL, AND WE’RE READY TO GO”

NACDS HAS RELEASED A NEW AD THAT SAYS

“it’s time to end this pandemic once and for all” and that “as vaccines become available, pharmacies are prepared to help reopen America.”

The ad notes NACDS’ estimate, based on conservative assumptions, that pharmacies can meet demand for 100 million COVID-19 vaccinations in one month when such supply is available.

• NACDS emphasizes that 90 percent of Americans live within five miles of a pharmacy.

• Also, pharmacies have experience in collaborating with public health to help go the extra miles to reach vulnerable Americans with mobile clinics – as has been done for flu vaccinations and in response to natural disasters such as hurricanes.

• Focused on the Washington, DC market, the ad complements

• NACDS’ recommendations to government about how to ramp-up vaccinations. These recommendations continue to gain progress and traction amid the focus on getting existing vaccines to patients’ arms, and preparing for forthcoming vaccine supply.

• “This ad serves as a tribute to the trust, accessibility, dedication and heroics of pharmacists and entire pharmacy teams.

• It also serves as a

• pledge that pharmacies will continue to be there for all individuals, families, communities and the nation as we look with hope and confidence to these safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines,” said NACDS President and CEO Steven C. Anderson.

• “As the ad states, our message to government decision makers is this: we’re trusted, we’re local, and we’re ready to go.” ■