ADVOCACY IN SOUTHERN NEVADA

United Way of Southern Nevada works to move families out of poverty through our Community-Based Agenda, a roadmap to improving lives through early education, high school achievement, post-secondary attainment and workforce supports. We engage in advocacy around our State and region’s policies because we know that creating a more inclusive environment for local families is one of the most powerful ways to help them achieve their goals.

For United Way of Southern Nevada, the broad reach of our organization increases the importance of our advocacy activities at Federal, State, and local levels. UWSN’s service area includes Clark County, which holds 72% of the total population in the State of Nevada and is represented by a significant proportion of elected offices at state and Federal levels. 74% of the Nevada State Assembly and 76% of the Nevada State Senate represent the communities UWSN is working to improve. At the Federal level, three out of the four individuals representing Nevada in the US House of Representatives are based in Clark County. UWSN is well-positioned to support and share the views of the United Way network, Clark County’s nonprofit organizations, and the broader Southern Nevada community.

2017 presented a set of advocacy challenges but the United Way of Southern Nevada’s partners and supporters united around the Community-Based Agenda and stepped up to advocate for the community we serve. Working in concert with our Board of Directors, Public Policy Committee, and community advocates, we identified priorities for the 2017 Legislative Session in our Policy Agenda and advocated to improve opportunity for all. Together, we advocated on behalf of the legislation listed in this report and signed into law.
**ADVOCACY IN ACTION**

Building relationships with elected officials takes other forms as well. UWSN staff had the opportunity to share a report on homelessness among Clark County School District high school students with County Commissioner Mary Beth Scow in January 2017. In July 2017, Clark County Commissioner Steve Sisolak spoke at the United Way Western Regional Conference, proclaiming July 18th United Way Day in Clark County.

### Leadership Activities (2017)

- Meeting (Official)  25
- Constituent Letter/Email  11
- Testimony  5
- Meeting (Staff)  3
- Media Engagement  3

### SOUTHERN NEVADA HIGHLIGHTS

**Providing adequate and equitable funding for K-12 education**

**Senate Bill 544** - Ensures sufficient funding for K-12 Public Education for the 2017-2019 Biennium. At $2.3 billion over the next two years, this bill continues many of the programs implemented by Gov. Brian Sandoval during the 2015 session, with nearly $900 million earmarked for education through 2019. With increased funding for education, more students will have the opportunity to build a strong educational foundation for success from cradle to career.

**Providing funding for administrator and teacher training**

**Senate Bill 155** - Appropriates state funds for the implementation and operation of educational leadership training programs for educators in Clark County. This funding will provide professional development opportunities for teachers and help retain qualified and experienced teachers to support students.

### United Way Day at the Legislature

Advocating for the issues that make a real difference in our community, UWSN and United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierra staff and board members joined together at the Nevada Legislature to personally meet with senators and assembly members in Carson City during United Way Day on March 27, 2017.

Discussions covered a diverse range of topics including innovative ways to improve access to high-quality early education options, recruiting qualified teachers to Nevada, and ensuring a robust system of public and mental health services, and many of these discussions had positive outcomes. United Way of Southern Nevada and United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierra were presented with a proclamation on the assembly floor recognizing the commitment of Nevada’s United Way organizations.
SOUTHERN NEVADA HIGHLIGHTS continued

Providing initial teacher licensure reciprocity relief for educators relocating from other states
Assembly Bill 77 - Makes changes to record keeping for schools and school districts, as well as make changes regarding reciprocity for teacher licensure. Reciprocity for teachers that have been licensed in other states to teach in Nevada will help reduce the teacher shortage throughout the state and increase education in Southern Nevada, one of UWSN’s main goals to help move families out of poverty.

Increasing the recruitment and retention of licensed and endorsed early childhood and K-12 teachers
Senate Bill 20 - Revises provisions to required teacher examinations and will allow for the removal of the state requirement that teachers seeking to obtain their initial teaching license in Nevada must pass exams that demonstrate their knowledge of the U.S. Constitution and Nevada Constitution. The removal of this requirement will help school districts recruit more qualified teachers from outside of the state to provide a quality education from early childhood to high school.

NATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

The United Way network is focused on creating community-based and community-led solutions that strengthen the cornerstones for a good quality of life: education, financial stability and health.

Advocated for Healthcare
Working in concert with United Way Worldwide and hundreds of other advocates, we supported healthy lives for all Americans through the Affordable Care Act and funding for Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP). Southern Nevada’s low-income population experiences higher rates of health issues and lower use of healthcare, so government-funded health programs are particularly important for our community.

Restored funding for the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program (VITA):
Due to targeted outreach to members of Congress on the Appropriations Committee, United Ways across the country and supporters communicated the value of the critical Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program and worked with several congressional offices to restore funding to $15 million for VITA in the appropriations bill for fiscal year 2018. Workforce support programs like VITA are essential to helping families as they build pathways out of poverty.
GET INVOLVED

United Way understands that effective advocacy takes collaboration, determination, and a well-educated community. Working together, UWSN was able to advocate for positive social change nearly 80 times in 2017, reaching more than 35 elected officials at all levels of government. On the national level, the United Way network met with nearly 300 members of Congress and sent over 9,500 letters to Capitol Hill on issues like the charitable deduction, safety net programs, and health reform.

As an effective platform for beneficiary, volunteer, board, and donor engagement, United Way advocacy focuses public discourse on the policies and proposals that can effectively reduce poverty and expand opportunities for all members of our community.

United Way of Southern Nevada offers a variety of opportunities to give, advocate, and volunteer for programs supporting working families across the region. Visit uwsn.org/advocate to be a part of the change and join our efforts.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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