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NEWS RELEASE

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NEVADA BILL SEEKS CHANGES TO TAHOE BI-STATE COMPACT

Stateline, NV – A bill was passed in the final hours of the 2011 Nevada State Legislative Session that keeps the bi-state compact in place until October 1, 2015 unless the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) fails to adopt an updated Regional Plan by that date or California and Nevada cannot agree to specific amendments to the Bi-State Compact, according to Nevada legislative staff officials.

Senate Bill 271 passed both houses of the Nevada legislature following several months of legislative and public input on the bill that resulted in amendments to ensure the compact remains whole until at least 2015. The bill's enactment could be extended to 2017 if progress is being made on the bill's requirements.

"We hope that passage of the bill will bring the two states to the table to seriously review policy differences on the future of Lake Tahoe," TRPA Executive Director Joanne S. Marchetta said. "It's important to note the final version of the bill took a more measured approach to bring policy issues to the fore and TRPA looks forward to working with Nevada lawmakers in the next few years to address the key points of the legislation."

Upon the signature of Governor Brian Sandoval, SB 271 sanctions Nevada's withdrawal from the Bi-State Compact on October 1, 2015 if specific measures are not achieved. While keeping the Regional Plan Update on schedule is within TRPA's purview, the balance of requirements spelled out in the new Nevada statute focuses on changes to the Bi-State Compact that was signed by the two states and ratified by the U.S. Congress in 1980:

1. A 'yes' vote from any nine board members can adopt, amend, or repeal environmental threshold carrying capacities, the regional plan, ordinances, etc. where under the current Bi-State Compact, four 'yes' votes from each state is required. Also, for approving a project, the affirmative vote of at least four members from the state in which the project is located is required versus five under the current Compact.
2. The Lake Tahoe Regional Plan must consider changing economic conditions (currently, economic and social conditions are referred to in the Compact but not explicitly required for consideration and action).
3. Any person challenging the Lake Tahoe Regional Plan in court bears the burden

of proof that the Plan violates the Compact (currently, the burden of proof is on the Agency to show in court that the Plan meets Compact requirements).

“The positive feedback TRPA has received from many Nevada legislators this session on the Agency’s new strategic direction demonstrates that we’re on the right track and with this legislation we will work with both the Nevada and California delegations to forge compromises about Tahoe’s future going forward,” Marchetta said.

TRPA adopted a new strategic direction last year that focuses the Agency on regional environmental gains, operational efficiency, community engagement and streamlined processes. Additionally, the Regional Plan Update is expected to be up for consideration by the 15-member TRPA Governing Board by the end of 2012. The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency cooperatively leads the effort to preserve, restore, and enhance the unique natural and human environment of the Lake Tahoe Region now and in the future. For additional information, call Julie Regan at 775-589-5237, or email jregan@trpa.org.

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