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PSC 101 Section 1012
May 9, 2020

KNPR: State of Nevada

The country today is in an unprecedented state. Governors have “locked down” their states, the president has suspended all international travel, and the world is dealing with a pandemic. No one alive today could have imagined something like this happening, yet here we are. On the State of Nevada radio program, host Joe Schoenmann interviewed three people from different industries to get their opinion on how to reopen the state and become the leader in tourism.

He first interviewed real estate mogul Paul Mirud to find out what his ideas were. Mirud stated that the government needs to rethink and rework the business licensing permit process. Currently it takes about 2 months for a new business to get the permit to begin construction. For established companies, it’s not a big deal. When it comes to small, or new, businesses, it can be much more difficult. They are stuck waiting around for two months not making any money and can possibly go under all together. He said that it may even be possible to outsource these jobs. The hard part is trying to figure who has jurisdiction over creating these groups. Trying to get a committee together to discuss this topic has seemed to be fruitless. He also thought that the government needs to rework how it functions at the business level. Mirud wants to remove the penalty-based system, such as fines and tickets, and replace it with an incentive-based system. Also, the entire county needs to get on the same page. Currently, it costs around \$20,000 for a business to get a full liquor license in Las Vegas whereas it is only a few thousand in the rest of the county.

Next, he interviewed Peter Guzman who is the president and chief executive officer for the Latin Chamber of commerce. He mentioned that this shut down has affected the Latin and Hispanic parts of our city the worst. Without work, families aren't getting provided for. He believes that government needs to get out of the way of the capitalistic nature of the economy and let entrepreneurs take over because that could streamline the reopening of the state. He also agrees that the state must be reopened in a safe manner because a second breakout could devastate the state to a point of no return. The safety and cleanliness of the environment as well as the patrons needs to be the foremost important topic. He is also a proponent for combining city and county governments so that everyone is on the same page.

Lastly, Schoenmann interviewed Andre Carrier who is the chief operation officer of Eureka Casinos. He has been working with University of Nevada, Las Vegas and specifically Lee School of business to come up with a way to reopen the state safely. There is a \$1,000,000 prize for anyone who wants to submit an idea of how to make this state safe. The topic of how simple and small this contribution could be, yet it could change life as we know it. He brought up how there was a time when airports didn't have metal detectors, but now it would be crazy to see one without it today. Schoenmann described this as a similar endeavor to Shark Tank (the television show). People would submit their ideas and these companies would pay to put it in place. According to Carrier, the dialogue about how to move forward has to change. The world can't live in this state of perpetual fear, so as a community people need to come together to figure out the solution. There are over 300,000,000 hospitality workers in the world, yet Las Vegas has the highest percentage of that. Currently, he said, that it is difficult to pass laws because of government interference and fear of job security. He also agrees that it is almost time to reopen the doors to the city, and state, and welcome visitors from all over the globe.

The one thing that everyone agreed on was that when the state does reopen, the health and safety of the employees and patrons was the most important thing. They all agreed that for an unknown period of time, people might be required to wear masks, social distancing measures will stay in place, and extra precautions must be taken in the sanitation of every surface. There was an interesting view taken about federalism, in that most men wanted to combine the government agencies and figure out how to get things done. They were extremely against the people taking this situation into their own hands, because then we may see a second breakout and that could be the downfall of us all.

Works Cited

“Southern Nevada Business Leaders Say Cut Red Tape to Boost Economy.” *State of Nevada*, KNPR, 7 May 2020.