

KNPR “State of Nevada” Summary

On KNPR’s (88.9) “State of Nevada” program, I listened to the “Governor Says Resorts Worried Mayor’s Comments Will Hurt Vegas” broadcast from April 25th, 2020. This segment was mainly about the Governor of Nevada, Governor Steve Sisolak, speaking out and responding to Mayor Carolyn Goodman’s interview on CNN. In that interview, she expressed her desire to re-open the strip to give people jobs, bring in tourism, and use Las Vegas as a test subject. He talked about the concerns of resort operators, his reassurance to the people of Nevada about the minimum control that the mayor actually has over the Las Vegas Strip, and what he sees and hopes for the near future of Las Vegas.

Right off the bat, the host, Joe Schoenmann, explained that he spoke to multiple business leaders who expressed their worries about Mayor Goodman’s views. He said that “her words broadcasted internationally are a big danger for the tourist based economy here” (01:12). He then proceeded to ask Governor Sisolak what he thought about this in which his response was in full disagreement. From this, you’re able to see that the main controversy deliberated throughout this segment is the outrageous pleas from Mayor Goodman and the raise of concerns from citizens and business leaders in the state. Governor Sisolak confirmed that he had not yet spoken to Mayor Goodman about her requests but went on to say that he disagrees with her portrayal of the situation in Vegas. Many people believe Mayor Goodman has great control over the Strip but in actuality has control over zoning issues. Sisolak made sure to clarify this to counter those who say “they’ll never return to Las Vegas as a tourist because of the lack of care for public health” (00:50). Governor Sisolak is among the various people who think her comments were concerning and damaging to the city. He highlights that “regardless of what she says, I will not allow the

people working in the hotels, our visitors or any Nevadan to be used as a control group, a placebo, a guinea pig, a lab rat for some science experiment that she wants to conduct that is simply not going to happen" (01:53).

In the next portion of this interview, Joe Schoenmann touches on the topic of Nevada recovering after COVID-19 is cleared from the state. After reiterating how Governor Sisolak wants to see a 2 week downturn in infections before any steps are taken to slowly reopen business, he asks, "at your most recent press conference, a State biostatistician talked about the fact that it might be best to wait until the end of June to do something like that. Are you seeing it that way as well?" (3:58). He follows up by explaining that he constantly looks at the statistics of hospitalizations and wants to see a fall in those numbers before proceeding into any kind of action of reopening. Though many medical professionals have suggested that it's best to wait until the end of June or even longer, Sisolak understands that he has to find a balance between getting people back to work and the safety of everyone. He has concerns for the economy and realizes that things have to start becoming normal again. The transition into this may start with opening up with recreation facilities such as parks then slowly moving up to other businesses while still enforcing distancing measures. Governor Sisolak states, "it's not going to be flip the light on, and all of a sudden, it's light" (07:00). He know everything has to start slow and observe how the city reacts to it and if it's the right thing to do to progress.

Eventually, the conversation shifts to the topic of tax revenues. After a conference call with Guy Hobbs, who holds expertise in tax policy, Host Schoenmann mentions that Hobbs "told a group of business operators that he expects tax revenues to be down about 50% for the state through at least July and he expects them to get up to about 85% but only in June of 2021" (07:29). Followed by this, he asks Governor Sisolak if he thinks the cuts in state budgets have to

be more than the 14% he asked for. In response to this, Sisolak makes a point that the cuts will be dependent on the revenue stream. This is a big deal because no one really knows even a rough estimate of those who are going to continue going out because places open up. People, especially of older age, may not want to risk being out and exposed to others and might stay home for a couple more months. Sisolak even makes note of gaming and room tax and the financial recovery of that since that's the biggest way the city of Las Vegas funds many things such as schools or metro. He doesn't know what any rates will look like and he thinks it's "just a big guess on how these numbers come back and how quickly we can get out of it" (08:31). There isn't a set plan for Las Vegas to go back to normal just yet, but Governor Sisolak is carefully taking everything into consideration to make the right decisions to move forward.

Within this program, some key terms that were discussed are jurisdiction, tax revenue, and tax policy. The biggest emphasis on jurisdiction was Governor Sisolak's statement to the public clarifying the fact that Mayor Goodman has no jurisdiction over what happens to the casinos on the Las Vegas Strip since this was a big concern to those around the world. Tax revenue and tax policy are terms that were heavily prevalent in this interview due to the effects on the economy and what budgets and financial recovery will look like when businesses open back up.

For the post part, Joe Schoenmann's questions and comments toward Governor Steve Sisolak were kept fairly unbiased. He more so wanted to get insight about what the governor had to say about this whole controversy with Mayor Goodman's words and how he is going to move forward from it. He also wanted to know more about what he thinks is best for Nevada and what he thinks will happen, especially for viewers to somewhat be in the know of what they can expect for the city of Las Vegas.

Works Cited

“Governor Says Resorts Worried Mayor’s Comments Will Hurt Vegas.” *KNPR’s State of Nevada*. Nevada Public Radio, Las Vegas, 25 Apr. 2020.