



# FOREWORD

By Terry Johnson

**W**elcome to the 2020 edition of the *Nevada Gaming Lawyer* magazine. For years to come, history will record this year as one of the most momentous for Nevada's gaming industry. From the night when the lights went out in casinos, to the dawn of an awakening call for social justice and equality, the industry has seen challenges this year like never before. Coronavirus pandemic. Economic collapse. Social unrest. Going forward, the next chapter in Nevada's gaming story will reveal how this year has strengthened our character, our compassion, and our commitment to persevere.

## Special Tributes

Looking forward, we owe a special acknowledgment to many in and around Nevada's gaming industry who have contributed so greatly to help our state. Some paid the ultimate sacrifice, and shall never be forgotten for it. Some paid their workers – even when not one dollar was coming in the door. Some gave up their own salaries to ensure their employees did not go without. From the back of the house to the front

line, from the casino floor to the C-suite and all points in between, to the taverns, stores, and gaming-related companies – the men and women of Nevada's gaming industry have shown character and compassion when our state needed it most. They remain a force and they showcase to the world all that is good about our great state and its premier industry.

There are also the first responders and health care workers who risk danger to their own health to maintain ours. And the law enforcement and public safety officers who fight to keep us safe, while putting their own lives on the line each day.



And lest we forget, the *essential* workers in Nevada's economy. No longer taken for granted, their value has been clearly witnessed more this

year than ever before. Each day, they leave their loved ones and their homes, giving their all for the cause of family and to meet the daily needs of the community. They have earned our utmost respect and heartfelt appreciation.

Lastly, a special gratitude to the women and men of Nevada's gaming regulators – the Gaming Commission and the Gaming Control Board. The day-to-day work of regulating this industry is never without challenge. And this year they have risen to an enormous challenge, with a sense of duty, honor and commitment that should make every Nevadan proud. Their tireless work in strengthening the economic vibrancy of our gaming industry continues undeterred.

### “Where Do We Go From Here?”

It has been fifty years since civil rights leader and Nobel laureate Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. famously asked this question in his book of the same title. As a nation, we have since journeyed unimaginably great distances towards the goal of becoming a more perfect union. Right here in Nevada, for example, because of the color of their skin my young parents could not walk through the front door of a casino. Just one generation later, I have the blessed opportunity to not only serve as a casino regulator, but do so alongside the first tandem of a Latino chair of the Nevada Gaming Commission and the first African-American to chair the Nevada Gaming Control Board – two distinguished and accomplished Nevadans in their own right. Only in America. Only in Nevada.

If this year showed us anything though, it is that we still have miles to go before we rest. Our streets have filled with protestors, seeking fulfillment of the promise of “equal justice under the law.” Our nation was awakened to the continued existence of the scourge of racism – thought long vanquished by some, and never more than a breath away by others. Whether in housing, banking, criminal justice, education, or employment – the remnants of discrimination remain stubbornly etched into the soul of America and equality of opportunity remains out of reach for far too many.

To go forward, we must *each* take up our whole armor – the shield of faith, the sword of truth, and the breastplate of righteousness – and fight for the society we deserve and the values we cherish. We must recognize, confront, and then dispense with the biases we ourselves hold as well as those we witness, so that no one is unfairly deprived of their chance for greatness. And we cannot simply be satisfied with the absence of indignity and injustice

but then not affirmatively pursue the presence of dignity and justice for those in need. Working together to confront our challenges and overcome our divisions, we will see that we are more than red or blue, black or white, left or right. In faith, in truth, and in pursuit of righteousness we can not only be better, but do better, and share in the dreams of those around us yearning for the best life possible.

The gaming industry and its ancillaries employ more Nevadans than any other industry. Given its place in the Nevada economy, it will continue to have a special role in a Nevada that values diversity, promotes opportunities, exhibits compassion for those in need, and pursues public policies that strengthen the communities in which they operate.

Like true Nevadans, we will play the hand we've been dealt. And let there be no doubt, as we go forward, we will not waiver from our desire to make both Nevada and America better, stronger, and more unified than ever before. We will acknowledge and remember the sacrifice and service of others. We will grow our compassion for our neighbors and their needs. And we will redouble our efforts now and in the years to come to respect one another, promote social justice, and vigorously pursue equality of opportunities for each and every Nevadan.

Congratulations to the Gaming Law Section of the State Bar of Nevada for delivering another outstanding edition. Thank you for your continued high standards, professionalism, and valuable insight and information.



Terry Johnson currently serves as a member of the Nevada Gaming Control Board, having been initially appointed in 2012. He has twice served as a State cabinet member, most recently as Director of the Nevada Department of Business & Industry before joining the GCB. Between his cabinet appointments, he was the Assistant Director of the Clark County District Attorney's Office. He also served for five years as Nevada's Labor

Commissioner, where he received the Nevada Taxpayers Association "Good Government Award" for his accomplishments.

He is a past recipient of the "Top 40 Under 40/Rising Stars" recognition, Nevada Legal Services' Pro Bono Attorney of the Year Award, and the National Bar Association – Las Vegas Chapter's Attorney of the Year Award.

Member Johnson holds a B.A. in Political Science from the University of Nevada – Las Vegas and a Juris Doctor from the UNLV Law School. He remains active in providing pro bono legal services to low income and vulnerable populations and non-profit organizations that assist them.