

NEVADA CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1965

BY PROF. JOANNE L. GOODWIN



Bennie Scott, (unknown), William Scott, Ann Scott, Ulysses Woodard, Bertha S. Woodard, (unknown), (unknown), with Governor Grant Sawyer (1918-1996), who is signing the Nevada Civil Rights Act of 1965

(Source: Special Collections, University of Nevada, Reno Libraries)

When Nevada finally passed a state civil rights bill in 1965 (Civil Rights Act (1965). *Statutes of Nevada*, 1965. Chapter 332, Pages 689-695. Fifty-Third Session, Assembly Bill 404), it was neither the first nor the last piece of legislation that advocates urged Nevada lawmakers to pass to ensure equal rights for all Nevadans regardless of race or gender. (1965 Nev. Stat., ch. 332, §§ 1-22, at 689-695) State legislators rejected five previous attempts (1939, 1949, 1953, 1957 and 1961) on claims that Nevada did not need such laws. Nevertheless, one year after the passage of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964, a coalition of supporters, led by Reno and Las Vegas branches of the NAACP, succeeded. Nevada's statute, as finally passed, prohibited discrimination in public accommodations and employment by race, color, religion or national origin but did not include a prohibition against sex discrimination. In Nevada, sex discrimination was not prohibited under state law until the passage of subsequent state legislation in 1967. (Civil Rights Act (1967). *Statutes of Nevada*, 1967. Chapter 332, Pages 689-695. Extra Info: Fifty-Third Session, Chap 63, Page 108, Assembly Bill 7, NRS 609.280) ■



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