

six weeks were just a horrible, horrible thing for her and her family. Just seeing her suffer the way that she did. ... I think it is something that no individual that is terminally ill should have to go through."

Though the measure has passed the Senate and is believed likely to pass the Assembly, the kind of dramatic testimony heard in Carson City makes for very uncomfortable choices by state legislators. On some issues there is room for compromise or understanding by one side of the other. Those things are harder to come by on this issue. In a *West Wing* episode, the choice faced by legislators was laid out starkly by scriptwriter Deborah Cahn: "You know how this thing polls? Forty-eight percent of Americans consider it a right. Forty-six percent of Americans consider it morally reprehensible. It is the definition of a lose-lose issue."

Still, while there has been good attendance at hearings on the bill, it has been in the dozens, by contrast with gun background

checks, which drew hundreds. Because of restraint by the players, S.B. 165 has not been a divisive issue. The two sides have tried to stay away from the overheated rhetoric that has been heard on other issues. On this issue, at least, there is the kind of mutual respect that once was common in politics. One news release sent out from an

Alexandria, Virginia, public relations firm for opponents of the measure, notifying reporters of a news conference in Carson City, contained no strong language, merely a reference to "the dangers of assisted suicide."

Huerta's multi-state tour of legislatures is called an "End of Life Options FOR ALL" education tour. But the Parks bill does not make suicide legal in all situations. There must be a medical finding of terminal illness. That

still leaves those seniors who are alone and lonely, miserable at the ends of their lives when they outlive all relatives and friends. Controlling the circumstances of death is still an incremental process. □

**"Nevadans should have the freedom to choose the end of life options that are right for them."**

**Sen. David Parks**  
Clark County Democrat

## Distant footprint



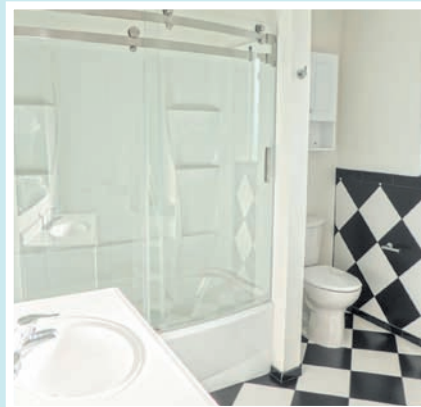
At the Galena Creek visitors center operated by the Forest Service, University of Nevada, Reno geographer Steph McAfee of the Nevada climatologist's office spoke on April 6 about the meaning of the fourth National Climate Assessment for the Great Basin. This talk on climate change was held at the extreme edge of the valley, 16 miles from the valley center. Nineteen audience members drove 18 cars to get there. A center spokesperson acknowledged the awkwardness, but pointed out that a speakers series of talks on many subjects is given at the center—seven talks just this month. He said carpooling would be preferable, but it's the nature of the talks that attendees don't know in advance who all will attend. The talks are listed in our calendar section or go to <http://tinyurl.com/y4wdd8hq> for a schedule.

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