



## NCEL Outdoor Engagement Spotlight Nevada Assemblymember Steve Yeager

Assemblymember Steve Yeager sponsored Nevada's No Child Left Inside Act (2019) and the Kids to Parks Program (2017). No Child Left Inside ([AB331](#)) creates a grant program to ensure all children have access to the outdoors. Kids to Parks ([AB385](#)) provides 5th graders free access to parks for a year.

### How do you engage with the outdoors and why is outdoor engagement important to you?

I love being outdoors because it clears my mind of distractions and brings out my creativity. It also enables me to escape from the constant pull of text messages, e-mails, and social media. I am privileged to live in the particularly beautiful state of Nevada, where the views are often breathtaking. I enjoy running and hiking the most, but I also try to mix in some biking and walking where I can.



### What led you to choose outdoor engagement legislation and what was the impact of your policy?

I wanted to ensure that Nevada's youth have the same opportunities that I do to get outside and marvel at the beauty all around us. In addition, I am a big believer in physical health and mental wellness, both of which are bolstered by being active outdoors. I have heard from numerous students and parents that they took advantage of their free state parks passes as 5th graders to explore the outdoors in a way they otherwise would not have. I could not be more delighted.

### How did the NCEL network and other state models help you in this process?

NCEL was critical in the process because it was through working with NCEL and connecting with other like-minded legislators that I developed my ideas for outdoor engagement legislation for Nevada. In particular, I was able to look to other states that had implemented some version of No Child Left Inside to develop my bill in the 2019 Legislative Session. I am sure the fact that other states had successfully implemented the program helped my bill cross the finish line.

### How can outdoor engagement make communities safer and more resilient in response to racial injustice and the COVID-19 pandemic?

Outdoor engagement benefits us in so many ways in these trying times. It makes us healthier and puts us in a better position to both prevent and fight off illness, whether it be COVID-19 or other chronic diseases. In addition, connecting to the outdoors reminds us that we are all in this thing called life together and allows us to take a needed break from what can be an unhealthy and stressful news cycle. Being outdoors often reminds us of our blessings and can re-energize us to re-engage in our communities to ensure that all are treated with the dignity and respect we all deserve.