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Speaking on behalf of Uniglobe Happy Travel/Travel Goddess Inc. and the Organization of Professional Travel Agents (O.P.T.A.) I am strongly opposed to AB 496.

I think the history behind the inclusion of travel agents in the deceptive practices bill NRS598 is important to the issues at hand today. The first travel agents to hear about this were informed about 36 hours before the bill was heard. Our industry is very complex, particularly in regards to the Airline Reporting Corporation. It is incomprehensible that a bill that impacts an entire industry would or could be passed into law without the proper study. Even though I originally testified in favor of the NRS598, it was under the premise that myself and several other agents had made last minute suggestions to add several inclusions and exemptions. We had one meeting with Ms. Manning and she did make several changes to the bill after our meeting and before it was heard. Our input represented about 10 agents in the entire state of Nevada, and represented about two hours of dialogue with Ms. Manning. I realize that "laws happen", but again, our business is very complex, and as other speakers here will point out, parts of the NRS598 are actually physically impossible to comply with, i.e. a bond to protect against bankruptcy and fraud, and seems so far, according to the information available to us, basically unenforceable.

Our industry has had many obstacles in the past couple of years. September 11th, zero commissions, poor economy and world relations have offered some hard lessons for all of us. Those who cannot weather this type of adversity are probably already out of the business. Those of us who remain in this business are dedicated to our craft, and have learned to survive in a changed world.

I am in favor of Mr. Carpenter's bill because it offers the most sensible protection to the consumer, and allows honest hard working businesses to stay in business, keep our employees working, (most of which are woman), and keep providing the valuable professional services we offer to the consumer.

The seller of travel registration number offers a simple self policing provision for agents to keep an eye on our industry, and would offer a mode of enforcement for Consumer Affairs. In the past two years we have not had access to a registered sellers of travel list, but would ask for access to this, in order to be more active in discovering those who are not in compliance.

Mr. Carpenters bill includes our employees under the agency's Seller of Travel registration. This is again a sensible approach to compliance and enforcement. We the business owners have always been responsible for the actions of our own employee's, and Mr. Carpenter's bill defines that responsibility.

A trust account is actually a standard in the industry today, and making it a requirement does not have a devastating financial impact on business owners, such as many of Ms. Mannings proposals would.

Section 8 of AB 343 should include the word "or" between lines a, and b.

Mr. Carpenters bill also provides that the Consumer Affairs Office will mail renewal notices to agencies. This is a most important issue. At this time, agents must contact the Consumer Affairs Office, (which is not a simple task, most times it involves long hold time, long distance for those not in Las Vegas), and advise them that we need to renew our certificate. Also, in the beginning, agents were not advised of this new law, or terms of compliance. Many of them learned about this law when they received delinquent notices on their4 initial registration.

Mr. Carpenters bill would retain the ARC exemption. The ARC bond exemption SHOULD NOT BE REMOVED! This exemption was never offered as being protective to the public, but was a benchmark for an agencies stability. Airline tickets are monitored much like currency. In order to distribute them, one must go through an extremely rigorous and expensive process to be appointed. The application itself is in two parts at more than 100 pages, and a 24 page application must be filed in addition for other people in your family and business. You must post a bond or letter of credit to be appointed. The process takes several months and includes a thorough investigation.

Just a foot note.

ASSEMBLY COMMERCE & LABOR

DATE: 4/2/03 ROOM: 4100 EXHIBIT L

SUBMITTED BY: JAN MARIE BROWN

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Ms. Manning said to me, that she has four employees dedicated to travel agency issues. My question is what are these four state employees doing? It does not seem possible that they can be utilizing their time effectively, if they cannot even send renewal notices to those they govern, nor does it seem they have been very effective in enforcing compliance with registration.

We are asking lawmakers today to keep it simple. Let Mr. Carpenter's bill work for our state, and many small business owners in Nevada. We agents just want to stay in business, make a living and serve our customers.

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