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April 2, 2003

Committee on Commerce and Labor
Nevada State Assembly
Carson City, Nevada

TFI Tours of Nevada, Inc. is a travel services company which was incorporated in the State of Nevada in January 1992. We have held the same Clark County travel agency business license since we opened our doors in April of 1992. During our entire 11 year history we have maintained our offices in the same office complex, located at 5030 Paradise Road, Las Vegas NV 89119.

I am here today in support of Assembly Bill 343.

The 2001 legislature enacted legislation that authorized the Commissioner of Consumer Affairs to adopt regulations pertaining to the selling of travel services in the State of Nevada, in order to prevent certain frauds, people accepting payments and not providing services.

Before this committee is Bill AB343 which seeks to correct some deficiency's in the 2001 legislation. These defects include:

- a) a lack of awareness by the general public of the law governing licensed travel agencies
- b) a bonding requirement that in some cases has caused hardship to some businesses that have operated in Nevada for many years
- c) a lack of communication from Consumer Affairs to affected businesses,
- d) and a lack of enforcement against individuals not in compliance.

AB343 seeks to address some of these problems.

- a) The public's lack of awareness is addressed by the requirement that a travel agency include their Nevada seller of travel registration number with all advertising.

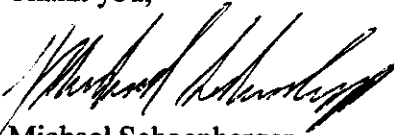
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SUBMITTED BY: MICHAEL Schoenberger

- b) AB343 recognizes that most travel agency owners in Nevada have long standing ties to the community- through business ownership, job creation, home ownership and family relations- AB343 recognizes that Nevada's travel agents are valued members of the community and provides relief from the punitive nature of the bonding requirements for agencies that can show a history of service to the community.
- c) Under current Consumer Affairs regulations a travel agency has the responsibility of knowing when they have to refile with Consumer Affairs to keep their registration current. AB343 changes this to be more in line with other local and State licensing institutions which mail renewal forms to businesses. Ideally I would also like to see a requirement for Consumer Affairs to keep the registered agents aware of any problems that they encounter so that we could act proactively to reduce any problems that the State might see occurring, unfortunately AB343 does not address this situation. Currently we only hear of problems when Consumer Affairs approaches the legislature.
- d) It is my belief that the biggest problem with the current regulations lie with the lack of enforcement against individuals not in compliance. Business and individual that seek to comply with local and State licensing requirements are not likely to be the source of possible fraud complaints by the general public, instead it is most likely to occur from unlicensed individuals and forms. AB343 attempts to deal with this issue by applying specific statute penalties.

I would also like to note that a competing bill attempts to address some of these same issues- AB496. In my opinion, AB496 does not offer the consumer any additional benefits, but it does inflict unnecessary burdens upon the Nevada travel agency community through excessive bonding requirements.

In addition while both bill seek to protect Nevada consumers from improper travel agent conduct, neither bill protects the consumer from the fastest growing market segment of the travel sales- namely the internet. Many consumers in Nevada buy travel products such, as airline tickets and vacation packages from out of state companies selling over the internet. These companies (some good and some bad) will not be affected by the pending Nevada legislation and as such will enjoy a competitive advantage.

Thank you,



Michael Schoenberger
President