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Comments on SB 400

May 7, 2003
Assembly Commerce & Labor
Room 4100 -/2:00pm

Chairman Goldwater and Committee Members,

My name is Judi Booe, and I am a Lobbyist for NARA. But in addition to that, I worked in telecommunications for nine years and my husband spent over 45 years of his life working in telecommunications. We understand what this bill means. We were philosophically opposed to the break up of AT& T in 1984 and everything my husband testified to on Capitol Hill regarding the negative impacts the break-up would create has come to fruition. Competition has not been good for telecommunications. Remember the guiding principle with MCI? It would allow a little company to fight AT&T. It was a nice thought...but MCI became a huge corporation and eventually became World Com.. and we now know about the fraud perpetrated on the country by World Com and their recent bankruptcy. So what was the point?

Eliminating a monopoly is not always in the best interest of the common person. It has only benefited big corporations. We all now have multiple phone bills, higher rates and a very confusing telephone system and in most cases, terrible customer service.

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 **Nevada Alliance for Retired Americans**

ASSEMBLY COMMERCE & LABOR
DATE: 5/7/03 ROOM: 4100 EXHIBIT
SUBMITTED BY: Judi Booe

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Competition has become a dirty word in the telephone industry. Competition for the sake of competition is not positive or constructive.

Many of the members of NARA, who are retirees from a variety of telephone companies, are interested in this legislation. We understand the nuances relating to telecommunications and how it will affect the public. We have lived with the changes within that industry since 1984. Each phrase in this bill may mean different things to different people. We understand those interpretations by others, but we wanted to be sure that the Committee has NARA's comments this legislation.

We appreciate the comments that AARP has expressed. We differ on the benefits to the senior population and feel that we understand the affects of this bill. Any rate increases for residential services still must be presented to the PUC. Sprint and SBC do not get a free ride on that issue.

NARA strongly supports SB 400. As you may know, NARA represents over 5,000 retirees in the State of Nevada. We understand what developing technology and competition means, especially when you are talking about telephone companies and broad band services. This legislation will allow Sprint and other telecommunications companies to compete on an even footing with others within the industry. Bundling of services is the wave of the future and it means jobs to many Nevadans. A number of our members understand the complexity of this legislation and why

there has been some confusion. It is not an easy piece of legislation to read and understand. However; our position is simple.... We strongly favor fair competition which in turn will reduce rates being charged to both businesses and residential services. We strongly favor the creation of jobs and this legislation can create an opportunity for many workers to take the next step into technology.

We hope that you will consider that we, as seniors, look at both the costs of enacted legislation and the effects it will have on Nevada. If this legislation were going to negatively affect NARA and its members, we would not support it. We have been assured by Sprint and SBC that the passage of this bill is not intended to increase residential rates. Thank you for your consideration.