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February 27, 2003

Assemblyman Mark Manendo, Chair – Government Affairs

Re: Assembly Bill No. 136 – Section 1. Chapter 318 of NRS

Dear Chairman Manendo, and Honorable Committee Members:

My name is Julie A. Keller, and I am from Dayton NV. I am representing myself. I am in favor of this bill if it includes Wild Horses, and does not threaten the wildlife's habitat by selling public land for grazing by livestock. My testimony is as follows:

- Wild Horses are an indigenous wildlife species, as modern *Equus Caballus* evolved on the North American continent.
- As early as the 1900s, two million horses roamed wild in North America. BLM's position is, "only 14,000 to 15,000 Wild Horses are manageable on Nevada land."
- BLM has 17,000 Wild Horses in holding facilities. Since 1980, well over four million American Wild Horses have been slaughtered in the U.S., and Canada, with their meat exported for human consumption.
- Wild Horses are a natural resource, valued by Nevadans, Americans and people throughout the world.
- Wild Horses are a source for tourism, as many people come to see them. Also, they are often used in advertising, i.e., Wells Fargo Bank, Chevrolet, The NV Appeal, and many others.
- Wild Horses are often blamed for overgrazing. They do not pull grass from the root. They graze off of the top, sometimes over 100 miles a day, but do not stay in one spot. In the wild, they will not deplete their natural resources.
- Livestock fencing, on any public land, eliminates the ability for wildlife to access water.

There are 48 million acres of public land. 45 million acres are used for grazing – per Mr. Bob Abbey, BLM.

- In 2003, the BLM generated \$300 million for the Special Fund set up by them. What is this money used for? Has the BLM evaluated the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)?
- There are 102 threatened species in Nevada.
- There is a way to keep all wildlife off of busy roads and highways. Please see the Strieter-Lite Wild Animal Highway Warning Reflector System flier. It has been tested in the Mark Twain Estates area, just east of Dayton, for almost one year – with a 100% success rate (Gail Bellenger, NDOT Biologist, 775-888-7889.) They are eligible for 95% federal funding in Nevada by the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration through the Hazard Elimination Fund.
- The Strieter-Lite Reflectors are; (1) scientifically proven to save lives, (2) have been tested and used successfully since 1979 throughout North America, and (3) eliminate the need for fencing thus not impeding wildlife's natural migration or access to water.

Thank you, Chairman Manendo, and honorable Committee Members, for the opportunity to speak with regard to this proposed amendment to NRS 318. I hope you will consider Wild Horses as they relate to this bill regarding all wildlife.

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