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Testimony of Laura Mijanovich, on behalf of the American Civil Liberties Union of Nevada, submitted on May 6, 2003 to the Senate Judiciary Committee in support of Assembly Bill 337

On behalf of the American Civil Liberties Union of Nevada, I urge you to support Assembly Bill 337 which provides for the automatic restoration of civil rights, including the right to vote of felons who have completed all conditions of their sentences, have received an honorable discharge from probation or parole or have been pardoned.

Because of a number of conditions, economic, social and otherwise, very few can earn this right. The possibility of earning all the rights of full citizenship under AB 337 provides a positive reinforcement for a very difficult transition through which only a few succeed.

Americans sanctify the right to vote. The limitations on ex-felons' right to vote is the largest remaining limitation on this right, which disproportionately affects the African-American and Latino populations.

AB 337, with its automatic restoration provision, will help remove the largest barrier to the right to vote for the American adult and thus will bring the State of Nevada more in line with the majority of states throughout the country. Those who qualify under the bill will have earned their right and should no longer be penalized. I urge this Committee to honor these individuals' good faith efforts to pay their debt to society and facilitate their reintegration into society. AB 337 will do that. Please support AB 337.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Laura Mijanovich", is located below the main text of the testimony.

Laura Mijanovich
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