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## TESTIMONY FOR AB337 IN THE SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

My name is Gene Munnings and I am testifying in favor of AB337. The reason I am here today is that this bill would directly affect me very positively. Let me explain. In October 1980, at the age of 21, in Baltimore City, Maryland, I was charged with 2 counts of Arson of a vacant structure. In February 1981 through a plea bargain I was to plead guilty to these 2 counts under the Alfred vs., North Carolina preceding which is commonly called the Alfred Plea. This means that I plead guilty without admitting any guilt and that the prosecutor does not find me guilty. But if the case were to go to trial there is a good possibility that a guilty verdict would result. I was told that even though I was pleading guilty, I was not being found guilty and therefore would not have any conviction. I was sentenced to 10 years in prison and spent 8 years and 16 days behind bars. Upon release on October 31, 1988, I had to complete a period of mandatory parole, which ended on October 15, 1990. I never did see a parole officer, as I was working the whole time and only had to call in once a month. I want to say that prior to prison I received a Bachelor of Science degree from Towson State University in Botany & Biology with 4 minors on September 1, 1980. I found a job within 3 days after being released working for Hickory Farms as a Store Manager. I worked there every Christmas season for 5 years. Other positions I held was as a janitor at a local restaurant, substitute teacher at an inner city school earning \$21.00 a day. I was the Nursery manager for a local Franks Nursery & Crafts store before landing a job with the State of Maryland as a Social Security Adjudicator. In order to hold that position, I had to clear an FBI background check, since I would be handling Social Security numbers. The entire time from October 1990 to 2001 I was able to vote and voted in all elections. While incarcerated I received absentee ballots which I always sent in. After release, I was an election judge for my precinct. I was an active member of the local improvement association working on housing inspections, environmental issues, conducting garden contests, etc. In Maryland, I had not lost my right to vote and was considered a full citizen. In 1993 I moved to Nevada to work for the Bureau of Disability Adjudication performing the same job as I was in Maryland. I was recruited by the Nevada agency based on my excellent work record in Maryland. The first week I was in Carson City, I found the Methodist Church and joined and registered to vote. I voted in every election up to last year's elections. I was under the impression that I was able to vote as I had in Maryland, as I had not lost my citizenship rights. I have served on the Economic Vitality Corridors Committee and the Storm water Advisory Committee. I completed the Leadership Program in 2001. I am an active member of the local community. I had tried repeatedly to get onto other committees unsuccessfully as other more qualified candidates were appointed. At present I am not able to serve on any committees due to not being a full citizen. About 5 years ago, when my wife and I moved into our current home from a condominium, I threw out all the papers relating to the charges & parole. I had never needed them up to that point and saw no need to retain them, as it was a box of papers. I also threw out most of my elementary and high school papers and donated the textbooks to the library. I had a theory that if not touched or used in more than a year then get rid of it. So the move was a housecleaning for me as I got rid of a lot of stuff. I had no idea that it would come in handy in the future. All that remains from that time is an old newspaper article and docket records. In June 2002, after having submitted my application to run for the Carson City Assessors position in May 2002, I found out that I was ineligible to run due to not having the right to vote or having citizenship rights in Nevada. I was shocked as I tried to explain this to Alan Glover the Clerk-Recorder, and he told me that

Maryland was one of 2 states that Nevada did not recognize their laws across the board and that I would have to come to the Legislature to have this fixed. I have contacted the Maryland Parole Board who is responsible for Pardons and sealing of records. They have told me that I am ineligible for a Pardon due to the fact that I do not have a conviction. They did agree after a lengthy conversation to send me the forms to fill out which I did and returned them over 5 months ago. I should note that the Mary Court informed me that the records from that time were only paper records and have since been lost. I have not heard back from the Parole Commission as of this date.

As I read this bill on page 10-11 Section 14 subsections 3 & 4 is where I would fall under in this bill. This would allow me to have my citizenship and voting rights restored.

I am a productive citizen here in Carson City, Nevada. I own 2 businesses; a Carson City landscape maintenance company and a transmission shop in Reno. I am an active member of the Carson Chamber of Commerce as an Ambassador and on the Leadership planning committee. I am also a member of the local business group Leads Unlimited for the past 5 years and held the position of Secretary for the past 3 years and am currently the Program Director. I am the founder and president of the local chapter of the M.I. Hummel collectors club and am planning an international conference in August 2004 here in Carson City, which is limited to 300 attendees from all over the world. We have some registered as of this date from all over the USA and 3 foreign countries. I am an active member of my church serving on the administrative council, board of trustees, playing in the hand bell choir as well as many other community activities I am involved in. I was named in the Who's Who in America for 2003. I would like to be able to:

**Have my rights restored so that I can vote and apply for various Carson City citizen committees that I may serve my community.**

**This can be accomplished by the passing of AB337 by your committee.**

The Carson City Republican central Committee on April 24, 2003 approved a resolution unanimously that requests passage of AB337.

I thank you for your time and concern in this matter. I am willing to answer any questions at this time.

  
Gene Edward Munnings