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Remarks on AB 223

Madame Chair, members of the Committee, good afternoon. I want to thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak on this piece of legislation. My name is Andres Ramirez, and I am here to testify in support of AB223.

Our state has witnessed an explosive growth of Hispanics over the past decade, and although many people will debate the pros and cons of this growth, the fact remains that there is a significant number of Spanish speaking residents in our state. They are participating in our communities, paying taxes and contributing to our economy.

The 2000 US Census estimates that 22% of the population in Clark County is Hispanic, with almost 80% of Hispanics being non-native residents. A recent study by the Center for Business and Economic Research of UNLV released in February of 2003 indicates that the economic impact for Non-native Hispanics is over \$15.6 billion. The study further states that approximately 83% of non Native Hispanics did not have English reading proficiency.

It is very clear that Hispanics are playing a vital role in our communities and our economy. However, along with growth come growing pains. As Hispanics continue to immerse themselves into our community and participate in our economy we need to take some steps to ensure that they are treated fairly and afforded to the opportunities of good faith negotiations in our market environment. Everyone knows that good market conditions

lead to a good economy and language and understanding are essential in trade and negotiation.

AB 223 helps create a good market environment. I have witnessed firsthand the complications that develop in car dealerships when customers don't understand what is being explained to them or what they are signing. Many times this is due to incorrect translations or explanations and many times this is due to deception. Now I am not going to allege that all car dealerships are intentionally trying to take advantage of Spanish speaking residents, or that they are condoning this behavior, but by implementing this legislation you will avoid many of these problems. Customers will be able to read and understand the contracts and negotiations in their own language and car dealerships won't carry the burden of potentially misinforming them. This bill makes sense. It is good for Hispanics and it is good for Nevada. Thank you for your time and consideration.