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To: The Concurrent Committee on Ways and Means

From: Cindy Nixon
Hawthorne, Nevada
Mineral County

I respectfully submit the following in support of Assembly Bill No. 219:

Assembly Bill 219 is a very progressive step toward the healthy, thriving economy for our entire state of Nevada. First of all, please note that I state OUR state of Nevada. ALL of us living here want to enjoy a quality life in the rural areas as well as those of us in living in the populous urban areas of Nevada. As it stands, most all of the state level offices and their services are located in one or two areas of the state. A few in distant Elko, northern Nevada, Reno, the Carson area, and southern Nevada, Las Vegas. There is a huge area comprised of small towns and great communities full of caring, responsible tax payers. We would love to have some of the state's business. The average office rental in Hawthorne for instance, is far, far less than the expense of renting in Las Vegas, Reno, Sparks or Carson City and surrounding area. I have not done a detailed study, but the expense of renting living space in these cities, I do know, is far greater than the cost of renting or purchase of a home in our smaller town. Please consider the young couple or individual working for the State of Nevada, just starting out, still paying their student loans off, but looking for an affordable start in real estate. They are hopefully well on their way to joining the ranks of other property tax payers in Nevada. Relocation of some of our state offices makes it possible for them. And if Hawthorne is not of a specific office or department's

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liking, I assure you there are other rural areas such as Winnemucca, Fallon, Lovelock, Austin, Tonopah, Beaty, Pioche, Ely, Calliante and others.

We in the rural areas of Nevada pay taxes like anyone else residing here in our state. As I stated in my first statement for AB 219, March 17th of this year, our small communities are struggling. We are having a truly tough time of it. Within our rural areas there are many individuals trying to improve the situation. They work very hard at this, but there is only so much that can be done short of bringing in more industry/jobs. Our school enrollment is shrinking along with the number of dollars we have to provide quality education to our children. Our grocery stores and other businesses are struggling to keep doors open. Just a few more families in each of our rural communities will save our businesses. Hard to believe, but ask the store owners. If we save our rural businesses, the state benefits from the tax revenue generated from such businesses, real and personal property taxes, business taxes and sales tax revenues.

If the state was to take the lead in bringing more business to the rural communities, other businesses would follow suit. Hypothetically speaking, if 60 state employees were to relocate to any of our rural communities, there is going to be a 20 to 30% increase in supportive industry such as new shopping or service businesses. At the very least, there will be a 20 to 30% increase in the business being done in the existing stores. Specialty stores will soon follow. While we have many educated and very talented people in our rural areas, predominately the work force is blue collar. I feel confident in saying that by introducing a diversity of culture and careers into a community the whole mind set of any given area begins to grow. Education takes a front seat.

Our educated children return to their home towns because there is something to return to. A healthy, thriving community is born, leading to the healthy, thriving community of the entire state. There is no longer any need to bail a dwindling county out of economic crisis.

Some of us choose to live in a less congested area, to send our children to schools with fewer violence problems, leave our cars unlocked in our own driveways, to not have to spend an hour battling congested city streets just to go pick up a prescription or take a child to daycare. I am sure that given the choice, many of the state employees would like that life style too. We have noticed in our county that it is quite the trend for retirees out of California's cities to relocate to our rural area. Not only retirees, but young to middle age individuals come here to seek a safer, quieter environment. We have been told, very recently, that Mina, Nevada is God's country. Have you been to Mina lately? For those of us who have traveled and toured all of Nevada, our state is truly a beautiful state with a lot to offer. We have spoken with many who work and live in the large cities of Nevada. They have very little idea of what our rural areas have to offer.

Reno, Las Vegas and other larger urban areas are experiencing rapid growth problems. Recently, Carson City tried to pass a moratorium limiting the number of new building permits. Reno-Sparks area is experiencing problems with water resources and spending a lot of money developing Honey Lake and other areas. The Las Vegas metropolitan area is trying to negotiate with Lincoln County for additional water resources. With the state taking the lead in relocating business to rural areas, they are taking a giant step in equalizing the growth of our state. Mineral County has applied for and obtained grants and spent our own economic development dollars as

matching funds to develop our infrastructure in water resources and sewage treatment. I am sure that other counties are working toward the same goals. Mineral county has also taken the lead in developing a refuse landfill being utilized by communities in Nevada and California.

By spreading the wealth, all Nevadan's have the opportunity to enjoy the open spaces, clean air and pure beauty of our state. We compliment the Senate and Assembly, all those involved in the writing and introduction of Assembly Bill 219. My husband and I pledge ourselves to work in any capacity in conducting this study to make AB219 a reality.