

January 20, 2010

**Testimony on Behalf of OneAmerica in Support of SB6371
Senate Committee on Financial Institutions, Housing and Insurance**

Distinguished Members of the Financial Institutions and Insurance Committee,

My name is Abdullahi Jama, and I am a Senior Organizer for OneAmerica. On behalf of OneAmerica and its members, we submit the following testimony in support of SB6371. A member-based organization and the largest immigrant rights organization in the state, OneAmerica's mission is to advance the fundamental principles of democracy and justice through building power in immigrant communities, in collaboration with key allies. Over the past few years, the organization has registered more than 23,000 voters with whom we maintain frequent communication on issues of importance to the immigrant community and its wellbeing.

OneAmerica supports many of the overall goals of this proposed legislation for several reasons. Many immigrants participate in the remittance of money to their home countries and quite often, these money service businesses are also owned and run by immigrant populations. OneAmerica (then named Hate Free Zone) was actively involved in the initial issues that came up around money wiring immediately after September 11, 2001. We were able to work with the community, the money wiring businesses and Representative Sharon Tomiko-Santos to bring about some important changes in oversight and regulation of money wiring businesses that did not unduly penalize these very important businesses that play a key role in the immigrant community.

We support house bill SB6371 because **the legislation eliminates the high auditing fees that money service businesses must pay and instead shifts this cost to the annual renewal fee**, which is charged based on a percentage of money transfer sales. Currently, the state's Department of Financial Institutions is charging these small businesses outrageously high fees for auditing that often causes these small businesses to shut down. Eliminating this fee and instead attaching it to the yearly renewal fee will make this overhead cost more affordable for small businesses and will support the survival of immigrant and minority owned businesses in difficult economic times

The issue of money remittance is one that is important to many immigrant communities. In our role of empowering and supporting immigrant communities to prosper and grow, we strongly support this legislation. We urge you to consider this and approve SB6731. Please convey our wholehearted support for its passage to the relevant legislative committees and elected representatives.

Respectfully submitted,

Abdullahi Jama
Senior Organizer
OneAmerica

MISSION
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