Good afternoon Mr. Chairman. For the record, my name is Douglas Geinzer and my address is PO Box 80808, Las Vegas, NV 89180. I was asked to testify today on AB 89 in a dual capacity: in my role as the CEO of Las Vegas HEALS and secondly as someone has been recruiting health care professionals to Nevada for well over 20 years.

For the record, Las Vegas HEALS is a membership based organization with HEALS being an acronym for Health – Education – Advocacy - & Leadership of Southern Nevada. We were formed in 2002 with a mission to improve access to quality health care in Southern Nevada. We represent organizations that employ over 24,000 health care professionals including all of the hospitals & medical education institutions in Las Vegas.

Las Vegas HEALS has spent the past few years on expanding Graduate Medical Education (or physician residencies) in the State of Nevada. And although we have been successful in building this necessary “grow your own” infrastructure and the fact that Las Vegas will soon be supported by four (4) medical schools, we still have an acute need to recruit physicians before that newly developed pipeline begins producing new doctors in 2022. And that means we need to recruit primary care and specialty physicians to Nevada. And much of our recruitment efforts in the upcoming years will be in the area of physician faculty members for these new medical schools.

As you can imagine, these physician faculty members play two roles: First and foremost, they will teach our future physician workforce. But that physician faculty member will also build a practice and see immediately begin to see patients. And to see patients, that relocating physician will need to be licensed in the State of Nevada.

As you can imagine, the recruitment of physicians is much different than any other profession. This is not a worker that can go back home from a medical meeting, (where we often recruit from), pack their bags and move out to Nevada the following week. Recruitment of physicians requires precise planning and as few barriers to overcome as possible. Currently, the biggest barrier we face lies in our physician licensure process, with that process sometimes taking up to six months or a year.

A lot can happen in 6 months or a year and our efforts are stunted with the lengthy licensing process.

AB 89 removes that barrier by allowing for some level of reciprocity or issue a license by endorsement, reducing the time to licensure to 45 days. This will make a huge difference.
I don’t want to spend a lot of time on the physician shortages our state, and particularly Las Vegas faces; But it is a critical shortage. Nevada is currently ranked 46th in terms of Physicians to Population ratios, with even worse ratios in many of the specialty medicine that causes our state’s poor population health ratings. Our poor health care ratings are not due to bad doctors practicing in this state. We have some of the finest physicians in the country that call Nevada home and deliver world-class care each and every day. We just do not have enough physicians. Again – we have built the necessary infrastructure with the State about to have four medical schools in the future. But we have a pretty large gap to fill between now and then. And this is the most critical gap. These are the physicians that will be teaching our future physician workforce.

I mentioned before, they will also practice medicine. And statistics show that the each practicing physician contributes over $1 million of economic impact to the community of which they serve, creating jobs; better paying jobs than most other industries. And it is that expanded healthcare, that will allow us to attract new businesses and new industry to Nevada and further diversify our economy.

As you can see, there are multiple benefits to passing this bill:

- We would begin to recruit much needed primary care and specialty physicians to Nevada immediately.
- It would ease our ability to recruit physician faculty members for our new medical schools that will ultimately help grow our own physician workforce in the future;
- And, it would help strengthen our current health care delivery system, making Nevada more marketable when recruiting new businesses such as Tesla or Switch Communications to relocate and grow in our State.