

Testimony of Gene Herrera,

Chair, Board of the Alliance of the Minority Contractors of Houston

Prepared for the Senate Business & Commerce Committee

March 15, 2011

In support of Senate Bill 980

Chairman Carona and members of the Business and Commerce Committee, good morning and thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony to you today in support of Senate Bill 980.

My name is Gene Herrera, and I am the Board Chairman for the Alliance of Minority Contractors of Houston. I'm also the owner of EDH Plumbing.

The Alliance of Minority Contractors of Houston is a non-profit trade association that advocates for the business needs and concerns of minority and women-owned contractors in the Greater Houston area.

From my vantage point, nothing is more critical than my ability to communicate with our members – and, in my plumbing business, with my employees. We are increasingly reliant on the latest technologies and communication tools to keep us in real-time contact with our clients and colleagues.

It's in Texas' best interest to ensure that we do all we can to move Texas forward and remove the outdated provisions in our state law that serve as barriers to advancing technologies.

Lawmakers like you have led our state forward, creating a strongly business-friendly climate that lets employers like me do what we do best – create jobs, make strategic investments in our business and communities, and grow our business.

Thank you for that leadership. Now, more than ever, we must ensure that state government and regulations don't hamper economic growth and business development.

The Hispanic community – and our AMCH membership, in particular – are big users of wireless broadband in our daily lives. And, we – as do an increasing number of Texas businesses and families – rely heavily on wireless Internet-based communication more and more to conduct business, remain competitive and deliver incredible value and service to our clients.

Senate Bill 980 addresses some of the most dated provisions in our telecommunication laws and opens the door for further innovation and job creation and a rapid deployment of new technologies.

In Senate Bill 980, Mr. Chairman, you've demonstrated that you recognize that we no longer live in a world that is dominated by paper filings, labor-intensive, job killing regulatory requirements, and only one form of communication from only one provider.

Today, Texas is better for the efforts the Legislature undertook in 2005 and earlier to modernize telecommunications and spur competition. I respectfully urge you to move us forward once again and position Texas for the technological advances that will transform the way we live and work and that are surely right around the corner.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before your committee in support of SB 980.