

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Ms. Smith. We appreciate it very much.

Mr. King.

STATEMENT OF CELES KING

Mr. KING. Thank you very much, Senator Biden. I guess we are here to wrap this up, and that you will go home and we will go home. I came in on the red-eye special this morning, and let me tell you it has been an interesting day, but these lights are pretty tough. So I am going to see if I can't stay within—

The CHAIRMAN. You came from California?

Mr. KING. Yes, sir. I am going to stay within—

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I hope neither of us go home on bail. [Laughter.]

Mr. KING. Well, that is the business that I am in. It is a business that I have become involved in as a result of self-help. When I came along, there was no private nor public kind of help, and I think to a degree many people in the black community have been able to have that as a background.

I can remember when I was a young person and my dad opened up a store, and that meant that he had to go and buy the lumber and he had to put the nails in himself, and there was no bank to help and there never was any thought about public assistance. We can make it out there and we are going to make it, and I certainly like some of the ideas of Judge Thomas.

In our own community, we have established many businesses and we have done a considerable job, not as good as I would like to see. I will mention that I am at some odds with some of my contemporaries. I am the past president of the Los Angeles chapter of NAACP, having served there during those rather turbulent 1960's. For the last 6 years, I have been national president of the Bail Agents Association. There are some 5,000 to 6,000 of us that are there that are licensees, and we are talking about the agencies, and for each one of those agencies we are talking about 8 or 10 people.

We are trying to do a good job, and long ago in this business the question of gender, the question of race is absolutely secondary to the quality of service that you deliver. If you are willing to work 60 to 70 hours a week year in and year out, you do not have those kinds of things as a problem in our industry.

Of course, our principal competitor is you, meaning the governmental services that are out there. But we do want to point out very much that as far as minorities are concerned, there are some businesses that are out here where we have overcome most of these problems, and we have worked at it very hard.

I am also the State chairman of the Congress of Racial Equality in California, and I serve in one other capacity. I represent the county of Los Angeles on the Century Freeway Affirmative Action Committee, and I can tell you that no affirmative action program is going to work unless the people have a self-actualizing approach. They have got to do some self-help or they are not going to be able to do it.

Many of us went to school and we had to work at the same time. I had the GI bill when I came out of the Air Force. I was a pilot in

the Air Force, but after that was over with I paid for every dollar of it because it had not come to the point at which I could reach out and get those types of assistance.

The CHAIRMAN. It was kind of helpful, though, when you had it, wasn't it?

Mr. KING. I am sorry?

The CHAIRMAN. The GI bill was kind of helpful when you had it, though, wasn't it?

Mr. KING. It was, and it was for all of us.

The CHAIRMAN. Right.

Mr. KING. And that is exactly the way that I think that affirmative action should happen. It should be for whoever needs it to the extent that we as taxpayers can afford it. Our industry has to do what we can in order to reduce taxes that people have to pay.

I am coming in under the light. I would like to call that to the chairman's attention. Well, I came in on target anyway.

[The prepared statement of Mr. King follows:]