

Counseling must be in borrower's native language

- A.** Daisy Ma, a former escrow officer from the Chinese-American community, testified that predatory lenders target elderly, minority, especially minorities who do not speak English, and immigrant homeowners, and that she would like to see mandatory loan counseling. (H&CD Hearing, 4/17/02, p.7, lines 19-24 and p. 8, lines 13-16.)
- B.** Robert Cox of ELACC testified that they give homebuyer education in a community that is 94% Latino, who frequently fall prey to predatory lending because they speak only Spanish. (H&CD Hearing, 4/17/02, p. 24, lines 5-14.)
- C.** During the three H&CD Hearings, a number of victims describing their situations needed an English translator: Lilian Gil, Spanish-speaker (H&CD Hearing, 2/21/02, pp. 16-18), Mario Luna, Spanish-speaker (H&CD Hearing, 2/21/02, pp. 20-22), Salvador Gil, Spanish-speaker (H&CD Hearing, 4/17/02, pp. 41-42), John Sorensen, from Alhambra, spoke for his wife, Linda, who is a Mandarin-speaker, (H&CD Hearing, 9/12/02, pp. 22-26), Cecilio Hernandez, Spanish-speaker, (H&CD Hearing, 9/12/02, p. 37-38.)
- D.** Mario Luna, victim, (Spanish speaker), stated that if he would have been able to speak to a loan counselor before closing the loan he would have known his options and would have had the opportunity to shop around for a better interest rate, without such high prepayment penalties and other fees (H&CD Hearing, 2/21/02, pp. 20-22.)
- E.** Ben Diehl, attorney at Bet Tzedek Legal Services, stated that given the multicultural nature of Los Angeles, and since all loan documents are printed in English only, it is imperative that some kind of service exist to ensure that Spanish, Korean, Chinese and residents speaking other languages in our community have a true opportunity to learn the terms of the loans that can cost them their homes. (H&CD Hearing, 2/21/02, p.25, lines 14-16 and p. 26, lines 20-24.)
- F.** Enrique Velazquez, organizer with Figueroa Corridor Coalition for Economic Justice, said that language is a barrier and he supports having documents in languages that can be understood by the borrowers. (H&CD Hearing, 2/21/02, p. 28, lines 1-2 and lines 14-16.)
- G.** Robert Cox of ELACC, which is based in Boyle Heights, testified that his community is 94% Latino, many speak only Spanish, and fall victim to this activity. (H&CD Hearing, 4/17/02, p. 24, lines 3-5, lines 12-13.)
- H.** Peter Kuhns, ACORN, testified that ACORN advocates for a written disclosure in Spanish and other languages. (H&CD Hearing, 4/17/02, p. 39, line 5.)
- I.** Moises Vasquez, private attorney, states that California Civil Code Section 1621, which requires Spanish language contracts if the dealings are in Spanish, has a loophole, where if any broken English is used, the lenders consider the dealings are in English and do not provide the Spanish translated documents. (H&CD Hearing, 4/17/02, p. 39 lines 22-26 and p 40, line 1.)

J. The *Spanish Language Disclosure Statute* has a mortgage document requirement for Spanish, so there is a precedent for having documents in a language other than English. (Testimony by Rosemarie Ibañez, H&CD Hearing, 9/12/02, p. 45, lines 5-9.) (Source: California Civil Code Section 1632.) [Note: The Council Motion and draft Ordinance provide for counseling in the native language; neither requested documents to be in native languages.]

K. Residents of Los Angeles use 224 identified languages, of which 180 languages are published. LAUSD students use 92 languages. (Testimony by Rosemarie Ibañez, H&CD Hearing, 9/12/02, p. 45, lines 10-12.) (Source: Professor Vyacheslau Ivanov, UCLA.)