

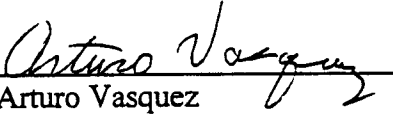
Declaration of Arturo Vasquez

I, Arturo Vasquez, hereby state and declare the following:

1. I am over 18 years of age and a United States citizen. My date of birth is October 14, 1933. My mailing address is P.O. Box 485, Fabens, Texas 79838.
2. I have over fifty (50) years of farming experience. I was raised on a farm and worked with my parents on all phases of the farm's operations. After my parents stopped farming, my brother, Rodolfo Vasquez, and I continued farming the same property. While our largest crop is cotton, we also grow alfalfa, corn, wheat and chile peppers. The property Rodolfo and I farm consists of 170 acres, of which I own sixty acres. For the last 15 years I have worked as a school bus driver, because I cannot rely on farming as my sole source of income. Accordingly, I leased my property to Rodolfo, who was responsible for running the farm. On my days off I helped him with the farm. Rodolfo died on June 11, 2002.
3. Between the years 1981 and 2000 Rodolfo and I applied for loans from the Farmers Home Administration and its successor, the Farm Service Agency (referred to collectively as the "FSA"). The FSA office was located in El Paso, Texas, and the individual we dealt with most consistently was Bill McAnally. The loans we sought were needed to plant and grow our cotton crops. Until the last few years, the loans we applied for were approved. However, the processing of our loan applications always took too long, and, as a result, the loan funds came too late to help. Although we applied for loans in early January of each year, the funds were never received until later April, after the planting season. The FSA agents knew when planting season was, and knew what impact a delay in receipt of the funds could have on our ability to raise cotton. White farmers were not treated similarly; their funding came in time for the planting season.
4. The consistent tardiness of the loan payments reduced the amount and quality of our cotton crops. Because the quantity and quality of our crops were impaired, the money we received for our crops was greatly reduced. Consequently, our ability to cover the cost of the FSA loans was impacted.
5. In 1999, the FSA sought to foreclose on both Rodolfo's property and my own property. Because of this, I was forced to file for Chapter 12 bankruptcy protection. I am still in the bankruptcy process at this time.

6. At the time the FSA sought foreclosure, I contacted Congressman Silvestre Reyes' office to complain about the FSA's unfair discriminatory treatment of Hispanic farmers. Congressman Reyes indicated he would try to help. Since that time, I have visited the Congressman's office three to four times a year to discuss this matter. While the Congressman has attempted to assist me, as well as other Hispanic farmers, we have thus far had only limited success.
7. In 2000, the foreclosure proceedings on our properties were in mediation. Rodolfo and I met with Bill McAnally before a mediator. We voiced our opinion at that time that the FSA had discriminated against Hispanic farmers.
8. I believe that, in delivering my loans late, the FSA discriminated against me because I am Hispanic.

I have reviewed the foregoing Declaration, consisting of eight (8) numbered paragraphs, and declare, under penalty of perjury that it is true and correct to the best of my personal knowledge.


Arturo Vasquez

7-15-2000
Date