

DRIVING
FAMILIES
FORWARD



An Act Relative to Work and Family Mobility

Lead Sponsors: Reps. Farley-Bouvier (HD.448) and Barber, and Sen. Crighton and Gomez (SD.273)

This bill would enable all qualified state residents to apply for a standard Massachusetts driver's license or identification card, regardless of immigrant status, while keeping our Commonwealth in full compliance with REAL ID requirements.

- **Increases Public Health safety amidst Covid-19 pandemic.** We need to protect the health and safety of immigrants who work in every corner of our Commonwealth by increasing access to COVID-19 testing, vaccines and food distribution. Public transportation, ridesharing and school buses increase the risk of exposure due to the inability to socially distance; personal vehicles provide the safest way to travel during a pandemic.
- **Driving is essential to mobility in Massachusetts, especially outside Greater Boston.** Public transit options are far too limited to enable most residents to get to work, take their children to the doctor, or buy groceries.
- **Tested and insured drivers make the roads safer for everyone.** All drivers need to know the rules of the road, pass the same driver's test, and be properly registered and insured.
- **More drivers will have a positive effect on our state's economy.** State revenue will increase as more residents pay for licenses and auto registrations. Fewer uninsured motorists and more drivers in the insurance pool could also lower everyone's insurance rates. In states like New Jersey that recently passed this law, it's estimated that insurance companies will bring in about \$233 million in additional premiums each year and the state of New Jersey would take in \$11.7 million in license fees.
- **Immigrants who are currently barred from driving are a vital part of Massachusetts' social and economic fabric.** An estimated 185,000 immigrants without status lived in Massachusetts as of 2016 – roughly one-fifth of the immigrant population. Many live in mixed-status families; about 1 in 20 U.S. citizen children in our Commonwealth live with at least one undocumented family member. In 2016, undocumented immigrants contributed \$8.8 billion to the Massachusetts economy, and they paid an estimated \$184.6 million in state and local taxes.
- **Under the Biden Administration, the need for the passage of drivers' licenses in Massachusetts is just as urgent.** Under the Obama/Biden administration, over three million immigrants, without status, were deported. Massachusetts has the authority to implement these protections and can be the 17th state to pass this legislation.
- **There is bipartisan support for driver's license legislation across the U.S.** Sixteen states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico already allow residents the right to apply for driver's licenses regardless of immigration status, including our neighbors New York, Vermont and Connecticut. Most recently, New Jersey and Virginia passed similar legislation. States with Republican governors have done so too – in Utah, Nevada and New Mexico.

"This bill would promote trust between law enforcement and all the communities we serve and protect. In order for our state's police officers to best do their jobs and remain safe while doing so, they need to be able to identify who's behind the wheel."

-Chief Brian Kyes

President, MA Major City Chiefs of
Police Association & Chelsea Police
Chief

For more information, please contact:

Dalida Rocha, SEIU 32BJ
drocha@seiu32bj.org

Natalicia Tracy, BWC
NTracy@braziliancenter.org