



DRIVING PA FORWARD: LICENSES FOR ALL PA HOUSE BILL 279 - LETTER CAMPAIGN

- Take home a summary and letter addressed to Bryan Cutler, Speaker of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives.
- Review this summary.
- On accompanying letter mark the provisions you support and sign.
- Return the letter to box in the OMC church vestibule at Masses the weekend of December 11-12.

Letters will be hand-delivered during a lobbying day in Harrisburg on December 14.

House Bill 279 promotes accessibility to a standard driver's license with strict privacy protections for all Pennsylvanians regardless of immigration status.

Prior to 2002, residents of Pennsylvania were able to legally obtain a driver's license with an Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN), a federally issued identifier used to pay taxes by those who do not have a social security number. In 2009, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) cancelled the licenses of tens of thousands of Pennsylvanians who had their licenses legally. Currently, undocumented immigrants are unable to obtain a license under any circumstances.

Bill 279, amending Title 75 (Vehicles) of the PA Consolidated Statutes, would reinstate the ability to get a license with an ITIN ID. In addition, House Bill 279 would prohibit PennDOT, as it now does, from selling personal driver license data to third parties who can resell it at a profit to other purchasers. Exceptions would be when the subject persons consent to release of information (for example, to obtain auto insurance), federal law or judicial requirements.

Sixteen states provide driving privileges in some form to undocumented residents, including most of Pennsylvania's neighboring states. Ironically, PennDOT representatives this year testified in favor of similar legislation. House Bill 279 would promote:

- safety of all Pennsylvania's residents, ensuring that all drivers have passed the driving examination, know the driving laws, and are licensed to drive.
- the privacy of all Pennsylvanians with driver's licenses.
- additional Commonwealth revenue from licensing fees and insurance
- improvement in relationships between law enforcement and immigrant communities by reducing the fear of deportation and increasing immigrant reporting of crimes.
- valid identification for everyone, easing routine activities such as renting an apartments, installing utilities, accessing healthcare.
- driving children to school or attending school activities, without risking the hazards of driving without a license.
- the ability of immigrants, many of whom are "essential" workers, to find and keep work.
- release from life in the "shadows" forcing undocumented persons trying to obtain insurance or other necessities to become victims of fraud and under-the-table exploitation.

The OMC Peace & Justice Committee is a member of New Sanctuary Movement (NSM) of Philadelphia. NSM co-leads the statewide coalition, Driving PA Forward, composed of advocacy, faith, businesses, farmers, labor and community organizations working together to foster passage of legislation promoting accessibility of a standard driver's license with strict privacy protections for all Pennsylvanians regardless of immigration status. For more information:

<https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/billinfo/BillInfo.cfm?year=2021&sind=0&body=H&type=B&bn=279>
<https://www.sanctuaryphiladelphia.org/campaigns/drivers-licenses-for-all/>