

January 11, 2023

Chair Scott Dibble
Minnesota Senate Building
95 University Ave West
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Dibble and Members of the Senate Transportation Committee,

The Minnesota Council on Latino Affairs (MCLA) supports Senate File 27. We believe that all Minnesotans should have access to driving privileges by being able to apply for and obtain a Minnesota Driver's License, regardless of their immigration status.

This bill has profound implications for Latino communities in Minnesota. As one of the fastest growing and youngest populations in Minnesota, Latinos play crucial roles in the state's economic competitiveness and socioeconomic prosperity as workers, entrepreneurs, consumers, taxpayers, and community members. A restrictive policy on driver's licenses prevents many Latino Minnesotans from fully participating in these roles, thereby hindering the community's growth, development, and long-term social integration. When it comes to decisions regarding whether to work and which jobs to accept, transportation is a key factor. The inability to obtain a Minnesota Driver's License, therefore, constrains upward economic mobility and widens existing achievement and opportunity gaps that disproportionately affect Latino Minnesotans.

Allowing all residents to obtain a driver's license would also improve the safety of our roads. Under this legislation, all immigrants would be able to take the necessary driving exams and purchase auto insurance like everyone else. This would increase the number of drivers on the road who understand and abide by the traffic laws, making the roads safer for everyone. By allowing all immigrants to apply for a driver's license, the state would benefit from a safer driving environment.

Thank you for your consideration of Senate File 27.

Sincerely,



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