

HENNEPIN COUNTY

ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

01/12/23

Representative Jamie Becker-Finn
100 Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard
559 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Senator Ron Latz
95 University Avenue W.
Minnesota Senate Bldg., Room 3105
St. Paul, MN 55155

Chair Becker-Finn, Chair Latz and Members of the House and Senate Judiciary Committee:

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to express my support for HF4/SF27, The Drivers License For All Bill, brought by Representative Aisha Gomez and Senator Zaynab Mohamed. I support this legislation because it makes our community safer and recognizes the human dignity of all residents of Minnesota.

As Hennepin County Attorney, public safety is my primary duty. While my office does not prosecute misdemeanor traffic offenses, we are impacted by the consequences of restricting the ability of some of our community members to drive.

Without more expansive public transportation, people need to drive to jobs, medical appointments, and to shop for groceries. When we create conditions that destabilize people's lives, we often see the consequences in court. Victims of domestic abuse and their children may need a car to seek safety. Lack of access to a driver's license leaves immigrants vulnerable to perpetrators of labor or human trafficking. Fear of immigration consequences may lead victims and witnesses to avoid court, making prosecution of violent crimes difficult.

I also support this bill because the license restriction is based on the faulty premise that foreign documents cannot establish identification. We can identify foreign residents on the road the same way we recognize their identities when they pay taxes.

Immigrants are a critical part of our community. They work difficult jobs, pay taxes, and make many other important contributions. They deserve to have the ability to drive a car to access a life in which they, and their children, will thrive. I support this bill because it is another step toward recognizing the humanity of all Minnesotans.

Thank you again for this opportunity to express my support for this legislation.

Sincerely,

Mary F. Moriarty
Hennepin County Attorney