

January 27, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

As a West St. Paul City Councilmember, I am proud to support Driver's Licenses for All (H.F. 4/S.F. 27), which is critical to our workers and their families.

Restoring driver's licenses for all will benefit all Minnesotans. In particular,

It makes our roads safer for everyone

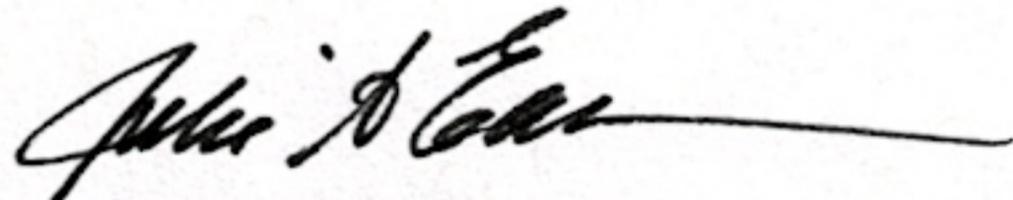
- Minnesotans without immigration status would need to pass a written and driving test to obtain a license, ensuring all drivers are certified to drive.
- Driver's licenses for all means fewer accidents. Issuing licenses to immigrants without immigration status led to a 9% decrease in hit-and-runs in Connecticut and a 7-10% decrease in California.
- With licenses, undocumented drivers will also be required to purchase auto insurance. After passing laws that allow undocumented drivers access to licenses, Utah and New Mexico both saw significant drops in their rates of uninsured drivers.
- **It benefits families and the economy**
 - In Minnesota, annual income would increase an estimated \$2,000-6,000 for full-time workers lacking immigration status if permitted to obtain a driver's license. That means more spending, boosting Minnesota's economy for all of us.
 - Greater Minnesota and the agricultural sector depend on immigrant workers, who need safe and legal access to roads in rural areas with little to no existing public transit.
 - All drivers benefit from lower auto insurance rates in states that grant driving privileges regardless of immigration status.
 - Minnesota has one of the lowest unemployment rates in the nation. We need workers! Immigrants would benefit from broader job opportunities if they were able to acquire driver's licenses.
 - In New York, research showed that newly licensed immigrants would buy and register more cars.
 - Connecticut's DMV collected \$7.5 million in license fees over four years – offset by just \$300,000 to ramp up the new license program
 - Driver's licenses improve healthcare access and health outcomes for Minnesotans lacking immigration status, which strengthens our entire community's health.
- **It makes life safer for our immigrant neighbors and friends**
 - As of 2018, 30,700 U.S. citizen children in Minnesota have parents who lack immigration status, 2.4% of all children under 18 in the state. For these mixed-status families, issuing licenses to parents means giving U.S. citizen children safer access to essential services like education and healthcare.
 - Law enforcement supports creating access to driver's licenses for all immigrants to be able to verify everyone's identity, giving them greater ability to protect public safety.

- Restoring access to Drivers Licenses for All will protect victims of domestic violence
 - Victims of domestic violence are particularly vulnerable without access to a driver's license.
 - Abuse rates among immigrant women are as high as 49.8%, according to the [National Organization for Women](#). This crisis was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - Immigrant women have dramatically fewer people they can turn to, and not having a driver's license impedes their ability to create a safety plan.

Restoring driver's licenses for all is critical to residents of West St. Paul who may be lacking access to acquire a license today. They need licenses to be able to drive family members to work, school and access services in the metro area. We are fortunate to have a passionate, growing community and providing transportation opportunities, such as driver's licenses, means they can participate in events more easily.

Should you have any questions, please contact me at jeastman@wspmn.gov or 651-270-3392. Thank you for this opportunity to support Drivers Licenses For All.

Respectfully submitted,



Julie A. Eastman

West St. Paul City Councilmember, Ward 1