

The Minnesota Catholic Conference believes that establishing a “noncompliant” driver’s license for undocumented immigrants who meet certain criteria addresses the legitimate needs of migrants and helps them strengthen their families—thereby strengthening our communities. It also helps to create a safer driving environment. Currently, 12 states, Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico allow undocumented immigrants access to driver’s licenses.¹

Strengthens Families

- Many immigrant families today face hardships because they cannot or are unwilling to risk family separation, jail, detention, or even deportation if caught driving without a license.²
- Allowing migrants to obtain a driver’s license would allow them to do things with their family with more ease, such as going to school, attending church, shopping for groceries — fostering full, productive participation in our communities.

Creates Safer Environment for Everyone

- Those applying for a driver’s license under the new provision would be subjected to the same written and skills-based test as other drivers and applicants for driver’s licenses in Minnesota.
- In addition, a “noncompliant” driver’s license could help ensure safer roads by increasing the rates of insured drivers. Such an increase should reduce insurance premiums, as the pool of people paying premiums would expand, and reduce the amount of accidents involving uninsured drivers.³ After passing laws to allow undocumented drivers access to licenses, New Mexico saw its rate of uninsured drivers drop by 24%. Utah saw a similar drop of 20%.⁴
- Allowing undocumented immigrants access to licenses would grant greater ability to enforce laws in immigrant communities. Allowing undocumented immigrants access to a license, a way to drive legally, and a way to identify themselves to law enforcement would increase trust between immigrant communities and law enforcement, leading to greater collaboration and cooperation.⁵

Response to Common Objections

- Noncompliant driver’s license legislation protects the voting rights of United States citizens because it would NOT be an appropriate form of identification for voting purposes.⁶
- Noncompliant driver’s licenses enhance security because to verify the identity of an undocumented person, the applicant must submit a valid, unexpired government identification issued by a country other than the United States that meets certain statutorily specified requirements, or a U.S. Driver’s license, to verify his or her identity.

¹ Driver’s License Quick Facts from the Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota
<https://files.constantcontact.com/0d30324c501/8f3f74fb-ce0b-4ced-8239-59b816b05997.pdf>

² Driving and Deportation report from The Advocates for Human Rights, 2014.

³ The State of Utah, which has issued state identification cards allowing undocumented persons to drive since before 2005, has conducted a study of insurance rates among the general population and among the population of presumably undocumented persons who have received driving privileges. The rate of insurance is 82% among the general population, and 76% among the population of presumed undocumented immigrants. (Office of the Legislative Auditor General, State of Utah, January 2008).

⁴ Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota (n 1)

⁵ Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota (n 1)

⁶ The driver’s license would be marked “Not for voting” and **could not** be used as identification or other proof of legal presence or citizenship. States that have investigated whether non-citizens register to vote have found extremely low numbers of such registrations. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/03/17/supreme-court-voter-registration_n_2896634.html.

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