

**Subject: Reform Driver's License Suspensions**

Co-Chairs Courtney and Kotek, Vice-Chairs Girod and Drazen, Members of the Joint Interim Committee:

Thank you for your leadership within the Oregon Legislature on critical public safety and criminal justice issues. Oregon is paving the way on policies that protect its communities while expanding access to critically needed rehabilitative opportunities for its citizens. As the nation's largest bipartisan criminal justice reform organization, we have worked with conservative and progressive organizations across the country to make our criminal justice system more effective and cost-efficient, including advancing many of the same policies that you have championed in Oregon.

Today, I write to you to support the introduction and passage of a bill in this upcoming special session that will reform the unfair and counterproductive practice of suspending driver's licenses solely for the inability to pay court-related fines and fees. Last session, House Bill 4065, sponsored by Representative Noble and co-sponsored by several of you, passed the House and made it to the Senate floor, but the session ended before final passage. This critical legislation would have allowed thousands of struggling families to keep their licenses and their jobs while they saved to pay off court fines and fees. The current practice of suspending driver's licenses leads to the loss of jobs and greater challenges in paying off court fees and reinstating a driver's license.

This reform is sorely needed even at the best of times, but during the COVID-19 pandemic, it is particularly essential as families struggle to find and keep work. The loss of a driver's license during this pandemic will hit struggling families even harder and trap them in a cycle of debt that they may never escape.

In conclusion, I again thank you for your support of effective criminal justice policies. And the Justice Action Network is eager to see the special session take up driver's license suspension reform: a bipartisan policy that has already been vigorously debated and vetted in the most recent session. If we may be of any assistance on this or any other topic, please do not hesitate to call on us.

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