

To: Co-chairs Beyer and McKeown, Vice-Chairs Boquist and Noble, and members of the committee

My name is Jessica Mathis and I am writing in support of HB 2015, which would allow access to driver's licenses for all Oregonians.

I am the Housing Coordinator at Bradley Angle, an agency in N Portland that provides supportive services to survivors of domestic and sexual violence. Our agency provides support to survivors through our Economic Empowerment Program, Housing Programs, Shelter, Youth & Family Services, and culturally specific programs for African American and LGBTQ survivors.

We see survivors in all stages and we witness all of the ways in which not having access to a driver's license impacts a survivors ability to get to safety and remain safe.

We work with survivors who often have their identification stolen, destroyed, or held captive by their abusers as a way to prevent them from leaving or being successful in doing so. This especially impacts survivors who are DACA recipients, permanent residents, or other Visa holders. These folks have a long process ahead of them to replace these documents. We also work with survivors who are in the process of obtaining U and T Visas, for domestic violence and trafficking respectively, and in the time from which they apply until it's approved they would be unable to receive a driver's license. This process can take years. A new group of folks showing up in our system are survivors of High Demand Closed Communities, also known as cults. These survivors are born in the US, but have spent their entire lives off the grid and undocumented, and have a complex needs.

When survivors are unable to drive, they can't maintain the jobs they need in order to support their families and leave abuse. Without the ability to go to work, access social services, or take their children to school they often have to return to their abuser. Having to choose between safety and driving illegally is not only bad for these families, but the community. We are all impacted by the increased safety and financial risk of unlicensed and uninsured drivers.

This bill is vital to supporting vulnerable survivors and public safety.

Having the ability to apply for a license to drive gives all Oregonians, including those without legal status, the opportunity to follow the law, get to work and school safely, and provide for their families and communities.

Thank you for all you hard work to protect vulnerable members of out community!

Jessica Mathis  
Bradley Angle  
Housing Coordinator  
5432 N Albina Ave  
Portland, OR 97217