



April 17, 2019

To: Joint Committee on Transportation

From: DeAnna Horne, President of AFSCME Local 3668

RE: House Bill 2015: Equal Access to Roads Act

Co-Chair Senator Lee Beyer, Co-Chair Representative Caddy McKeown, and Members of the Joint Committee on Transportation,

I am DeAnna Horne, President of AFSCME Local 3668 at Metropolitan Public Defender in Portland. On behalf of AFSCME and myself, I urge you to support HB 2015.

HB 2015 would eliminate the requirement that Oregonians provide proof of legal status in the United States before the Department of Transportation may issue a noncommercial driver's license, a driver permit or an Oregon State Identification.

Currently, Oregonians who lack legal status in the United States must choose between providing for their families, taking their children to school, or commuting to work and breaking the law by driving without a valid license. This is particularly true in rural Oregon where public transportation may be infrequent and walking for miles along rural roads is simply unsafe. This is simply an untenable and unfair position for the State to place its citizens.

Additionally, laws that govern the basic knowledge needed to obtain an Oregon driver's license are intended to keep all of us safe. Placing folks in a position where they are unable to obtain a license and yet they have a need to drive puts all Oregonians at risk. A license certifies that a driver has a basic level of ability and knowledge.

As a career public defender, I have seen the difficulties that people face when they do not have a license and run a-foul of the DMV. Driving without a license carries a fine of up to \$1,000 and a prohibition on seeking a license in Oregon for 180 days. When one is forced to make a choice between abiding by the law and making a living for their family, many folks choose to drive. Things can quickly get out of hand for a person who is trying to make it to work, is recognized by law enforcement, and racks up thousands of dollars in unpaid fines. It's a hole that is difficult to climb out of.

I am also very pleased that HB 2015 allows for state issued identification. The lack of a photo identification, whether a driver's license or a state issued ID, makes for an extremely difficult life. A photo ID opens up free travel, allows people to open bank accounts, rent homes, and otherwise allows people to live a life that most of us take for granted.

It is time to pass HB 2015. There is no down side to this legislation. It is only fair and just. It upholds the values that we, as Oregonians, hold dear.

Sincerely,
DeAnna Horne
President, AFSCME Local 3668