



# SHARING THE ROAD: Why Driver's Licenses for All Makes Sense

Simon Marshall-Shah, State Policy Fellow | December 2019

## Expanding access to driver's licenses is not new



Until 2008, all Michiganders—including undocumented immigrants and those who cannot prove their legal presence—had the ability to obtain a driver's license after passing a driver's test and meeting other requirements. The law changed after Attorney

General Mike Cox issued an opinion on the issue in 2007 and the Legislature took action to codify this opinion into law.

## Driver's license legislation has been introduced



The Drive SAFE (Safety, Access, Freedom and the Economy) bills were introduced in Nov. 2019 by Sens. Stephanie Chang (D-Detroit) and Winnie Brinks (D-Grand Rapids), and Reps. Alex Garza (D-Taylor) and Rachel Hood (D-Grand Rapids).

These bills would bring Michigan law up to speed with that of 14 other states that allow residents who meet all other requirements to obtain a driver's license: CA, CO, CT, DE, HI, IL, MD, NV, NM, NY, OR, UT, VT, WA, plus Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia.

## Benefits of passing the Drive SAFE bills



55,000

New licenses

+

20,000

Vehicle purchases

=

\$13.5M

in revenue

IN THE FIRST THREE YEARS

\$12M

in annual recurring revenue, including sales and gas taxes

\$100M

in revenue over 10 years



### MORE DIGNITY AND FREEDOM, LESS FEAR

Our undocumented neighbors are business owners, parents, employees and caregivers. Allowing access to a driver's license means that those who do obtain one can engage in their communities, participate in our state economy more fully and complete everyday tasks with dignity and without fear.



### MORE INSURED DRIVERS AND LOWER AUTO INSURANCE

20,000 more Michigan drivers would be insured and have passed driver's tests. To register a passenger vehicle in Michigan, one must have auto insurance. Roads are safer and accidents are resolved more smoothly when more drivers have passed a standardized driving test and are insured.

Across the country, states that allow undocumented immigrants to apply for driver's licenses see lower annual premiums; doing so in Michigan would **save Michiganders about \$20 a year**. Although this is a modest decrease, that is enough to pay for a car wash in the thick of Michigan winter!



### MORE RESIDENTS PARTICIPATING IN MICHIGAN'S LOCAL ECONOMY

Allowing undocumented immigrants to apply for driver's licenses would **support Michigan's booming agricultural industry**. In addition, access to a driver's license means access to amenities and opportunities beyond one's immediate community, **including new businesses and higher-paying jobs**.