



**Testimony Presented to the State Board of Education
Resolution in Support of Driver’s Licenses for All Michiganders and
Senate Bills 631 and 632, House Bills 5192 and 5193 (Drive SAFE (Safety, Access,
Freedom and the Economy))**

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Good afternoon, Board Members, and thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today. My name is Simon Marshall-Shah and I am a State Policy Fellow with the Michigan League for Public Policy, a state-level nonpartisan policy institute dedicated to economic opportunity for all.

I’m here today to speak with you about the benefits of passing the Drive SAFE legislation that has been introduced into the Michigan Legislature and to encourage the Board to pass a resolution in support of these bills and driver’s licenses for all Michigan residents, regardless of one’s ability to prove his or her legal presence.

The League recently issued a report that looks at the ways in which the Drive SAFE legislation would improve the lives of those in the undocumented community while also increasing state revenues, having a positive economic impact across the state, and benefitting other Michigan drivers with safer roads and lower auto insurance premiums. I’d like to share our findings with you.

- Within just the first 3 years of implementation, The League projects 55,000 people would obtain a driver’s license and 20,000 would purchase and register a vehicle.
- Within this time frame: the state would see a boost of \$13.5 million. Thereafter, Michigan annual revenue would increase by \$12 million as a result of the law. These revenues would be generated from driver’s license fees, vehicle registrations and related fees, and sales and gas-related taxes.
- This policy would increase state revenues by nearly \$100 million over 10 years.

In addition to these revenue benefits, the Drive SAFE bills would support local Michigan economies and communities:

- When people have access to stores, restaurants, amenities beyond those in their immediate neighborhood or near their work, they spend more money across their communities and in the state.

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- Employees and employers *both* would have more choices because of employees' ability to travel farther and to different areas for job opportunities (with higher wages) and employers' pool of applicants growing larger because of it (with more workers and more to choose from).
- Critically for this group of Board Members, access to driver's licenses means parents and children are safer when driving to and from school every day; families can attend regular doctor's visits so children can stay healthy; and classrooms are healthier when all children and students attending schools and universities are healthy and able to thrive.

Furthermore, other Michigan drivers would see benefits:

- Roads are safer when more drivers have been tested to receive a driver's license. Also, licensed drivers are 10 times more likely to stop after an accident than unlicensed drivers.
- Michigan drivers would see their annual auto insurance premiums go down. A larger number of people with insurance means that annual premiums will go down for everyone.

Finally, I want to address an important concern:

- Drive SAFE bills do not allow undocumented immigrants the right to vote. One must be a citizen of the United States to vote. We allow 16- and 17-year-olds to obtain driver's licenses and drive. Yet, we do not allow individuals under the age of 18 to vote. Simply having a license does not equate to voting privileges.

In closure, based on these community and economic benefits, including the stories we have heard today, I encourage the State Board of Education to pass a resolution in support of these bills and the undocumented community. Thank you for your time and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.