

May 3, 2023

The Honorable Frank Hornstein
Chair, Transportation Policy and Finance Committee
563 State Office Building, Room 563



The Honorable Scott Dibble
Chair, Transportation Committee
Minnesota Senate Bldg., Room 3107

Re: Support for Driver's License provisions from HF503/SF577 and HF490/SF777

Chair Hornstein, Chair Dibble, and Members of the Conference Committee,

On behalf of the 135 member organizations of the Minnesota Asset Building Coalition (MABC), thank you so much for supporting two important measures to reduce financial barriers to legal driving status.

- The **Reintegration Driver's License** provisions from HF503/SF577 create a no-cost, temporary driver's license for people releasing from incarceration with financial holds on their license. Legal driving status is critical for this population because it supports successful community reintegration, including securing employment and stable housing, meeting conditions of release, and reconnecting with family.
- The **Retroactive Driver's License Reinstatement** provisions from HF490/SF777 make 8000 Minnesotans whose license is currently suspended for failure to pay a traffic ticket eligible for reinstatement. Legislation passed in 2021 ending license suspensions for unpaid traffic tickets, and these provisions extend relief to people whose license suspension occurred prior to the enactment of the 2021 legislation.

We're grateful to Senator McEwen and Representative Pinto for their leadership on the reintegration driver's license bill and to Senator Hawj and Representative Becker-Finn on the retroactive reinstatement bill.

Thank you, Chair Hornstein and Chair Dibble, for recognizing that removing financial barriers to valid license status is a critical equity measure. The denial of valid driving status due to inability to pay fines and fees isolates people from community and family and excludes them from full participation in the job market. This denial disproportionately impacts BIPOC individuals and communities and contributes to racial disparities. Creating access to valid driving status not only restores practical access to opportunity but also restores hope for a brighter future.

Thank you for the good work you do to support economic opportunity for all Minnesotans. We look forward to the Conference Committee and hope to see both of these provisions included in the Conference Report.

Sincerely,

Anna Odegaard
Director, Minnesota Asset Building Coalition