

PILLSBURY UNITED COMMUNITIES

January 5, 2023

Dear Chair Hornstein and members of the Transportation Finance and Policy Committee,

On behalf of Pillsbury United Communities, I write in support of HF4, Driver's Licenses For All.

Beginning in 1879 with Minneapolis's first settlement house, Pillsbury United Communities (pillsburyunited.org) is one of Minnesota's oldest nonprofit organizations. Our mission is to co-create enduring change toward a just society where every person has personal, social and economic power. We operate four community centers and six social enterprises in Minneapolis, primarily serving Black, Brown and Indigenous people, people who are refugees and immigrants, and people who are poor and working class in Minneapolis.

We know firsthand that that the current inability for people who are undocumented to get a driver's licenses undermines the strength, stability, and safety of our communities. Families are being forced to make the impossible choice between being law abiding and driving to places that are essential to their livelihoods and wellbeing (work, school, doctor's appointments). Both the legal consequences of driving without a license and the mental and physical toll of the fear and stress that comes from having no safe, legal, and affordable options for transportation are destructive to families. Because of this, our staff (led by Jovita Morales, Luz Francisco and Rosa Francisco) have been fighting for Driver's Licenses for All for more than a decade.

Undocumented Minnesotans have only been barred from becoming licensed drivers since the early 2000s. We agree with what Governor Walz said at the Jan. 3 press conference on this issue: "it has been a cruel policy that did nothing good." Passing Driver's Licenses for All will make our roads and communities safer, families stronger, and economy more prosperous, and we hope you will do it this session.

Thank you for your consideration and your leadership on this issue,

Kenzie O'Keefe
Head of Mobilization and Narrative Strategies
Pillsbury United Communities