



March 3, 2020

Michigan Senate Transportation and Infrastructure Committee  
Binsfeld Office Building Room 1100  
201 Townsend Street, Lansing, MI 48933

**RE: Opposition to Senate Bill 0006 (2019)**

Dear Michigan Senate Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Members:

I am writing regarding Senate Bill 0006 (2019) on behalf of the Michigan Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights (MCIRR). MCIRR is a state-wide coalition comprised of over 70 nonprofit member organizations. Our mission is to coordinate educational and organizational efforts that build capacity within Michigan's immigrant advocacy community; support immigrants' rights in federal, state, and local policy; and promote a more positive and inclusive atmosphere for immigrants and refugees in Michigan.

We are writing in opposition to Senate Bill 0006. This bill would penalize individuals for driving with an expired driver's license. If the goal of this policy is to increase public safety by decreasing the number of unlicensed or uninsured drivers, we share that goal. However, we disagree with this approach. Prior to 2008, Michigan law contained no requirement that an applicant for a driver's license or state ID card prove a specific immigration or citizenship status in order to be eligible. After the legislature changed the law to require proof of U.S. citizenship or "legal presence," tens of thousands of individuals who are unable to prove legal presence lost the ability to drive legally in Michigan. In addition, significant delays in verifying proof of legal presence for many categories of immigrants with lawful immigration status mean lags and gaps of weeks or months in those individuals' driver's licensing. Tens of thousands of immigrant drivers want to be licensed, but are shut out.

We urge you to consider the Drive SAFE (Safety, Access, Freedom, and the Economy,) bills that were introduced in 2019. We ask that you prioritize and pass the SAFE bills (Senate Bills 0631/0632 House Bills 5192/5193), which will provide driver's licenses for all before passing any legislation that would further penalize individuals for driving without a license.

Sincerely,

*/s/ Evangelina Alvarez*

Evangelina Alvarez  
Secretary of the MCIRR Steering Committee