



To:

Joint Committee on Transportation
jct.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov

April 16, 2019

Dear Co-Chair Beyer, Co-Chair McKeown, Co-Vice Chair Boquist, Co-Vice Chair Noble, and Members of the Joint Transportation Committee:

I am writing on behalf of the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO) to express our support for **House Bill 2015, Equal Access to Roads Act**. The bill ensures standard licenses are available to all drivers who meet the requirements to drive, regardless of their citizenship or immigration status.

As a statewide, grassroots organization, we believe that *all* families, regardless of who they are or where they come from, deserve the rights, recognition, and resources they need in order to thrive, including the ability to drive legally. It is a core everyday need for many Oregon families -- to take their kids to school, to commute to work, and to take care of family and neighbors in need.

Our Asian and Pacific Islander community is one of the fastest growing demographic in Oregon. 60% of our communities are immigrants, and 20% of us are undocumented. One of our members, named Guangli, was born in China and immigrated to Venezuela for work where she had a son. When Guangli's son was two years old, the family traveled to the United States on a visit visa. They have been hiding here in the United States for the last six years. As an undocumented, single-mother who doesn't speak English fluently, Guangli was unable to find a full-time job. Luckily, she found a part-time job at a Chinese grocery store in walking distance of her home in the Jade District. Despite this, she struggles to take care of her son's health, because everytime he is sick, she has to bring their passports to make an appointment. Unfortunately, two years ago, Guangli's passport expired, and she has had an incredibly difficult time renewing it. Since she can no longer produce an ID, getting a doctor's appointment for her son is now nearly impossible.

The costs of not having a driver's license go well beyond the ability or inability to drive. People like Guangli fear for their family's health, safety, and security. Excluding immigrants because of their immigration status from getting a driver's license, puts our Oregon neighbors at risk, making it harder for them to care for themselves and build a better life for their families. We must ensure access to driving so that no one -- no family, no community -- faces a barrier to meet their basic needs.



I urge the Joint Transportation Committee to pass HB 2015 because our immigrant friends and families should not have to live in fear for their health, safety, and security. They should not have to live in fear of being deported or worry about their families being torn apart simply because of a traffic violation.

I thank you for your time and consideration, and ure the Committee to vote in support of HB 2015.

Sincerely,
Ivy Major-McDowall
Legislative Coordinator
APANO