

To: Joint Committee on Transportation
From: D. Michael Dale, Northwest Workers' Justice Project
RE: House Bill 2015: Equal Access to Roads Act

Co-Chair Senator Lee Beyer, Co-Chair Representative Caddy McKeown, and Members of the Joint Committee on Transportation,

Northwest Workers' Justice Project is a non-profit organization that provides critical representation and education to Oregon's low-wage, immigrant, and contingent workers for the purpose of protecting their workplace rights and dignity. We are based in Portland, Oregon and we urge you to support HB 2015.

HB 2015 would expand eligibility for a standard (Class C) driver license to all Oregon residents regardless of citizenship status by returning the regular Class-C Oregon Driver License (ODL) to a pre-2008 set of application requirements. Today, individuals face many barriers to securing a driver license due to these expanded requirements. Specifically, undocumented immigrants, who are often unable to provide proof of legal presence in Oregon, are barred from obtaining an Oregon Driver License. Being unable to access a license to drive puts many immigrants without legal status in an impossible position: either choose to drive without a license and risk arrest and deportation or choose not to drive and be unable to provide for their families.

The ability to drive legally is a core everyday need for many Oregon families as people take their kids to school, commute to work, and take care of family and neighbors in need. Requiring all drivers, regardless of citizenship or immigration status, to pass a written safety exam and driver's test and provide proof of identity and insurance makes Oregon roads and communities safer for everyone.

Oregonians should not have to live in fear of being deported or worry about their families being torn apart simply because they are taking their kids to school, going to work, or taking care of their family or neighbors.

This is why we support HB 2015 and encourage this committee to pass it. Please remember our concerns when voting on this bill. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

D. Michael Dale, Executive Director
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