

Hello,

My name is Megan and I am a Portland resident. I am writing in support of the Equal Access to Roads Act.

Oregon is required to implement new stricter standards for issuing enhanced driver licenses to bring the state into compliance with the federal Real ID Act. In 2017, the Oregon Legislature passed the Real ID act, which created two options for getting an Oregon driver license:

1. The standard driver license, similar to what is currently being issued; or
2. An enhanced Real-ID license, which will allow Oregonians to board airplanes and enter federal buildings without additional accepted documentation of legal presence, such as a passport.

The ability to drive legally is a core everyday need for Oregon families.

- Many Oregonians do not have access to documents needed to get an enhanced driver license. This includes the elderly, immigrants without legal status, low-income individuals, people who are houseless, and survivors of domestic violence.
- The standard license will help ensure that all Oregonians can access a license to drive and have a legal way to identify themselves.
- 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 family.

The Equal Access to Roads Act upholds Oregon's values.

- In Oregon, we believe of fairness, looking out for our neighbors, and treating others as we would want to be treated.
- Oregonians shouldn't 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.
- We might disagree about how to fix our complex and broken immigration system, but we can all agree that our immigrant friends and neighbors shouldn't be separated from their families over a traffic stop.
- Immigrants join the long American tradition of coming here in search of a better life and the freedom and opportunity we offer.

Requiring all drivers to get a license makes Oregon roads and communities safer for everyone.

- All drivers will be required to pass a written safety exam and driver test and provide proof of identity and insurance before getting a license.
- Without a driver license, immigrants who otherwise have no criminal record can be flagged for deportation over a traffic stop. Since 2016, deportations due to traffic violations have increased by 138%.
- In many communities, especially in rural Oregon, it's not practical or safe for people to walk for miles on country roads just to get to and from work or take care of their families.
- In states with similar laws, traffic accidents and hit-and-run incidents have decreased, and the number of insured driver rates have increased significantly.

Megan Horst