

Submitter: Michaela Hammerson
On Behalf Of: Moms with Teenage Drivers
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2683

I am writing to strongly oppose HB 2683, which would allow individuals to request that the Department of Transportation note on a driver's license, permit, registration card, or ID a disability that interferes with their ability to effectively communicate with a police officer. As a mother of three boys, including a 16-year-old son who is learning the responsibilities of driving, I find this proposal not only impractical but dangerous.

Driving is a privilege, not a right, and it comes with serious responsibilities. If a person's disability prevents them from effectively communicating with a police officer, they should not be issued a driver's license or permit in the first place.

We are all required to respond to an officer's lawful commands when appropriate—there's no exception to that rule. A driver who can't communicate effectively puts themselves, law enforcement, and the public at risk, especially in high-stakes situations like traffic stops.

Beyond that, consider what happens in atypical traffic scenarios—an accident, a weather emergency, or a road closure. Drivers must be competent and able to follow directions from emergency responders and first responders without delay. Lives depend on it. Adding a note to a license doesn't solve the problem; it just flags an issue that should disqualify someone from driving altogether. How is a police officer or paramedic supposed to adapt in the heat of the moment to a vague disability marker? This bill doesn't make roads safer—it creates confusion and liability.

HB 2683 is ridiculous. Instead of bending over backwards to accommodate conditions that impair a fundamental requirement of driving, we should uphold clear, consistent standards for everyone behind the wheel. I urge you to reject this bill and keep our roads safe for my sons and every Oregonian.