



Representative Emilia Strong Sykes
34th Ohio House District

Chairman Green, Vice-Chairman Greenspan, Ranking Member Sheehy and members of the House Transportation and Public Safety Committee, thank you for the opportunity to present sponsor testimony on House Bill 260.

Drug possession, stealing gasoline, failure to pay child support, and violating a municipal ordinance, these are just a few of the many non-motor vehicle related reasons why someone might have their driving privileges revoked in Ohio, creating a cycle that never allows people to pay restitution to the state as their mode of transportation is revoked. Driver's license suspensions have become an all too common punishment in Ohio and I along with Rep. Butler do not believe it is a punishment befitting all crimes not related to a motor vehicle offense. To strip someone of their ability to get to work, get their children to daycare, school or doctor's appointments is nonsensical and does not get to

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the deserved behavioral compliance. We cannot expect people to better themselves if we take away one of the primary tools they have at their disposal to do that very thing.

This becomes especially burdensome for low-income families and those who live in communities without adequate transportation. People are forced into a never-ending cycle of fines and jail time. Removing a person's ability to drive to and from work is counterproductive. It affects their family, their employment and the ability to care for their families every day needs.

HB 260 will require courts to grant driving privileges to people who commit non-motor vehicle offenses. It makes sense that if you commit an offense with a motor vehicle your right to drive be reviewed and if warranted, suspended. If the offense does not involve a motor vehicle, why are we punishing people by taking their license? Why are we making it impossible for a parent to earn gainful employment to pay their child support? More than half of the offenses listed in HB 260 are drug related, why are we taking the opportunity for people to get to treatment?

Currently the law states that courts may grant driving privileges, but it does not require that they do so when the offense is not motor vehicle related. I believe that granting driving privileges to non-motor vehicle offenses is the best way to help people start a new path.

Thank you again for this opportunity to testify on House Bill 260, Rep. Butler and I will be happy to take questions.

