



# OHIO JUSTICE & POLICY CENTER

RECLAIMING LIVES • RENEWING COMMUNITIES • RESTORING JUSTICE

215 EAST 9TH STREET SUITE 601  
CINCINNATI, OHIO 45202  
(T) 513-421-1108  
(F) 513-562-3200  
CONTACT@OHIOJPC.ORG  
WWW.OHIOJPC.ORG

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## To: Ohio House Committee on Transportation and Public Safety

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**From: Dorianne Mason, Second Chance Project Director, Ohio Justice & Policy Center**

**Date: November 8, 2017**

**Re: In Support of HB 260**

Greetings Chairman Green, Vice Chair Greenspan, Ranking Member Sheehy, and members of the House Committee on Transportation and Public Safety. I urge you to support HB 260 so that Ohioans can continue to be productive students and employees, healthy community members, and engaged parents.

I submit this testimony on behalf of the Ohio Justice & Policy Center, a nonprofit law firm whose mission is to promote fair, intelligent, and redemptive criminal justice systems. Among its projects, OJPC represents people with criminal records who face barriers to community reintegration – some of whom have lost drivers licenses due to charges unrelated to their motor vehicles.

HB 260 centers on values we all share as Ohioans, across backgrounds and parties. We want people to be safe, self-sufficient citizens. We want to end cycles of poverty, mass incarceration, and addiction. We want Ohioans to access jobs, schools, and treatment. We want them to be able to transport children to school and to good childcare.

Arbitrary driver's license suspensions – for crimes totally unrelated to driving or motor vehicles – prevent people from achieving these goals. In Ohio, individuals can lose driving privileges due to drug-related offenses, making them unable to go to court-ordered treatment. People who are convicted for inability to pay child support, after losing a job unexpectedly, cannot get hired because they cannot drive to work. Our clients are risking more fines and possible jail time if they are caught driving with a suspended license, or being unable to get their kids to school, missing treatment and court dates, losing their job because they didn't have a way to get to work. These restrictions simply don't make sense. HB 260 solves this problem.

Best,

/s/ Dorianne G. Mason

Contact: Dorianne Mason, [dmason@ohiojpc.org](mailto:dmason@ohiojpc.org), (513) 421-1108 X 19  
Ohio Justice & Policy Center, 215 E. 9th St, Suite 601, Cincinnati, OH 45202