



Office of Representative John E. Barnes, Jr.

Chair Brinkman, Vice Chair Henne, Ranking Member Boccieri and Members of the House Insurance Committee, we stand before you today as the sponsor of a very important piece of legislation – House Bill 336, the Reinstatement Fee Amnesty Initiative.

This bill requires the registrar of motor vehicles to establish a six-month driver's license reinstatement fee reduction and amnesty program no later than ninety days after the effective date. The program shall immediately terminate six months after that effective date.

So Where Did This Concept Come From For This Bill?

Currently there is a total of 3.2 million active driver's license suspensions statewide, with an average of nearly three suspensions per person (a breakdown of suspensions by county is attached). Many Ohioans currently under suspension for an extended period do not have the means financially to pay the cost for the reinstatement fees. This bill seeks to address the issue of drivers on the road without a valid license, as well as reducing the amount of administrative backlog of the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles currently has while trying to garner payment of such fees. It is our goal to create a reasonable, practical, and measured attempt to make sure that Ohioans can have a valid driver's license while driving through our neighborhoods or interstates.

This legislation grants reinstatement fee reduction or amnesty for people under the following conditions:

1. A person whose license or permit has been suspended because of an eligible offense may apply to the Registrar for a reinstatement fee reduction if the person has completed all court-ordered sanctions, and at least eighteen months have expired since the court imposed the suspension.

- a. If the person owes reinstatement fees for multiple eligible offenses, the person shall be required to pay only the lowest reinstatement fee owed for those offenses
 - b. If the person owes reinstatement fees for one eligible offense, the person shall be required to pay one-half of the reinstatement fee owed for that offense.
2. A person whose driver's license or permit has been suspended may apply to the Registrar for complete amnesty if the person has completed all court-ordered sanctions, and the person can demonstrate proof of indigence by providing documentation in a form approved by the Registrar.
3. The person does not have an offense that involves alcohol, a drug of abuse, combination thereof, a deadly weapon, violent assault, or of a sexual nature.

The Registrar shall conduct a public service announcement regarding the driver's license reinstatement fee reduction and amnesty program that includes a description of the program and its requirements. In addition, the Registrar shall make such information available on the Bureau of Motor Vehicle's web site. This bill also grants the Registrar's office a great deal of flexibility and prerogative by allowing the office to establish any procedures necessary for the implementation of this program.

We are thankful to the Registrar and the Ohio Bureau of Motor vehicles to their commitment to solve this problem, and working so closely with us throughout this process. Thank you for your consideration of this bill and we are available for your questions.