

Written Testimony in support of ending debt-based driver's license suspension
Prepared for John Rush
President & CEO: CleanTurn, 180Demo

Dear Chairman Ghanbari and Members of the Homeland Security Committee,

As a proud Ohio business owner, I write to you in strong support of Senate Bill 37, a bill to end driver's license suspensions due to unpaid fines or fees. This common-sense legislation will strengthen our economy, support hard-working Ohioans, and get our state moving again.

Driving is a daily necessity for the vast majority of Ohioans – myself included. Nearly three-quarters of our state's workforce depends on a car to get to and from work. Roughly 1.8 million individuals in our state lose their licenses each year because of an unpaid fine, fee, or traffic ticket. For them, it can mean the difference between remaining employed and entering a cycle of poverty.

As an employer with several businesses in Columbus, I know firsthand how hard it is to attract and retain top talent. Needlessly punitive measures that keep Ohioans off the road for no other reason than inability to pay a fine or fee only make it harder. With unemployment at a historic low, and thousands more job vacancies than available workers, employers like myself are looking for new ways to build a loyal, resilient, and productive workforce. It's no surprise that [seven in ten](#) small business owners in Ohio support ending driver's license suspensions for unpaid fines and fees. Simply put, no business owner wants the DMV getting in the way of workers showing up on time.

Getting drivers back on the road after debt-based suspensions has significant and immediate benefits to the local and state economy. – especially for low-income communities. After 7,000 Arizona drivers repaid their debt, the state saw increased economic output of [\\$149.6 million](#).

By helping our neighbors stay on the road, we can make our communities safer. Stable employment is one of the most important factors in determining whether or not someone will reoffend. Moreover, as law enforcement agencies are facing staffing and recruiting challenges across the state, we should ensure that police departments are able to spend their time on important matters like violent crime – not debt-based traffic enforcement.

Ending debt-based suspensions will keep millions of Ohioans on the road, gainfully employed, and contributing to society. Senate Bill 37 is good for business, good for our economy, and good for communities.

John Rush
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