

Written Testimony in support of ending debt-based driver's license suspension  
Prepared for Kendra Hovey  
Fair Chance Ambassador, Hot Chicken Takeover, Untamed Brands

Dear Chairman Ghanbari and Members of the House Homeland Security Committee,

I write to you in support of Senate Bill 37, a common sense bill that would end debt-based driver's license suspensions in Ohio.

As Fair Chance Ambassador of Untamed Brands, a multi brand platform that includes Hot Chicken Takeover, I am particularly interested in this bill. Driving is an essential aspect of daily life for the vast majority of Americans – as it is for me. The food service industry is an industry that would greatly benefit from opening access to driver's licenses.

In Ohio, approximately 60% of all driver's license suspensions are based on a person's failure to pay money owed to a court, the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV), a private third party, or failure to appear in court. With 82% of individuals in Ohio dependent on a car to get to and from work, the effect of a suspended license is catastrophic. A suspended license can be the difference between remaining employed and entering cycles of poverty.

This, in turn, has hugely detrimental effects for our state's economic recovery. Excluding qualified and able workers, just because of unpaid fines and fees, means these individuals cannot pay back their debts or put money back into our communities. Debt-related suspensions substantially burden Ohio communities with an average outstanding total debt each year of over \$920 million.

At the same time, businesses across Ohio are struggling. With unemployment at a historic low and thousands more job vacancies than available workers, companies are desperately looking for new ways to build a diverse, loyal, and productive workforce. At Hot Chicken Takeover, we take pride in not letting someone's background prelude them from being employed - and for that reason, our employees are indeed loyal and productive. We've learned first hand that giving someone a job and making it easier, not more difficult, to drive to work in turn creates happier and safer communities.

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

Kendra Hovey  
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