



**STATEMENT OF THE OHIO STATE BAR ASSOCIATION
IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 37**

Before the House Homeland Security Committee
Representative Haraz Ghanbari, Chair

Chairman Ghanbari, Vice-Chair Plummer, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the House Homeland Security Committee: On behalf of the Ohio State Bar Association (“OSBA”), thank you for the opportunity to present written-only testimony in support of Senate Bill 37.

The OSBA generally supports reforms that limit driver’s license suspensions to dangerous driving offenses. The loss of a driver’s license creates a substantial barrier to employment and responsible citizenship.

Over 1 million Ohioans had a suspended license each year from 2016-2020, many of which were related to unpaid debt. The Legislature has recognized the financial barriers for people working to reinstate their license and has made efforts to reduce them in recent years, piloting a program to waive reinstatement fees for indigent persons. That program was so successful that the General Assembly made it permanent.

But there is more work to be done. While we are proud of the progress on reinstatement fees and thankful for the support of the Legislature, we believe more must be done to address the underlying problem that is causing so many Ohioans to choose between driving without a license and failing to live up to their financial and societal obligations. Many of the existing policies are not meeting their intended goals and a further review of the system is needed. Senate Bill 37 moves in the right direction.

The OSBA appreciates all of the work that has been done by the bill sponsors and interested parties on this issue. The OSBA is supportive of the efforts outlined in Senate Bill 37 to reduce the number of non-driving related suspensions in Ohio and we urge passage.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this legislation.

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