

December 10, 2024

Representative Haraz Ghanbari, House Homeland Security Committee Chair  
Riffe Center  
77 South High Street  
Floor 13  
Columbus, OH 43215



United Way of  
Greater Lorain County

RE: Senate Bill 37: Regards Driver's License Suspension Law; Financial Responsibility

Dear Representative Ghanbari,

We appreciate your consideration of Senate Bill 37 and deem it urgent for the bill to be passed by the House before the end of 2024. United Way of Greater Lorain County (UWGLC) believes the proposed legislative changes in SB 37 would be extremely beneficial to the people we serve.

Transportation is a massive barrier in Lorain County that prevents people from getting to work. Lorain County's lack of reliable public transit is compounded by more than 40,000 debt related driver's license suspensions per year – 35 suspensions for every 100 driving age residents of Lorain County. Research also shows that the average person in Lorain County has a 25-minute commute to work, rendering it virtually impossible to get to work without a car.

Eliminating driver's license suspensions for anything not directly related to dangerous driving would restore the right to work for thousands of Lorain County residents, allowing them to positively contribute to the economy while paying down their underlying debt.

In Ohio, approximately 60 percent of all driver's license suspensions are based on a person's failure to pay money owed to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles, or for failure to appear in court or pay a fine. Research has shown that 61 percent of people with these suspensions experienced at least one essential hardship as a result, including housing, food, and employment.

UWGLC commits over \$450,000 per year to Lorain County residents through the United Community Assistance Network (UCAN). UWGLC and nine local partners provide working households with emergency financial assistance for rent, utilities, and other emergency basic needs – including driver's license fines and fees – when they fall into a short-term financial crisis. The goal of the collaborative is to proactively provide support to low-income workers when needed so they can return to stability and ultimately work their way out of poverty. Many of the people we serve through UCAN would have no realistic means of reinstating their driver's license without the changes proposed in SB 37.

Again, we thank you for your leadership in this important work and urge the House Homeland Security Committee to vote on and pass this critical bill on December 11<sup>th</sup>.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ryan Aroney".

Ryan Aroney  
President & CEO  
United Way of Greater Lorain County

December 10, 2024



Additional Endorsements of this Testimony from our UCAN Partners

**United Way of  
Greater Lorain County**

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