



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

Before the Senate Judiciary Committee
Senator Nathan Manning, Chair

Chairman Manning, Vice-Chair Reynolds, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and members of the Senate Judiciary 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 supports reforms that limit driver’s license suspensions to dangerous driving offenses and make it easier for a person to get their license back when they have complied with court orders and penalties. The loss of a driver’s license creates a substantial barrier to employment and responsible citizenship.

It is currently estimated that over one million Ohioans have their driver’s licenses suspended. Another 500,000 Ohioans are eligible for reinstatement of their licenses but have not yet been reinstated. For many, the failure to reinstate is because of the inability to pay high BMV reinstatement fees. It is estimated that one in five Ohio drivers is driving without a valid license.

To that end, the OSBA has worked with the legislature to pilot a program to waive reinstatement fees for indigent persons. That program was so successful, the legislature made it permanent the next General Assembly.

While we are proud of our 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.

Senate Bill 37 moves Ohio in the right direction – driver’s license suspensions should be limited to offense involving dangerous driving.

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

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