

Committees

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## Darnell T. Brewer

State Representative, Ohio House District 18

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Chairman Senator Manning, Vice Chair Reynolds, Ranking Member Hicks-Hudson, and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee

Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB29. This legislation will create much-needed reform in enforcing Child Support in correlation to Driver's license suspension.

Ohio House Bill 29 seeks to change the revised code regarding driver's license suspensions & failure to pay child support. In the state of Ohio, there are a variety of ways one can get their license suspended. In Ohio, the suspension of a driver's license for failing to pay child support can create a terrible cycle. It hinders one's ability to work, attend medical appointments, and fulfill medical and educational obligations. This predicament is not just a legal issue but a human one. It affects real people and real families every day in our state.

A news article from Scene Magazine recently noted that a Cleveland neighborhood in Ohio has the highest driver's license suspension rates and is among the city's most prevalent helpline callers, 211. The United Way of Greater Cleveland operates 211 and offers guidance to residents requesting assistance obtaining information on basic needs, including transportation.

According to research provided by an associate professor of urban studies at Cleveland State University and a Legal Aid Society attorney, residents of the 44104 zip code were among the most likely to call 211 for help with transportation from 2016 through 2020.

This area in Cleveland is primarily home to Black residents and also has one of the highest rates of poverty in the State. The Marshall Project found that debt-related driver's license suspension, such as missing child support payments, failing to pay court fines, and not having insurance, affects not only the 44104 zip code but millions of Ohioans.

Who represents the 44104 area with the highest number of driver's license suspensions in the Ohio House of Representatives- ME! So, I take this bill personally.

Abraham Lincoln was once quoted as saying- " You can not escape the responsibility of tomorrow by evading it today.

So today, I am glad this committee has not only taken responsibility for driver's license issues with SB 39 but is equally ecstatic to be considering HB 29.

As for responsibility, this bill will not automatically grant someone their driving privileges if they default on their child support. It will allow them to petition for limited driving

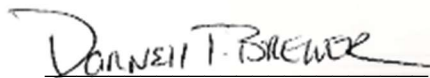
privileges. These privileges include but are not limited to Work, Doctor visits, educational requirements, court-ordered treatments, and any other purposes the court may deem necessary. The decision of whether someone receives these privileges is still made by the courts and administered through the child support enforcement agency. Our ultimate goal is to help the system work the way it was intended to, to help the people.

We want parents to pay for their child's support, but we must allow them to. Throughout this legislation, our offices have met with experts, stakeholders, and citizens. Their insights and experiences have been invaluable to this bill and its formation.

Therefore, our legislation will encourage child support enforcement and allow individuals to work and continue to provide support and payment into the child support system.

Finally, we hope you and this committee support our efforts and move forward in helping to move Ohio's economy forward by allowing people to continue to work. We know poverty should never be a determining factor in who is allowed to drive.

We appreciate your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "DARNELL T. BREWER". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Representative Darnell Brewer  
District 18 - 135th General Assembly