



March 9, 2021

Representative Frank Hornstein
Chair, Transportation Finance and Policy Committee
545 State Office Building
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Saint Paul, MN 55155

Dear Representative Hornstein and House Transportation Finance and Policy Committee Members:

The Minnesota Budget Project urges you to support House File 1163, which would allow Minnesotans to access driver's licenses regardless of their immigration status. This bill would advance the economic success of our state, and recognize and support the contributions of immigrants who call Minnesota their home and are working, learning, and living in our communities.

For a large number of Minnesotans, the daily activities we do to support our families -- like getting to work, dropping children off at school, or buying groceries -- require driving. For about 85,000 Minnesotans, doing these basic activities without a driver's license risks potentially life-altering consequences, including families being separated and losing their livelihoods.

This is a time when immigrants are serving our communities as essential workers on the frontlines during COVID-19. They are making sure we all have food on the table and protecting our health in their jobs as farm workers, food processors, and health care workers. Now more than ever, it is crucial that all of our community members can reliably and safely get to their jobs.

Allowing all Minnesotans the ability to acquire driver's licenses is also a crucial step in building a more equitable and prosperous economy. As our state's workforce ages, Minnesota increasingly relies on all members of our communities being able to fill critical jobs, which often requires having a driver's license. With a driver's license, these community members will have more ability to schedule a range of shifts and access broader job opportunities. The resulting increase in these Minnesotans' earnings also creates a boost in consumer spending that's good for our local economies.

Please support House File 1163 so our immigrant neighbors can more fully and safely participate in our communities and economy. Please contact Clark Goldenrod (cgoldenrod@mnbudgetproject.org or 651-757-3071) if there is any additional information we can provide.

Sincerely,

Clark Goldenrod
Deputy Director

The Minnesota Budget Project, an initiative of the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits, identifies and promotes public policies so that economic security is available to all Minnesotans, regardless of who they are or where they live.

Cc: Members, Minnesota House Transportation Finance and Policy Committee