



February 5, 2021

Via E-Mail Delivery

Representative Carlos Mariani, Chair
Public Safety and Criminal Justice Reform
Minnesota House of Representatives
479 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55103

Representative Brian Johnson
Lead, Public Safety and Criminal Justice Reform
Minnesota House of Representatives
243 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55103

Dear Chair Mariani and Representative Johnson:


On behalf of the Justice Action Network, the nation's largest bipartisan criminal justice reform organization, I am writing in support for legislation introduced in the House and Senate to address the issue of driver's license suspensions. The bipartisan legislation, HF 336/SF 432, was introduced by Rep. Jamie Becker-Finn and Sen. Bill Ingebrigtsen.

The Driver's License Suspension Reform bill prohibits the suspension of a driver's license for unpaid traffic tickets and makes licenses currently suspended only for unpaid tickets eligible for reinstatement. The legislation also prohibits the "double staking" of reinstatement fees by the Minnesota Department of Public Safety (DPS). In the past two years, DPS initiated the process of "double staking" fees which has led to significant hardships for families.

This legislation does not change driver's license suspensions for dangerous driving offenses. This legislation also leaves in place the collection process for unpaid tickets but allows for people with no other than unpaid traffic tickets to continue to legally drive while they are paying off these debts to the government. Minnesota has several other tools to collect unpaid traffic tickets between cities, counties, and state government. States have passed similar legislation including Maine, Mississippi, California, Virginia, Tennessee, and Michigan. We have included background information on the statewide impact of the legislation. We appreciate your efforts to address inequities in our criminal justice system.

Thank you for your consideration. Please feel free to contact our organization's government relations representatives, Melissa Lesch at melissa@parkstreetpublic.com or Chas Anderson at chas@parkstreetpublic.com.

Sincerely,


Jenna Bottler
Deputy Director, Justice Action Network

Cc: House Public Safety and Criminal Justice Reform Committee Members