

HB 161 - E&T - MDH - LOS.pdf

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

February 1, 2024

The Honorable Marc Korman
Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee
Room 251, House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

RE: House Bill 161 – Vehicle Laws Driver’s Licenses, Learner’s Instructional Permits, and Identification Cards – Letter of Support

Dear Chair Korman and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) respectfully submits this letter of Support for House Bill (HB) 161 – Vehicle Laws - Driver’s Licenses, Learner’s Instructional Permits, and Identification Cards.

HB 161 will be crucial to the Maryland Department of Health’s (MDH) Healthcare System’s efforts to provide its patients with identification cards upon discharge. Specifically, this legislation will waive the \$20.00 (twenty-dollar) identification card fee for individuals who present documentation showing that they are currently under the care of MDH.

Operationally, this bill will make it easier for our patients to obtain a community discharge placement where providers require state identification cards and insurance cards. The MDH Healthcare System believes that by waiving the identification card fee, it will be able to provide patients with identification cards at a greater pace, helping to lower the waitlist for admission and provide a timely and uncomplicated discharge process. HB 161 will help to make community discharges a timely process.

The MDH Healthcare System urges a favorable vote on HB 161 – Vehicle Laws – Driver’s Licenses, Learner’s Instructional Permits, and Identification Cards.

I appreciate your consideration of this matter. If you would like to discuss this further, please contact Sarah Case-Herron, Director of Governmental Affairs, at sarah.case-herron@maryland.gov

Sincerely,

Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H.
Secretary

HB0161 – MVA – Driver’s Licenses, Learner’s Instru

Uploaded by: Patricia Westervelt

Position: FAV

February 1, 2024

The Honorable Marc Korman
Chair, House Environment and Transportation Committee
251 House Office Building
Annapolis MD 21401

RE: Letter of Support – House Bill 161 – Vehicle Laws – Driver’s Licenses, Learner’s Instructional Permits, and Identification Cards

Dear Chair Korman and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) supports House Bill 161 as it improves quality of life for those experiencing unique hardships, assists those serving in public sector jobs requiring time abroad, and improves roadway safety for motorcycle endorsement applicants.

House Bill 161 allows the MDOT Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) to issue an Identification (ID) card to certain populations free of charge. It further would expand eligibility of out-of-state renewal options to civilian contractors of the federal government, including civilians working abroad for the military. Finally, it would extend a learner’s permit for a non-Graduated Licensing System (GLS) permit from six months to one year.

Providing Maryland residents with a form of identification connects people to life’s opportunities. The cost of a regular identification card is \$24 for a new, adult, full-term identification card and \$20 for a duplicate. Sometimes, customers are in difficult situations and struggle to afford this cost. The MVA has worked with many support organizations and agencies over the years to offer a reduction in the fee to \$1 for those in specific situations who are experiencing unique economic hardships. However, the costs incurred by the MVA merely in collecting and accounting for the \$1 fee charged to these customers exceeds the revenue generated by the charge itself, and this isn’t even accounting for the costs incurred by the product itself. With low rates of 811 customers in Fiscal Year (FY) 22 and 975 in FY23, the overall proposal should result in net savings for the MVA services provided as a result. With this legislation, the MVA can provide the vital identification product for customers in need while reducing the burdensome administrative costs incurred by the MVA through increased efficiencies.

Additionally, some applicants’ licenses or identification cards expire while they are working overseas, including for the armed services. These customers have documentation indicating they are civilians and have been out of the country for purposes related to government contracting work. Many of these customers are working side-by-side with the armed services or the U.S. Department of State. Currently, there are no provisions that keeps these customers’ licenses in effect for the duration of their work despite their public service on behalf of the country.

The MVA receives approximately 15-20 requests monthly from these types of situations faced by civilian contractors and is unable to assist them with out of state renewal unless they are a uniformed member of the armed services. Extending the ability for the MVA to offer out-of-state renewal processes for these Marylanders who are serving their country overseas in unique roles would update the MVA's services to reflect the modern landscape of the federal workforce. As Maryland is uniquely situated geographically to the federal government and its agencies that focus on overseas work on behalf of American interests, offering this reform is a necessary customer service reform for the MVA to provide for the large population serving in these modern public service roles.

Finally, the MVA is seeking to extend the non-GLS learner's permit. During the 2023 session, at the MVA's request, the legislature extended the term for a commercial learner's permit to one-year, providing commercial drivers a needed update to the timeframe during which they can receive needed safety and skills training along with more behind the wheel training with a licensed driver. Several years ago, the legislature extended the GLS learner's permit to one-year and this proposal would extend the same timeframe to non-GLS learner's permits. It would allow applicants seeking a motorcycle endorsement to have additional behind the wheel time with an experienced driver along with completing additional training if needed. Applicants who are obtaining a Motorcycle Endorsement on their license (which is mainly used seasonally) would then have the needed flexibility to complete a driving test regardless of the season, allowing for more flexibility on when they complete the training course and giving them the needed time behind the handlebars to gain necessary skills for safe operation. Further benefits also would allow out of country applicants to get the proper road time, and in some cases these applicants would be able to have additional time to obtain their out of country licenses through their host country if they were previously licensed.

For these reasons, the Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee grant House Bill 161 a favorable report.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine E. Nizer
Administrator
Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration
410-787-7830

Pilar Helm
Director of Government Affairs
Maryland Department of Transportation
410-865-1090

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Uploaded by: Rachel Sledge Government Affairs

Position: FAV

February 1, 2024

The Honorable Marc Korman, Chair
Environment and Transportation Committee
House Office Building, Room 251
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: TESTIMONY ON HB0161 - VEHICLE LAWS - DRIVER'S LICENSES, LEARNER'S INSTRUCTIONAL PERMITS, AND IDENTIFICATION CARDS - POSITION: FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Korman, and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Human Services (DHS) thanks the Committee for the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 161 (HB0161) and respectfully requests a favorable report. With offices in every one of Maryland's jurisdictions, DHS helps Marylanders in economic need, provides preventive services, and protects children and adults. We believe enacting HB 161 will remove financial barriers for customers in all three of our major administrations and lift up youth receiving our services to achieve greater independence.

House Bill 161 would benefit approximately 68,900 youth and young adults aged 15 to 20 who currently participate in programs administered by our Family Investment Administration (FIA). FIA administers means-tested programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Temporary Cash Assistance (TCA) providing food and cash assistance to households whose income is below the federal poverty line. The cost for an identification (ID) card through the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration is \$15 for individuals under 18 years old and \$24 for those over 18.

House Bill 161 would further benefit participants in other DHS programs. Our Social Services Administration (SSA) serves 4,686 individuals aged 15 to 20, including young people who are in foster care or receiving an adoption or guardianship subsidy. Our Child Support Administration (CSA) serves 933 Marylanders aged 15 to 20, of which 847 are custodial parents and 86 are non-custodial parents.

ID cards are valuable forms of ID essential to employment. Removing the fees for our program participants would provide a simple step forward in the Moore-Miller Administration's plan to address child poverty.

If you require additional information, please contact Rachel Sledge, Director of Government Affairs, at rachel.sledge@maryland.gov.

In service,



Rafael López
Secretary

HB 161 - Vehicle Laws - Driver's Licenses, Learner

Uploaded by: Kam Bridges

Position: FWA

JOTF JOB OPPORTUNITIES TASK FORCE

Advocating better skills, jobs, and incomes

Testimony in Support of House Bill 161

Vehicle Laws - Driver's Licenses, Learner's Instructional Permits, and Identification Cards

TO: Hon. Marc Korman, Chair, and Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee

FROM: Job Opportunities Task Force

DATE: February 1, 2024

POSITION: Favorable with Amendments

The Job Opportunities Task Force (JOTF) is an independent, nonprofit organization that develops and advocates policies and programs to increase the skills, job opportunities, and incomes of low-wage workers and job seekers in Maryland. **JOTF supports House Bill 161 with amendments, which would waive the fees associated with receiving a state ID under certain circumstances.**

House Bill 161 will waive the fee for receiving a state ID if the applicant:

- Presents documentation showing they were released from a correctional facility within the prior 60 days
- Presents documentation showing the applicant is a youth under the care of the Department of Juvenile Services
- Presents documentation showing that the applicant is a youth between 15 and 20 years of age who is a participant in a department of human services program
- Presents documentation showing that the applicant is currently homeless
- Or presents documentation showing that the applicant is currently under the care of the Maryland Department of Health

JOTF supports this legislation because having valid identification is critical for vulnerable populations to gain access to critical social services and employment opportunities. The demographics covered by the provisions of House Bill should not be subjected to the fees associated with applying for an ID; that is simply another financial barrier they are forced to overcome. Waiving the fee will increase access to the necessary documentation for vulnerable populations to improve their situations. However, many homeless individuals do not have access to documentation proving that they are homeless. JOTF would support amendments that allows for alternative methods for an individual to prove their unhoused status besides documentation to ensure this bill directly supports the populations that need it the most.

For these reasons, JOTF supports House Bill 161 and urges a favorable report with amendments.

For more information, contact:

Kam Bridges / Senior Public Policy Advocate / Kam@jotf.org