

PLEASE SUPPORT



The Senate Passed S-238 with UNANIMOUS SUPPORT to establish a
"STUDY COMMITTEE ON MIGRANT WORKER ACCESS TO DRIVER'S LICENSES
AND NON-DRIVER IDENTIFICATION CARDS."

WHY S-238?

"The general assembly finds that migrant workers in Vermont face significant challenges based on their current inability to apply for Vermont driver's licenses and non-driver identification cards, including the inability to travel and access services, medical care, and purchase basic necessities, to officially identify themselves or be identified, and to fulfill typical responsibilities of their employment that require them to legally drive." *S-238 as passed with unanimous support in the Senate*

The S-238 study committee is comprised of a balanced team of knowledgeable stakeholders and qualified experts including: The DMV, the Department of Public Safety, the Secretary of Agriculture, the Vermont Human Rights Commission and Migrant Justice. Committee members have met and are all committed to working together for a balanced and thorough study.

WHY S-238?

"I was kicked by a cow and waited for 24 hours in pain with deeply bruised ribs, and hurt wrist and ankle until my employer was able to help me access medical services. With a license me or my co-workers would have been able to drive and I wouldn't have feared calling 911."

-Danilo Lopez, dairy worker

"Now I feel like a prisoner. With a license I wouldn't because I could come and go as I need."
- Farmworkers on the importance of S-238

Common everyday activities that we take for granted such as shopping, banking, seeking medical advice or just socializing...are not readily available to the migrant farm workers, especially the closer to the Canadian border they live...I am here to show, not only our employees, but all the other migrant farm workers in Vermont that they deserve to be recognized for their contribution to the agricultural in Vermont.

*-Phylliss Bowdish, Weybridge
Dairy Farmer on S-238*

Access to Driver's License and ID for all Residents Encourages Public Safety

Police can identify and verify ID and license holders' when/if needed, and new ID holders can feel comfortable contacting police, especially as crime victims or witnesses. There has been great progress in VT on establishing Bias-Free-Policing and Human Trafficking Policies. This program would complement this work by encouraging all community members to feel safe accessing police. Some migrant workers are already driving, as part of their jobs or out of the fundamental need for transportation in our rural state. We are all safer if all Vermont residents take a test, understand the rules of the road, and buy insurance. Removing the SSN requirement for receiving a State ID and driver's licenses will also benefit asylum seekers, refugees and other immigrants while their visa applications are in process.

Access to Driver's License and ID for all Residents Supports Human Rights

Right now migrant farmworkers in Vermont are being denied the Human Right of freedom of movement. There are cases of worker and human rights abuse, on a minority of farms, where workers end up stuck in bad situations without any power to leave because they can't drive. This creates a powerless work force, which is bad for all Vermonters. There are also cases of migrant workers who need to get out of abusive relationships but can't because they can't drive. This program would help those in abusive situations have the power to move independently. Imagine living in rural Vermont without a car, and paying up to \$100 for rides to buy groceries--this is the current reality for many people living and working in Vermont.

This program would be a good complement to the new VT Human Trafficking law, as driver's licenses will reduce the black market of human trafficking.

Access to Driver's License and ID for all Residents Provides direct support and relief for Vermont's farms

There are only 24 hours in a day. Many farmers and most farm workers work 60-80 hours a week. Even the most well-intentioned farmers can't find the time to meet all the needs of workers to get off the farm in order to access health care, food, religious services or other basic needs. This dependency on farmers for access to basic services and resources is not good for anyone. Workers describe themselves as feeling like 'children' needing to ask their employers for basic necessities. Farmers also say that access to licenses would increase the responsibilities workers can take on at work, making jobs more productive and satisfying for everyone.

VT CAN AND SHOULD decide who has freedom of movement!

NO FEDERAL LAW SAYS VERMONT CANNOT ISSUE ID AND LICENSES REGARDLESS OF A PERSON'S IMMIGRATION STATUS. Full implementation of the **REAL ID ACT** in every state is proving to be both financially and politically impossible, and it is unlikely that full implementation will ever occur. REAL ID timeline continues to get postponed and states, including Vermont, are unable to be entirely REAL ID compliant. If and when the REAL ID ACT goes into full effect the draft of this program that the study committee will be considering was written in such a way that it would automatically expire if REAL ID ever goes into full compliancy.

Vermont will not lose federal funding for passing this ID and license program. Washington State and New Mexico provide drivers' licenses to residents without SSN, and they have not lost any highway funding or REAL ID compliancy funding. There has not been any negative repercussions on the banking or finance industries.

PLEASE SUPPORT S-238 AS PASSED BY THE SENATE!



For more information or sources, contact:

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