



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 683

Resolution calling upon the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles to stop requiring applicants for driver's licenses to provide information regarding immigration status.

By Council Members Foster, Barron, Brewer, Clarke, Comrie, James, Koppell, Liu, Monserrate, Palma, Quinn, Vann, Gonzalez and Martinez

Whereas, Currently, The New York State Department of Motor Vehicles ("DMV") is in the process of suspending and revoking hundreds of thousands of driver's licenses across New York State from persons whose social security numbers on file at the DMV do not match their social security numbers on file at the Social Security Administration; and

Whereas, As of November 17, 2004, the DMV had already suspended as many as 1,700 licenses of persons contacted by the DMV beginning in January 2004; and

Whereas, While the DMV has stated that this practice is a homeland security issue targeted at decreasing identity fraud, it is adversely affecting thousands of immigrants living and working in New York City and across New York State; and

Whereas, This practice could affect as many as 300,000 immigrants in New York State; and

Whereas, Immigrants residing in New York City need to drive in order to maintain employment, access services and support their families; and

Whereas, While New York State law requires the DMV to collect social security numbers from persons who apply for licenses, DMV regulations allow persons without social security numbers to apply for licenses with a letter from the Social Security Administration; and

Whereas, The DMV is currently further restricting the license application and renewal process by

requiring immigrants to provide information regarding immigration status and to have specific types of resident status-practices not mandated by either DMV regulations or New York State law; and

Whereas, In addition, when persons visit DMV offices to apply for or renew licenses, the DMV has implemented a practice of stamping valid licenses of immigrants with visa or immigration status information, which involves DMV staff in immigration enforcement matters and creates a two-tiered system for citizens and noncitizen residents; and

Whereas, A shift in the DMV's focus from ensuring that persons with a demonstrated ability to drive can do so legally to creating immigration status requirements that surpass state law hurts hard working immigrant families and threatens to make the roads less safe; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the city of New York calls upon the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles to stop requiring applicants for driver's licenses to provide information regarding immigration status.

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