



Equal Access to Roads Act

Policy Overview

Prior to 2008, the Oregon DMV required three things to issue an Oregon Driver License: proof of identity, proof of Oregon residency, and proof of driving skills. In 2008, the Oregon Legislature and then-Governor Ted Kulongoski made an effort to comply with the brand-new federal Real ID program by placing new requirements on applicants for an Oregon Driver License (ODL). These new requirements required applicants for an ODL to produce documents that indicated their legal presence in Oregon, in addition to identity, residency and skills.

In 2017, the Oregon Legislature passed the Real ID act, which created two options for getting an Oregon Driver License:

1. The Standard Class-C Driver License that is currently issued; or
2. A Real-ID License, which will allow Oregonians to board airplanes and enter federal buildings without additional accepted documentation of legal presence, such as a passport.

The Equal Access to Roads Act would expand eligibility for a standard (Class C) driver license to all Oregon residents regardless of citizenship status by returning the regular Class-C Oregon Driver License to a pre-2008 set of application requirements. The proposed bill:

- Allows all Oregon residents who pass written and driving tests, pay the fees, and provides proof of identity and residency to receive a standard driver license, regardless of citizenship status.
- Provides protection to ensure a person's information is secured and not shared with the federal government.
- Includes an emergency clause so that the bill can address community needs as quickly as possible.
- Provides anti-discrimination language to ensure a person isn't targeted for having a Class C license.
- Will have an implementation timeline beginning on January 1, 2021 to ensure success.

Between 80,000-100,000 Oregon residents could benefit from driver license expansion. The new requirements for Real ID will create barriers for many. The most impacted communities include Oregon's undocumented population, seniors, homeless/houseless folks, domestic violence victims, and other Oregonians who have difficulty accessing their birth certificate and other paperwork necessary to prove their citizenship status.

The driver license campaign is led by a steering committee composed of the following advocacy organizations: ACLU of Oregon, Causa, Fair Shot Oregon, Oregon AFL-CIO, Oregon Association of Nurseries, PCUN, and SEIU. We invite organizational partners to join us to win driver licenses for all. For more information or to join the effort, contact Andrea Williams at andrea@causaoregon.org.