

Affirmative Policies to Strengthen State Driver's Licenses

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Imposing immigration status–related restrictions on who can receive a driver's license does not improve the safety or integrity of the document. In fact, such restrictions undermine the purpose of the driver's license, which is to improve traffic safety. State policymakers should support practical driver's license reforms that improve highway safety and the integrity of the license document.

- ☑ **States should require proof of state residency to ensure that only state residents can obtain a driver's license.**
 - State residency should be defined as residing in a state with the intention of remaining in the state. Residency is not defined by immigration status.
- ☑ **States should implement internal antifraud mechanisms, including:**
 - Requiring personnel involved in the licensing process to complete the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators' Fraudulent Document Recognition Training Program, so they can detect fraud at licensing centers.
 - Developing internal controls, such as a formal audit plan and procedure.
 - Ensuring that duplicate licenses are not issued.
- ☑ **States should implement security measures to make driver's licenses difficult to counterfeit, including:**
 - Implementing photo comparison technology to compare existing images with each other and compare new images to those on file.
 - Incorporating security and design elements — such as holograms, watermarks, and high-definition photographs — into each license.
- ☑ **States should implement measures to reduce corruption, including the production and sale of false documents, within state driver's licensing agencies, such as:**
 - Imposing harsh penalties on state agency employees for engaging in fraud in issuing driver's licenses.
 - Imposing harsh penalties on those who produce, distribute, or purchase fraudulent licenses.
- ☑ **States should appoint a task force or commission that includes members of the community to study the following issues related to state driver's license policy:**
 - Procedures for issuing driver's licenses, including a review of the current documents (including foreign documents) acceptable to prove identity and state residency.
 - Mechanisms for strengthening the state residency requirement.
 - The impact of uninsured and unlicensed drivers on insurance premiums, hit-and-run accidents, law enforcement resources, and the judicial system.
 - The impact of unlicensed drivers on public safety, including community policing efforts.
 - The impact of immigration status–related driver's license restrictions on lawfully present immigrants and foreign-born U.S. citizens.



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