



## CALIFORNIA LATINO LEGISLATIVE CAUCUS

May 6, 2014

The Honorable Jeh Johnson  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20528

RE: California Assembly Bill 60 (Alejo) Driver's Licenses

Dear Secretary Johnson:

On behalf of the California Latino Legislative Caucus (Latino Caucus), we respectfully urge you to reconsider your decision to reject the design elements of the California AB 60 driver's license. After 15 years of unwavering and sustained efforts by members of the Latino Caucus to authorize driver licenses for undocumented California residents, in the fall of 2013, the California State Legislature approved and Governor Edmund G. Brown signed into law AB 60. AB 60 is a historic measure which provides access to driver's licenses for all eligible drivers, regardless of legal status, but in a manner consistent with the Real ID Act of 2005.

As you know, immigrants are statistically more likely to be the victims of crime and are often primary targets for scams, discrimination, retaliation, and extortion in encounters with a diverse set of unscrupulous actors. As the state with the largest population of undocumented immigrants – approximately 2.8 million – the Latino Caucus has a great interest in protecting this vulnerable population, many of whom are constituents and working families, from bad actors and criminals that thrive by exploiting others. While leading the charge to advance AB 60, the Latino Caucus was careful to work closely with our agencies and Governor Brown to ensure that the driver's licenses issued under AB 60 would be in compliance with the REAL ID Act of 2005. In crafting the legislation, we struck a fine balance that complies with the federal law and still provides the adequate protections for vulnerable community members from discrimination.

Recent news of your agency's decision to decline the approval of the proposed AB 60 drivers license submitted by the California Department of Motor Vehicles is not only disappointing, but it is extremely troubling to us in the Latino Caucus. We strongly believe that the design submitted by California satisfies the intent of the law by including a distinctive mark on the front and the required statement on the surface of the license. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has taken a flexible and pragmatic approach to promoting state compliance with the many provisions of REAL ID. DHS should work in partnership with California and approve this design.

As members of the California Legislature and the Latino Caucus, we urge you to revisit the AB 60 design proposed by the DMV and take critical steps that will help ensure the successful implementation of California's new driver's license law (AB 60), which is scheduled to take effect January 1, 2015. Again, the law provides access to a license for all eligible drivers, in a manner consistent with the REAL ID Act of

---

*Chair:* Senator Ricardo Lara

*Vice Chair:* Assemblymember Luis Alejo

*Senators:* Ron Calderon, Lou Correa, Kevin de León, Ed Hernández, Ben Hueso, Alex Padilla, Norma J. Torres

*Assembly Members:* Raul Bocanegra, Ian Calderon, Nora Campos, Cristina García, Lorena Gonzalez, Jimmy Gomez, Roger Hernández, Jose Medina, Henry T. Perea,

Speaker John A. Pérez, V. Manuel Pérez, Sharon Quirk-Silva, Anthony Rendon, Freddie Rodriguez, Rudy Salas, Susan Talamantes Eggman

1020 N Street, Room 511 • Sacramento, CA 95814 • Phone (916) 651-1535 • Fax (916) 651-4933



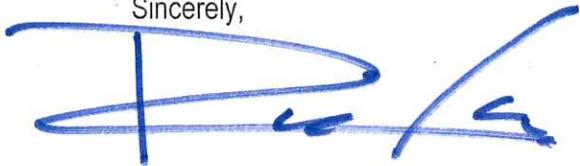
Secretary Jeh Johnson  
May 6, 2014  
Page Two

2005. Just as important, this law will improve public safety in our populous state by ensuring that all Californians understand the rules of the road and can be trained, tested, licensed, and insured.

Over the last 15 years, California has led the way on immigration issues where the federal government has failed to act. While waiting for comprehensive immigration reform, the California legislature has worked to remove legal barriers, expand access to education and health care, and promote economic mobility and self-sufficiency for those families in our state who do not have a mechanism to change their legal status. In the absence of federal comprehensive immigration reform, we feel compelled to continue to provide as much relief and support as possible to these hard working residents. Absent a reversal of your recent decision, your actions to date would seem to undermine these hard fought and carefully considered efforts.

In closing, the California Latino Legislative Caucus encourages you to exercise flexibility in implementing the law and accept, as consistent with REAL ID, California's proposed design for licenses to be issued to state residents who cannot show proof of citizenship or authorized presence. Given the fierce push back on the REAL ID Act of 2005, with many states passing laws rejecting or forbidding its implementation, deeming California compliant with the law and confirming that DHS will not exploit the program for immigration enforcement purposes, will move your REAL ID implementation efforts ahead significantly.

Sincerely,



RICARDO LARA  
Chair, CA Latino Legislative Caucus  
Senator, 33rd District



LUIS ALEJO  
Vice Chair, CA Latino Legislative Caucus  
Assemblymember, 30th District