February 3, 2014

Senator McGee
Senate Chair, Joint Committee on Transportation
State House Room 109C

Representative Straus
House Chair, Joint Committee on Transportation
State House Room 134
Boston, MA 02133

Honorable Chairs of the Joint Committee on Transportation:

I write today as a police officer with over thirty years experience and having public safety at the forefront as you consider H.3285, An Act Relative to Safe Driving.

It is my understanding that under current Massachusetts law, tens of thousands of our residents are not eligible for driver's licenses due to their inability to provide a Social Security number or an acceptable immigration visa code.

It is also my understanding that the Safe Driving Bill would allow these residents to be eligible to take driver training, become licensed and then obtain insurance.

What the Safe Driver Bill would not do is confer any public benefit, immigration status or any other advantage other than the ability to operate a motor vehicle and obtain insurance.

It is clear that national immigration reform is a federal issue, but until it is resolved in Washington, D.C., the states have a responsibility to ensure the best interest of the Commonwealth's citizens.
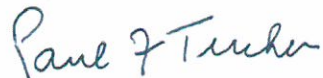
I have spoken with many of my fellow chiefs, who like me, support this bill as long as steps are taken to ensure the identity of the applicant has been properly assured and the license is solely to allow operation and insuring a vehicle.

It is our opinion that all residents will benefit due to these provisions as the incidences of unlicensed and uninsured motorists would be reduced, which makes sense from a public safety standpoint.

I urge you and your Committee to consider the positive impact of this bill and report it out with a favorable recommendation.

Thank you for considering my opinion and that of many of my colleagues. Please feel free to contact me if I may be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

Paul F. Tucker
Chief of Police