CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO   OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY

George Gascón
District Attorney

August 27, 2013

The Honorable Jerry Brown
Governor of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 60 (Alejo) The Safe and Responsible Driver Act — SUPPORT

Dear Governor Brown:

I'm writing today to urge passage of AB 60, which would allow the California Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to issue drivers licenses to all qualified drivers. The DMV has stated that unlicensed driving is a major California safety problem, estimating that 12% of the drivers on the road do not have a valid driver's license. Allowing all Californians to apply for a driver's license will increase the number of safe, properly insured drivers on the road.

The Safe and Responsible Driver Act is an important public safety measure of critical need in our State. The act will ensure that all drivers are properly trained, pass the driving test, learn state laws, and pass background checks processed through the Problem Driver Pointer System (PDPS).

As a former Chief of Police, and now as District Attorney, I want to stress the importance of avoiding public policies that inherently discriminate. To that end, I have serious concerns about any amendments that would differentiate on the face of the license based on an individual's immigration status. Providing access to driver's licenses to all California residents regardless of immigration status also promotes important community policing goals, which would be undermined by a license that distinguishes based on immigration status. Equal treatment should be given to all qualified drivers, and distinctions based on immigration status should not be enshrined in California driver's licenses.

By signing this legislation into law we will join a growing list of states, including New Mexico Washington, and at least eight others, to make California's roadways safer. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

George Gascón
District Attorney

CC: Honorable Luis Alejo
        California Chiefs Association