

Marked Driver's Licenses Are Wrong for This State

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Marked licenses invite discrimination and undermine civil rights.

- Placing a unique mark or legend on driver's licenses issued to certain immigrants sends the message that the state residents who carry and present them have second-class status.
- This message could lead landlords, banks, pharmacies, and other businesses to treat these residents differently than people whose licenses aren't specially marked.
- Antidiscrimination laws alone won't protect state residents from such treatment; it would be difficult to enforce laws prohibiting discrimination based on the types of ID people present.

Marked licenses provide a pathway to detention and deportation.

- When a person presents such a specially marked license, it signals to police officers and others that the person lacks lawful immigration status.
- The mark or legend on the license could lead local police to arrest the person who presents the license, which may then result in his or her immigration status being checked through federal detention and deportation programs such as Secure Communities and 287(g).
- The criminalization of people with marked driver's licenses would be exacerbated if the license were not valid as proof of a person's identity. Individuals with a marked license could be taken in for "identification" or fingerprinting if their license weren't accepted as evidence of identity. This could result in their being placed into the immigration detention-and-deportation process.

Marked licenses undermine the public safety goals of making licenses available to all state residents.

- Marking driver's licenses based on people's immigration status will discourage some drivers from obtaining licenses due to concerns about discrimination or being targeted for immigration enforcement.
- Discouraging such drivers from obtaining licenses undermines the public safety goal of ensuring that all drivers in the state are trained, tested, and insured.

Marked licenses make state residents a target for discrimination in other states.

- State residents with a driver's license that bears an immigration status-related mark or legend will face real dangers when they travel to other states.
- Law enforcement officers in some other states are likely to treat drivers who present specially marked licenses differently than other drivers.
- People who drive to Arizona for seasonal work, for example, will be affected by a state law that, in some circumstances, requires police officers to inquire into their immigration status. A marked license could trigger such questions and lead to the driver being placed into the detention-and-deportation process.
- Other states are not likely to have antidiscrimination laws that protect our state's residents whose driver's licenses are specially marked.

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