

Hello, my name is Maria D. Castro, and today I am here to speak to you about the need of every individual who lives in this country of having a driver license. Citizen or not, driving is necessary. We all have obligations, take children to school, to the doctor when they are sick, grocery shopping to feed our families, to work, and why not to have a little bit of fun with the family at the park. Most of our daily duties cannot be done without driving, and nobody should be afraid of driving because of their legal status in the country. I would like to highlight the following facts: An individual without legal status in this country can buy, tag and insure a vehicle. During this process no institution asked or care if they are legally here in this country, I ask that you take a moment and think about this process. If any individual with no legal status in this country can buy, tag and insure a vehicle; Why not allow them to obtain a driver license to drive this vehicle? Is not cohesive that they can do one thing but not the other. To buy the car, they need to work, to go to work they need to drive, and to drive they need a license. They all go together, you can't have one without the other.

The opportunity to obtain a driver license is a good thing for everyone involved. They are here and work hard for everything they have; they are not asking for a hand out, but for a hand up. I am very lucky and proud to be a US citizen. My parents crossed the border to give his children a better life; and that is what everyone wants, to give their children a better life. But they can do that if they get taken away because they are driving without a license. Believe it or not, Hispanic people get stopped for not reason sometimes. Not so long ago, my husband was stopped because the officer said he was driving with the high lights on. The newer cars have brighter lights now, he tried to explain that to the officer and show her that she was not correct on what she was saying but she did not care to listen. She said I know you were driving with the high lights on. He realized it was not going to do him any good to argue with her. I got a phone call from an officer and he told me what was happening and that I needed to pick up the car because they were going to take him to jail. I asked him, was he doing anything else wrong while he was driving, he said no. then I asked, do you take to jail everyone who is driving without a driver license? My question was unexpected to him, I said, give me a few minutes, and I will come and get the car. Few minutes later he called me back and said "We are going to let him go, you do not have to come to get the car" So, my husband got stopped for no reason and got a ticket for driving with the high lights, and no license. I know that having a driver license does not mean they have a legal status, but gives them piece of mind that they are not going to be taken away for driving without a license.

I am sure that there are others who go through similar situations as we did, I hope that one day we can all drive without fear.

Sincerely,
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