



# Allowing Undocumented Immigrants to Obtain Licenses

## Words from Our Faith Traditions

- “You shall love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.” –Deuteronomy 10:19
- “... I was a stranger and you welcomed me” – Matthew 25:35b
- “Those who were already firmly established in their homes and firmly rooted in faith show love for those who migrated to them ...” - Qur'an 59:9
- “Migrants and refugees are not pawns on the chessboard of humanity. They are children, women, and men who leave or are forced to leave their homes for various reasons, who share a legitimate desire for knowing and having, but above all for being more.” – Pope Francis, Message for the 2014 World Day of Migrants and Refugees

## Facts to Consider

### **Poverty Reduction Benefits**

- Licensing all drivers is positively correlated with a reduction in states' poverty rates.<sup>1</sup>

### **Safety Impact for All Rhode Islanders**

- Licensing all drivers helps increase traffic safety for everyone, as unlicensed drivers, nation-wide, are five times likelier to be involved in a fatal crash than licensed drivers, based on data provided by AAA Foundation.<sup>2</sup> Undocumented Rhode Islanders, like all other drivers, would need to pass a driving test to get a license.

### **Is this feasible?**

- Twelve states (CA, CO, CT, DE, HI, IL, MD, NV, NM, UT, VT and WA), plus DC and Puerto Rico, have successfully implemented such reforms, providing access to licenses or their equivalent.<sup>3</sup>

### **Tax Contributions of Undocumented Rhode Islanders**

- Undocumented Rhode Islanders pay an estimated total of \$31,154,000 in state and local taxes, yearly, through sales and excise taxes, property taxes, and income taxes.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Latin Policy Institute, “A Legal and Policy Analysis of Driver’s Licenses for Undocumented Rhode Islanders,” page 23, [http://www.rwu.edu/sites/default/files/downloads/lpi/drivers-license\\_report-legal.pdf](http://www.rwu.edu/sites/default/files/downloads/lpi/drivers-license_report-legal.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> AAA Foundation, “High-Risk Drivers Fact Sheet,” <https://www.aaafoundation.org/sites/default/files/DDFS.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> Updated data available at <https://www.nilc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/drivers-license-access-table.pdf>. Original source: The Pew Charitable Trusts, “Deciding Who Drives: State choices surrounding unauthorized immigrants and driver’s licenses,” August 2015, <http://www.pewtrusts.org/~media/assets/2015/08/deciding-who-drives.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, “Undocumented Immigrants’ State & Local Tax Contributions,” March 1, 2017, [http://itep.org/itep\\_reports/2017/03/undocumented-immigrants-state-local-tax-contributions-2.php#.WOPDPm\\_yvbg](http://itep.org/itep_reports/2017/03/undocumented-immigrants-state-local-tax-contributions-2.php#.WOPDPm_yvbg)