

115 STATE STREET  
MONTPELIER, VT 05633  
TEL: (802) 828-2228  
FAX: (802) 828-2424



**STATE OF VERMONT**  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

REP. MARTIN LALONDE, CHAIR  
REP. THOMAS BURDITT, VICE CHAIR  
REP. KEVIN "COACH" CHRISTIE, RANKING  
MEMBER  
REP. KENNETH GOSLANT, CLERK  
REP. ANGELA ARSENAULT  
REP. JOSEPH ANDRIANO  
REP. ELA CHAPIN  
REP. KATE DONNALLY  
REP. WILLIAM NOTTE  
REP. THOMAS OLIVER  
REP. BARBARA RACHELSON

TO: Emilie Kornheiser, Chair of House Ways and Means  
FROM: Martin Lalonde, Chair, House Judiciary  
RE: Funding Consideration for H.53 – relating to driver’s license suspensions  
DATE: 2/21/23

On February 17, 2023, the House Judiciary Committee passed H.53 (An Act Related to Driver License Suspensions) with a vote of 10-1-0. H.53 would eliminate the suspension of driver’s licenses for failure to pay fines associated with moving violations (those associated with points on a driver’s record). The Judiciary Committee has passed this bill so that licenses are suspended only for unsafe driving (the accumulation of 10 points or DUIs), not for the inability to pay a fine associated with moving violations. Fines would still be imposed and collected, including through the tax offset process, but one would not have their license suspended solely for failure to timely pay.

When someone loses their driver’s license, they must pay an \$80.00 reinstatement fee to get their license back. In considering H.53, House Judiciary reviewed a draft fiscal note indicating a potential impact of \$200,000 in foregone revenue to the Transportation Fund from the reduction in reinstatement fees due to a reduction in license suspensions. In addition, the bill may negatively impact the collection of fines and Judicial Bureau fees, though that impact was not quantifiable. The reduction in the fines and Judicial Bureau fees could impact court-related special funds.

House Judiciary appreciates the thoughtful and comprehensive work of the House Ways and Means Committee in addressing potential impacts and wants to highlight our specific areas of concern. Understanding that the Crime Victims’ Restitution Fund, the Victims Compensation Special Fund and the Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence Special Fund may be impacted from a decrease in collected fines and Judicial Bureau fees, House Judiciary asks that these funds remain fully funded as we continue to navigate policy work that addresses economic disparities in our criminal justice system, such as seen in H.53.