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Committee on
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Testimony in Support of
LD 1190 - An Act Regarding Driver's License Suspensions for Nondriving-related Violations
Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary

Good morning, Senator Keim, Representative Moonen, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Judiciary. I am Representative Tom Winsor, and I am pleased to co-sponsor LD 1190 "An Act Regarding Driver's License Suspensions for Nondriving-related Violations".

Many of my constituents live on the economic edge, and when they violate our motor vehicle laws or have some other civil infraction they may find themselves unable to pay their fines or meet the terms of a court imposed payment. The result is can be a suspended license. A suspension that is administratively applied to them any without notice.

Imagine for a moment that you live in Greenwood City, and your license has been suspended. There is no public transportation and few neighbors. The court is 15 miles away in South Paris. You do not have a credit card. So what do you do? How do you get to work, or even apply to work without a license?

I bet you would as they often do; just drive anyway.

Often they get caught. So the fines and fees just pile up.

The current system of suspending licenses does little to benefit the state. Driver's license suspensions are an important tool to keep dangerous drivers off our roads. However, suspending a license for simply missing a payment provides no public safety benefit and I suspect may not really encourage folks who have no money to pay that that they do not have.

I think if they could be summoned to appear to show cause as to why they have not complied with the court's order that would have the same effect without increasing their costs exponentially.

While it is not a subject of the bill before you, I want to point out that out public policy has imposed more than a 22 percent surcharge on the fines these folks pay to support things like the Criminal Justice Academy, County Jails, Civil Legal Services, and so on.

These fines and fees do add up and remember that you cannot draw water from a dry well.

Thank you for your consideration and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tom Winsor
State Representative