

DRIVE TO JUSTICE

HOUSE BILL 29

AT A GLANCE

DEBT-RELATED DRIVER'S LICENSE SUSPENSIONS

According to the report, "Road to Nowhere: Debt-Related Driver's License Suspensions in Ohio," published by the Legal Aid Society of Cleveland in 2022:

- In Ohio, approximately 60% of all driver's license suspensions are based on a person's failure to pay money owed to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles and failure to appear in court or pay a fine.
- Ohio drivers have more than 3 million debt related suspensions.
- Debt-related suspensions substantially burden Ohio communities with an average outstanding total debt each year of over \$920 million.
- Zip codes with the highest populations of Black Ohioans foot the largest portion of the bill, costing residents an average of \$12 million each year.

HB 29 OVERVIEW

- Eliminates the driver's license suspension for **failure to pay a court fine or fee**.
- Requires the Registrar of Motor Vehicles to automatically remove any driver's license suspensions or motor vehicle registration suspensions imposed by the Registrar for failure to pay a court fine or fee.
- Removes driver's license suspension for drug abuse offense unless the offender used a vehicle to further the commission of the offense or the offense occurs under the same circumstances as an OVI-offense.
- Eliminates the option of submitting a valid and unexpired driver's license, in lieu of bail or another form of security, as collateral for the person to appear in court.
- Allows a person to enter into a payment plan with the clerk of court in order to avoid an arrest warrant for **failure to appear** or **failure to pay** a fine.
- Requires a court to issue a supplemental citation to a person who fails to appear in court, and delays issuance of a summons or arrest warrant by the court for failure to appear until **30 days** after the supplemental citation is issued.
- Authorizes the supplemental citation to be sent through electronic means to the offender.

HB 29 OVERVIEW

- Authorizes a person who is in default on child support payments to present evidence that a driver's license suspension would effectively prevent that person from paying child support or the arrearage due under the child support order.
- Authorizes the child support enforcement agency to consider that evidence in determining whether to notify the Registrar to terminate a driver's license suspension on the person in default.
- Delays the implementation of a driver's license suspension on a person who is in default on child support payments for 30 days after the child support enforcement agency sends notice to the person.
- Authorizes a person whose driver's license is suspended for failure to pay child support to file a motion with a court with jurisdiction over the child support order for limited driving privileges in all circumstances, not just when the motion is made during contempt proceedings as under current law.
- Removes a driver's license suspension or a denial of the opportunity to obtain a driver's license as possible penalties for a student who is habitually truant from school.
- The "lookback" period for penalties for driving with no vehicle insurance or proof of financial responsibility (sometimes called an SR-22) will change from five years to one year.
 - *Whether people currently in the longer lookback period will have that requirement dropped is still being determined.*