



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 422

Resolution calling on the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles to increase the point of proof value of IDNYC, New York City's municipal identification card, in an effort to help all New York City residents, regardless of immigration status, to obtain a New York State driver's license

By Council Members Won, Avilés, Brewer, Hanif, Cabán, Gutiérrez and Farías

Whereas, Identity documents (IDs), such as driver's licenses or birth certificates, are essential for people to carry out important life functions, including driving a car, opening a bank account, getting a job, or voting; and

Whereas, Despite the importance of IDs, many people have difficulty obtaining and maintaining accurate IDs, which ultimately impacts their ability to access and interact with public services and the world; and

Whereas, According to a 2022 report by the Movement Advancement Project (MAP), an independent nonprofit think tank, key obstacles in obtaining accurate IDs include: burdensome and circular documentation requirements; expensive services; limited availability of ID services; confusing ID policies; and discrimination and prejudice; and

Whereas, In addition, there are noticeable gaps in the United States (U.S.) for who has one of the most popular forms of ID- a valid, accurate driver's license, with the MAP report citing that: while 12 percent of all U.S. adults lack a valid, accurate driver's license, when broken down by specific communities, 8 percent of white people; 21 percent of Black people; 23 percent of Hispanic people; 68 percent of transgender people; and 21 percent of people ages 70 and over lack a valid, accurate driver's license; and

Whereas, In 2015, New York City (NYC) launched a municipal ID program (IDNYC) to provide

residents access to a free identification card, regardless of social or immigration status; and

Whereas, IDNYC is accepted as a government-issued photo identification card, and is a recognized ID for interacting with the NYC Police Department, allows access to all City buildings that provide services to the public, is permitted for qualification for affordable housing through the City's housing lottery system, and is permitted as proof of identity for employment and health benefits; and

Whereas, IDNYC helps many City residents, including persons experiencing homelessness, youth, undocumented immigrants, and formerly incarcerated individuals, obtain a government-issued photo ID; and

Whereas, City data shows that, as of September 30, 2023, IDNYC had issued 2,129,589 IDs since the start of the program; and

Whereas, In New York State (NYS), the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) requires a certain number of documents, each of which are designated a certain point value, to apply for a learner permit, driver's license, or non-driver ID card; and

Whereas, Some IDNYC users find it difficult to obtain a NYS driver's license due to IDNYC only being accepted as 1 point of proof of identity and 1 point of proof of residency, while the NYS DMV requires 6 points of documents that prove identity, and also prove date of birth and residency; and

Whereas, Increasing the point of proof value for IDNYC would allow for vulnerable New Yorkers to obtain a NYS driver's license much easier, which can provide for easier access to public services; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles to increase the point of proof value of IDNYC, New York City's municipal identification card, in an effort to help all New York City residents, regardless of immigration status, to obtain a New York State driver's license.