

## Every year, Virginia suspends almost 39,000 driver's licenses for drug offenses unrelated to driving.

Virginia is still enforcing a relic of the War on Drugs: automatic driver's license suspensions for anyone convicted of a drug offense. While most states have opted-out of the federal law which created these automatic suspensions, Virginia suspends nearly 39,000 driver's licenses annually for drug offenses unrelated to driving. Driver's license suspensions for non-driving offenses are indefensible: they are bad policy, waste government resources, and further disadvantage people convicted of drug crimes.

### License suspensions for non-driving offenses don't work.

- The American Association of Motor Vehicles found that there is 'no evidence' that non-driving suspensions deter criminal behavior.
- Nevertheless, non-driving suspensions are added on top of harsh existing criminal penalties for drug convictions.

### License suspensions waste taxpayer dollars and traffic safety officials' time.

- Forcing traffic authorities to focus on non-driving suspensions instead of driving-related behavior undermines public safety. No firm numbers are available for Virginia, but a clear pattern from other states has emerged.
- For example, Georgia motor vehicle officials spent \$80,000 a year on postage in order to correspond with people who had their license suspended for reasons unrelated to driving.
- In Washington state, punishing drivers who continue to drive after their driver's license was suspended for non-driving reasons consumes 70,000 hours a year in patrol officer time.

### License suspensions make finding and keeping a job harder.

- Public transportation is often not a reasonable alternative for low-income people who bear the brunt of these license suspensions. For example in the Richmond metropolitan areas, almost 75% of jobs are not reasonably accessible via public transit for people living in low-income communities.
- This policy leaves thousands of people without access to economic opportunities. A New Jersey study found that 40% of people lost their job upon having their driver's license suspended and 88% reported lower income.

**5 states have recently stopped suspending licenses.**

Using an opt-out clause in the federal legislation, Ohio, Massachusetts, Georgia, Delaware, and Indiana have passed bipartisan reforms getting rid of these automatic suspensions in the last three years.

**These laws actually make our roads less safe.**

A study of law enforcement in eight states found that when non-driving license suspensions increase, less driving-related traffic enforcement takes place.