

## Driver's licenses for all

- 1 Late on the last night of the legislative session, California lawmakers passed a bill allowing undocumented immigrants to obtain driver's licenses. If the bill is signed by the governor, it will be an important and long-overdue step forward that will enhance public safety.
- 5 Under AB 60, sponsored by Assemblyman Luis Alejo (D-Watsonville), immigrants in California who learn the rules of the road, pass a driving test and provide whatever additional information the state Department of Motor Vehicles determines it needs, will be eligible to receive a license to operate a car.
- 10 That would bring California in line with at least nine other states that have adopted similar measures. Since 1993, most immigrants living here illegally have been barred from obtaining California licenses (...)

Already, critics of AB 60 are arguing that providing driver's licenses to people who are in the United States illegally rewards them for breaking the law. (...)

- 15 Other critics are arguing that immigrants will use their new licenses as identification to commit voter fraud or to claim public benefits.

- In fact, the new license will carry explicit language noting that it confers only the right to drive a car, and doesn't bestow any new legal rights or establish eligibility for employment or public benefits. Such language will also guarantee
- 20 that California complies with the federal Real ID law, which requires states to verify the legal status of individuals when issuing driver's licenses or other forms of identification. (...)

By legalizing the status of most of the country's undocumented immigrants, that would make the roads safer in all 50 states.

*(260 words)*

**Abridged** from *Los Angeles Times*, September 15, 2013