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HOUSE MEMORIAL 67

54TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2019

INTRODUCED BY

Sheryl Williams Stapleton

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE MOTOR VEHICLE DIVISION OF THE TAXATION AND REVENUE DEPARTMENT TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO RESEARCH AND REFINE BEST PRACTICES, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES CONCERNING THE ISSUANCE AND DENIAL OF NEW MEXICO DRIVER'S LICENSES AND STATE IDENTIFICATION CARDS TO OLDER ADULTS.

WHEREAS, by 2030, more than sixty million older adults could be driving on the nation's roadways; and

WHEREAS, states have laws that restrict driver's licenses for seniors or impose extra requirements, such as vision or road tests, for getting a license renewed based solely on advancing age; and

WHEREAS, New Mexico drivers age seventy-five and older are generally required to renew their licenses at a local office of the motor vehicle division of the taxation and revenue

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1 department; and

2 WHEREAS, in addition to taking a basic vision test every
3 year, senior drivers may be asked to take a written knowledge
4 test and a road test as well; and

5 WHEREAS, drivers with medical conditions that might
6 interfere with driving, such as diabetes, heart ailments,
7 stroke or other conditions, must keep the motor vehicle
8 division updated on their medical status through reports signed
9 by their doctors; and

10 WHEREAS, the failure of a vision test or a negative letter
11 from a doctor may, and normally does, deny the issuance of a
12 New Mexico driver's license; and

13 WHEREAS, family decisions about a senior driver's ability
14 to drive, traffic citations and a questionable mental health
15 diagnosis may also affect denial of a driver's license; and

16 WHEREAS, any denial forces a senior to present a passport
17 or birth certificate for traveling and other purposes; and

18 WHEREAS, acquiring a birth certificate or passport may, in
19 some circumstances, present financial and logistical hardship;
20 and

21 WHEREAS, under the federal REAL ID Act of 2005, New Mexico
22 changed the documentation requirements for issuing driver's
23 licenses and non-driver identification cards, and providing
24 documentation may be problematic; and

25 WHEREAS, older drivers are generally considered safe

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1 drivers, and more programs exist to improve their driving
2 skills; and

3 WHEREAS, a recent Pew charitable trust report states that
4 recent studies have shown that many of the restrictions against
5 older drivers are not as effective as once thought in
6 preventing traffic fatalities; and

7 WHEREAS, age-based restrictions on drivers may
8 discriminate against healthy seniors who reflect the changing
9 way that society defines "old";

10 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
11 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the motor
12 vehicle division of the taxation and revenue department be
13 requested to convene a working group to research and refine
14 best practices, policies and procedures concerning the issuance
15 and denial of New Mexico driver's licenses and state
16 identification cards to older adults; and

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group review
18 existing laws, practices, policies and procedures in other
19 states and countries and compare them to New Mexico; and

20 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group be requested
21 to review New Mexico laws, practices, policies and procedures
22 for possible discrimination toward older drivers; and

23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the motor vehicle division of
24 the taxation and revenue department invite representatives of
25 the aging and long-term services department, the department of

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1 health, the department of transportation, the human services
2 department, the department of public safety, gerontology
3 specialists, AARP New Mexico, the American civil liberties
4 union of New Mexico and members of the disabled and senior
5 populations that utilize state and municipal ride services to
6 participate in the working group; and

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the working group present its
8 findings and conclusions to the appropriate interim legislative
9 committee by October 1, 2019; and

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
11 transmitted to the director of the motor vehicle division of
12 the taxation and revenue department, the secretary of
13 transportation, the secretary of human services, the secretary
14 of public safety, the director of AARP New Mexico and the
15 president of the American civil liberties union of New Mexico.

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