



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
52ND DISTRICT COURT  
NOVI

DENNIS N. POWERS  
DISTRICT JUDGE

June 19, 2009

To The House Judiciary Committee,

I am writing in support of HB 4604.

First, driver responsibility fees (DRF) do nothing to make our roads safer. The real cause of hazardous driving is due to those who drive in an aggressive manner. Drivers get upset on the roads for many reasons and take out their frustrations in many aggressive ways, such as speeding, cutting-off other cars, running red lights, not signaling when turning or changing lanes, drinking alcoholic beverages before and while driving, etc.

Second, DRF are often not paid and licenses are suspended because the driver does not have the financial means to pay the underlying fines nor the DRF. They have lost their jobs, have had a pay reduction, or are underemployed, and since their DRF is not paid, their license is suspended.

Furthermore, when your license is suspended, you have no insurance. If you are injured in an accident and have no insurance to pay your medical bills, the public ends up paying those costs. You also have to pay to repair your vehicle and perhaps the other driver's as well. In turn, the police will then write a ticket for DWLS(R), resulting in the Secretary of State suspending your license until all fines and DRF are paid.

However, these suspended drivers will continue to drive any way. There is no public transportation available. A cab ride to/from work is more money than they earn. Many times the suspended driver will lose their job when the employer learns that they have no license and can't drive as needed for their employer. Additionally, some courts place those drivers in jail, which in turn takes up valuable beds that are needed for serious offenses, and tax dollars have to be used again to pay the cost of housing these prisoners.

By placing DRF on the driver, have our roads become safer? Does DRF stop the aggressive driver? In fact, DRF cause more licenses to be suspended, more jail space lost and more economic hardship to the one class of drivers who can least afford the fees.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dennis N. Powers".

Dennis Powers, Judge 52/1