

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5800

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As Amended by House, February 28, 2024

**Title:** An act relating to improving access to department of licensing issued documents by clarifying the application requirements for a minor, modifying the requirements for at-cost identicards, and studying the feasibility of reduced-fee identicards.

**Brief Description:** Improving access to department of licensing issued documents by clarifying the application requirements for a minor, modifying the requirements for at-cost identicards, and studying the feasibility of reduced-fee identicards.

**Sponsors:** Senators Wilson, C., Torres, Billig, Kuderer, Mullet, Nobles and Shewmake; by request of Department of Licensing.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Transportation: 1/09/24, 1/18/24 [DP].

**Floor Activity:** Passed Senate: 2/1/24, 49-0.

Passed House: 2/28/24, 95-0.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Adds responsible adult to the individuals that can sign the application for an intermediate driver license, driver license, or motorcycle endorsement for a person under the age of 18.
- Modifies eligibility criteria for at-cost identicards for applicants receiving public assistance grants.
- Requires the Department of Licensing to conduct a study of offering reduced fee identicards.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Lias, Chair; Lovick, Vice Chair; Shewmake, Vice Chair; King,

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

Ranking Member; Holy, Assistant Ranking Member; Cleveland, Fortunato, Hansen, Hawkins, Kauffman, Lovelett, MacEwen, Nobles, Padden, Valdez, Wilson, C. and Wilson, J..

**Staff:** Bryon Moore (786-7726)

**Background:** Intermediate Driver License. An intermediate driver license is a type of driver license issued by the Department of Licensing (DOL) to individuals under 18 years of age. The intermediate driver license authorizes the license holder to drive a motor vehicle subject to certain restrictions until the license holder reaches the age of 18.

An applicant for an intermediate license must be at least 16 years of age, have possessed a valid instruction permit for at least six months, have passed a driver licensing exam, have passed an approved driver education course, and present certification by a parent, guardian, or employer to DOL stating the applicant has had at least 50 hours of driving experience, ten of which were at night.

For a person to obtain a driver license or motorcycle endorsement while under 18 years of age, the individual must have an application signed by a parent or guardian. If the person under 18 years of age does not have a parent or guardian then the application can be signed by the minor's employer.

Identicards. DOL issues an identicard as a form of identification and it generally expires on the eighth anniversary of the applicant's birth date after issuance. The identicard is distinctly designed so it is not confused with an official driver license. The fee for an eight-year identicard is \$73.

An at-cost identicard, based on the production costs rather than the usual \$73 fee for an eight-year identicard, can be provided if the applicant is:

- a recipient of public assistance grants, and has a written referral from either the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) or the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF);
- under the age of twenty-five and does not have a permanent residence address; or
- being discharged from certain state and local facilities.

**Summary of Bill:** Intermediate Driver License. Responsible adults, as defined by DOL rule, are added to the types of persons that can sign the application for an intermediate driver license.

Responsible adult is added to the list of individuals who can be the signatory for the application of a person under the age of 18 for a driver license or a motorcycle endorsement, regardless of whether an applicant has a parent, or guardian.

Identicards. The requirement that a recipient of public assistance grants applying for an at-

cost identicard receive written referral from either the DSHS or DCYF is removed. Participants in the Women, Infants, and Children program is added to the definition of individuals receiving continuing public assistance eligible for an at-cost identicard. DOL is given broadened authority to determine the documentation requirements for individuals receiving continuing public assistance grants eligible for an at-cost identicard.

DOL must conduct a study on the feasibility of offering reduced fee identicards. DOL must report its findings and any recommendations to the Governor and the Transportation Committees of the Legislature by December 1, 2025. The issues for examination in the study include:

- assessing the current cost of identicards and its impact on families and customers with limited resources;
- reviewing other states and how they handle pricing of their identity credentials;
- evaluating eligibility criteria for at-cost identicards;
- recommending improvements to accessing identicards for the public; and
- identifying cost and revenue impacts associated with any changes or expansion in a reduced fee identicard program.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members:** No.

**Effective Date:** The bill contains several effective dates. Please refer to the bill.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: This legislation is aimed at removing barriers to getting an identicard or driver's licenses. Having identification is essential to full participation in our society. Since over 40,000 of the state's youth live in informal arrangements, the addition of responsible adult to those that can provide the needed documentation on the application will remove a major challenge to them getting a driver's license. The changes that will expand access to at-cost identicard and make the process more efficient using technology are another component aimed at improving access to identification. The study of reduced cost identicards will look at a variety of issues that could further improve access to identification, but will also be cognizant of the fiscal challenges the state has.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Claire Wilson, Prime Sponsor; Beau Perschbacher, WA Dept. of Licensing.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** No one.

**EFFECT OF HOUSE AMENDMENT(S):**

Creates a definition for the responsible adult who under the bill can sign the application for an

intermediate driver's license, driver's license, or motorcycle endorsement for a person under the age of 18. Requires that a responsible adult be over the age of 21. Specifies that a person can be authorized as a responsible adult due to:

- having a familial, kinship, or caretaker relationship to a minor;
- directly providing support to a minor as an educational, medical, legal, social service, or Washington-State licensed mental health professional; or
- being an employee of a government entity who provides support to a minor in a professional capacity.