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Lt. Governor Garlin Gilchrist
100 N. Capital Ave,
Lansing, MI 48933

Jeff Donofrio, Director of Labor and Economic Opportunity, State of Michigan
105 W Allegan St.
Lansing, MI 48933

Dear Lt. Governor Gilchrist and Mr. Donofrio,

The Detroit Training Center team witnesses on a daily basis first hand the systematic and structural injustice of our current drivers license system against the people that walk through our doors wanting to improve the economic status for themselves and their family.

Thousands of Detroit residents, and even more across the State of Michigan have been deprived of their drivers' license due to economic reasons alone, thus resulting in potential incarceration, many developing additional problems as a result. In the City of Detroit this is an especially acute problem due to the incredibly unjust costs of car insurance, resulting in an ever growing number of Detroit residents who have lost their license simply for driving without insurance and/or nonpayment of related fines, fees, and court costs. Frequently in an effort to resolve this problem it requires the need to travel to multiple jurisdictions in which they received a citation on more than one occasion and pay these costs that can total into thousands of dollars all the while not being allowed to operate a motor vehicle or apply for a job that requires a drivers' license. The elimination of Driver's Responsibility Fees was an incredible benefit to these individuals, but the remaining costs are still a barrier.

The Detroit Training Centers'(DTC) mission is to help eliminate barriers to employment for the unemployed or underemployed Michigan residents. Our prospective students that DTC primarily serve generally have one or more identifiable barriers to employment in the Construction / Transportation / Manufacturing industries:

(In General order of severity)

1. Lacking a Drivers License
 - a. Missing required documents
 - b. Fines required to be paid prior to restoration
 - c. Not knowing how much is owed and to what court



- d. Too many points and fines required to be paid prior to restoration
2. Lacking related Skills / Certification / Licensing for specific living wage and up positions
3. Fundamental Skills Deficiencies (Reading or Math at below 6th grade level)
4. Returning Citizen - On Parole, probation, or fully released. Felony Convictions or other
5. Long term unemployment
6. Drug and Alcohol Addiction / Use Preventing Passing a Drug Screen
7. Homelessness
8. Lacking available and reliable transportation (Owning a Car)
9. Lacking reliable transportation able to driving regularly (Insurance)
10. Limited knowledge of positions and career pathways available to them even with their barrier
11. Veteran Status - Both recent returning vets as well as older veterans (not usually a barrier)
12. Child care, Elder Care, or other family care requirements. Single Parenthood
13. Medical (Including Mental Health) issue precluding work in industry or specific position
14. Lacking desire to work full time in demanding field

The Workforce Development Training Programs at DTC have been designed to help people with barriers find high wage employment with an identifiable career path.

We initially began with the returning citizens population and Blight Removal training, and we continue to serve both students as well as the employers and their customers (frequently the City of Detroit, or State of Michigan). All of our programs are employer driven and we only create new programs after obtaining overlapping documented and verified employment demand from multiple employers. As a direct result, we survey our employers to determine the requirements for new employees for higher wage positions available to entry level talent. In almost all cases, with the exception of Asbestos Abatement and some general labor positions, every employer requires a Driver's License of every applicant for positions above \$14.00 per hour. This requires DTC to mandate a driver's license as a requirement to enter the majority of our programs as we would consider \$15 and up our minimum target. Our workforce programs and the employers and type of employment we seek for our students are ideally suited to solve problems related to #2, 4,5,7,8,9, and 10. For #3 DTC has referral partners with Southwest Solutions for ESL students, and St. Vincent Sarah Fisher Center for those otherwise in need of additional reading or math support. For #6 Homelessness referred people to Detroit Rescue Mission Ministries and Covenant House.

This leaves us with problem #1 Drivers Licenses, # 11 Family Care, #12 Medical Issue, and #13



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and seen least often Lacking a Desire To Work Full Time In Demanding Field without active solutions that we have been able to identify and prove effective in eliminating these barriers.

Better national solutions are needed for #11, #12, however #1 is a uniquely Michigan issue and can be solved right here. The Michigan legislature has shown willingness to work together on the issue with the elimination of responsibility fees, which gives me further hope.

Businesses all throughout the State of Michigan are hurting for skilled, trained, and ready to work talent; and throughout the State people are structurally unemployed or underemployed due to debt owed to the State of Michigan.

In most instances the State is withholding the drivers' license due to crimes related to poverty; which is primarily the inability to pay due to a lack of economic resources (Unsolved Fix It Tickets, driving without insurance, driving on a suspended license due to a previous driving without insurance) than to any sort of criminal intent.

We continue to speak with business owners and HR reps every day to get the word out about our graduates and help place students in employment. We have (as well as efforts by the City of Detroit) successfully convinced multiple employers to drop criminal background check requirements or limit them to specific positions or types of crime. We have successfully worked with employers to hire homeless graduates who needed extra help with rides and other assistance. I have not convinced anyone to drop this nor am I convinced they should drop their Driver's License Requirement.

With a group of other organizations that serve a similar population to DTC, we created a simple proposal for the State of Michigan which will not only aid in the collection of additional fines, but also increase the collection of State Unemployment Tax, State Income Tax, Sales Tax, Property Taxes, and taxes on business profits.

Driver's License Restoration Initiative, Economic Benefit of Immediate Driver's License Re-Instatement - see attached.

Thank you,



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