

## FACT SHEET ON MASSACHUSETTS SENATE BILL 2014

Senate Bill 2014 - An Act relative to motor vehicle license suspension. The senate vote is Thursday, September 24. If you need to look up your senator or contact info, you can go to: <https://malegislature.gov/>

### WHY THE BILL IS NEEDED

Under current law (G.L. c. 90, §22(f)), a person's driver's license is automatically suspended after conviction of a violation of the Controlled Substances Act, M.G.L. c. 94C. The license suspension has nothing to do with whether the drug offense involved use of a vehicle. The drug conviction appears permanently on a person's driving record even if the court case is sealed later on. The bill would repeal these onerous sanctions which were put in place during the heyday of the so called war on drugs.

Confiscation of a driver's license is not smart on crime because it compounds obstacles to employment and rehabilitation of people with drug problems and/or CORI. First, it impedes the ability of people to travel to interviews, to apply for jobs within a broader geographical area, and to access treatment facilities, housing, education and training opportunities that are all severely limited without a driver's license. Second, a \$500 fee is required to re-instate a license is an overwhelming debt for many people out of work and/or trying to rebuild their lives. The majority of people assessed a \$500 re-instatement fee cannot afford to pay it and they lose treatment and life opportunities because of their lack of mobility. Third, because drug convictions are recorded on driving records, our clients suffer from a lifetime CORI stigma even after the underlying criminal record is sealed. Fourth, license suspensions can make it hard for people to maintain relationships with friends, family and others whose support is often important during the recovery and rehabilitation process.

Please note that this bill deals only with drug conviction offenses and has nothing to do with DUI's and drunk driving.

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