

Rep. Crowley: Proposal expands access to economic security

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MILWAUKEE, WI –Rep. David Crowley (D-Milwaukee) issued the following statement after circulating a four bill package aimed at increasing the number of Wisconsin residents who obtain and keep their motor vehicles operating privileges and using advances in technology to allow individuals increased access to their license or identification cards.

“In the State of Wisconsin, having a driver’s license is an essential part to gaining and maintaining financial independence,” noted Crowley. “I am authoring The Driver’s License Expansion Package to ensure that more of our young adults enter the workforce with the most important tool to finding a self-supporting job. LRB-2660/P2 would eliminate the financial barrier that many of our youth face when it comes to driver’s education by allowing schools to provide the services and be reimbursed by the Department of Instruction.

“Another important piece of this package is LRB-2485/P4, a bill that would decrease the number of individuals that have their license suspended for criminal convictions not involving a vehicle and for forfeitures,” Crowley pointed out. “As many as 60% of all license suspensions result from the failure to pay forfeitures. That number increases when criminal convictions for non-vehicle related crimes are added to the list. This is unacceptable and counterproductive,” added Crowley. “Under current

law, individuals too poor to pay a forfeiture are put further in debt and further from financial independence when their driving privilege is revoked. We also are crippling those individuals who end up in our criminal justice system chances of rehabilitation and increase the likelihood of recidivism. Those on probation or payroll face numerous barriers to reentry and the inability to have reliable transportation to a self-supporting job has factored in to the failure of numerous individuals” Crowley said.

“Finally, the last two bills in my package take advantage of today’s technology to increase access to your driver’s license or identification card and increase accountability of law enforcement officers involved in traffic stops. LRB-3940/P1 will allow the Department of Transportation (DOT) to begin issuing electronic operators’ licenses and identification cards. LRB-2971/P4 would require the DOT to record race, ethnicity, age, gender and zip code information for every individual whose identification is run during a traffic stop in the State of Wisconsin. Only if we have the data can we hope to change the alarming disparities that were reported by the U.S. Department of Justice and felt everyday by minorities across the state,” Crowley concluded.