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## **Providing licenses to immigrant drivers boosts road safety, communities**

*Early adopter states have seen greater declines in accidents than nationwide*

Richmond, VA -- Providing all Virginians, regardless of immigration status, with the ability to get a driver's license could increase road safety by boosting the share of drivers who are trained and tested, according to a new report by The Commonwealth Institute for Fiscal Analysis.

According to the report, 12 states and the District of Columbia already allow unauthorized immigrants to obtain some form of driver's card. In the three earliest states to implement expanded access to driver's licenses all have seen a greater than 30 percent drop in traffic fatalities since 1994, compared to a nationwide 20 percent drop. Increasing access to driver's licenses could also increase the share of cars that are insured.

"Virginia residents who are already driving should be provided the opportunity to learn and abide by the rules of Virginia's roads," says Laura Goren, Senior Policy Analyst and lead author of the report. "We're all safer when all drivers are trained, tested, licensed, and insured."

Increasing access to driver's licenses would also boost Virginia's communities and economy by enabling workers to fill job openings that would otherwise remain vacant and lower everyone's car insurance costs by boosting road safety and decreasing the number of uninsured drivers.

"Driving is a necessity for most Virginia families, not a choice," says Goren. "Expanding access to licenses not only helps the individual, it also helps their children and other community members."

The full report is available online at [www.thecommonwealthinstitute.org](http://www.thecommonwealthinstitute.org).

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