

Statement of Friends Committee on Legislation of California – witness in Senate Transportation Committee Hearing on April 9, 2024, re SB 1081 - OPPOSE

Thank you, Sen. Cortese and members of the committee for the opportunity to speak in opposition to SB 1081. I'm Kevan Insko, Director of the Friends Committee on Legislation of California, an advocacy group founded by Quakers in 1952. As you may know, Quakers have a testimony of peace and nonviolence. Today I join with my colleagues from immigrant rights and civil liberties organizations, peace and justice centers, faith-based groups, and with hundreds of individuals, including veterans and young people, who have registered their opposition, in asking you to vote NO on SB 1081.

Under this bill a young person, as young as 16 would be asked to make the decision to register for the federal selective service system, the draft -when they sign to apply for a California driver's license. These two functions are completely unrelated. The purpose of licensing drivers is road safety – The DMV already has an enormous responsibility and California should not be using our limited state resources to enforce the Military Selective Service Act. The Selective Service System is currently already receiving information about people who apply for a driver's license in CA, which it can and does use to do its own outreach. Federal laws should be enforced by the federal government at federal expense.

The bill proposes that those who do not accept the automatic registration may proceed to sign the driver's license form and check a "Don't Register" box on the application. However, checking such a box could be considered "self-incrimination," because it is actually the "knowing and willful" nonregistration that is the grounds for civil sanctions and federal prosecution.

SB 1081 purports to restrict access to records of who opts out of being registered with the SSS, but this provision could be overridden by a federal subpoena for evidence of knowing and willful nonregistration.

Many people have sincere religious objections to registering for the draft. This bill would force them to violate their conscience or sign a confession of a crime to get a driver's license. Many others would be confused and not know what to do. Others might unthinkingly sign without the opportunity to consider what this decision means to them. Or they might click a box that would actually show willful nonregistration and therefore make them more likely to have sanctions.

Undocumented immigrants, in particular, have concerns about sharing sensitive personal information with the federal government. But it could present future problems for them if they check that they are declining to register. And there is also an issue with the Selective Service saying that those who are required to register are those that have male listed on their birth certificate – that does not track with the way the gender is defined for a California driver's license.

A few years ago, when my son was still in high school, I helped him apply for financial aid through the FAFSA form, which required selective service

registration. This surprised us, and he needed time to research his options and make a decision with thoughtfulness. But now that has changed -young people no longer have to register in order to apply for and receive federal financial aid and the new FAFSA form no longer carries SSS registration information. And in 2021, the CA state legislature, itself - your colleagues - took away the requirement to register in order to receive CalGrants. Let's not go backwards. There is an argument that other states do something like this, in some way. There are also states that are similar to us, including New Jersey, Oregon, Pennsylvania and Massachusetts. In any case, California has never been afraid to stand out among the states for our protections for privacy, equity, and immigrant rights. Again, why go backwards?

Legislation like SB 1081 will put unnecessary pressure on young people at a time when they just want to become licensed drivers. For many reasons, we respectfully ask you to vote no on SB 1081. Thank you.