

License cont'd from pg 1

In New York and elsewhere, the idea of extending new privileges to those without legal immigration status has been resisted. But a renewed push across the country to allow them to get driver's licenses resonates strongly among those who make their living in the rural crop fields, dairy farms and

Access to Roads Act, which would eliminate the requirement that an individual must provide proof of legal presence to be issued a noncommercial driver license. HB 2015 is currently scheduled to have a public hearing before the Joint Committee on Transportation on April 17, according to Rep. Diego

“Workers like me can't drive to a hospital, can't buy medicine. But I feel I need to take the risk so my kids and my family can have a better life

fruit orchards where the need for everyday transportation can be the greatest.

Apple orchard worker Eladio Beltran, who is facing deportation after a traffic stop, says licenses also could alleviate the constant fear workers like him live under.

“We don't feel safe,” Beltran said. “If you are in a vehicle and you see a cop, you know any time he can turn his lights on. And you end up arrested; you end up in Mexico.”

Immigrants and their advocates have already gotten access to such licenses in a dozen states including California, Colorado and Illinois, some of them accepting state tax returns as identification. They are now targeting roughly a half-dozen states where they see a friendlier political landscape this year. They include Wisconsin and New Jersey, where Democratic governors succeeded Republicans, and New York, where Democrats now are in total control of the Legislature.

This spring Oregon legislators are considering HB 2015 or the Equal

Hernandez (D-Portland).

“Without access to a license to drive, many immigrants without legal status are put in an impossible position: either choose to drive without a license, risking arrest and deportation, or choose not to drive and be unable to provide for themselves and their family. Since 2016, deportations over traffic stops have increased by 138%,” said Iván Hernández, communications manager for Causa Oregon, the advocacy group that filed the bill, in a quote submitted to *The Skanner* and *The Statesman Journal*.

“Now there's a new urgency to really try to get this done, and there is new political opportunity,” said Christine Neumann-Ortiz, executive director of Voces de la Frontera, a Wisconsin advocacy group.

The laws could give state-level protection to immigrants who fear more aggressive enforcement by federal immigration agents under the Trump administration.

Read more at TheSkanner.com

Trail Blazers ‘Take It to the Court for Education’

Programs from 14 schools representing 13 cities and 11 counties across Oregon and Southwest Washington are receiving \$100,000 in direct support from the Trail Blazers Foundation and Wells Fargo through the fifth annual “Take It to the Court for Education” program. will benefit hundreds of students from historically-underserved communities in rural and urban areas.

Grant checks were distributed during a reception on March 23 at Moda Center, prior to the Portland Trail Blazers battling the Detroit Pistons. The donations will support a wide variety of academic, arts, athletic and community programs.

The 14 grants range from \$2,000 to \$10,000.

(top photo) Pictured here presenting a check to Portland's Lent K-8 School are Wells Fargo's Oregon Community Development Officer Chabre Vickers (left), Richard Smith and Wells Fargo's Northern Oregon Region Bank President Tracy Curtis.

(bottom photo) Presenting a check to Portland's Scott School are Wells Fargo's Oregon Community Development Officer Chabre Vickers (left), Braylon Williams, Megan McCarter, Lydia Poole and Wells Fargo's Northern Oregon Region Bank President Tracy Curtis.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF PORTLAND TRAIL BLAZERS

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purpose the jail as a “community wellness center,” which would provide mental health and addiction services, as well as other health care services and possible job training.

It's an expansion of what VOA Oregon — which provides residential addiction treatment services along with domestic violence services, early child care and services for seniors — already does.

She said Schnitzer approached her last fall to create a new proposal for putting the building, which he'd considered turning into a warehouse but was still interested in repurposing for a civic use.

“The homeless issue and problem is a complicated issue. It isn't just finding a roof. There are other issues that need to be addressed,” Toran told *The Skanner*. “One of the things that we know is that the population prefers to be around other services. They prefer to be in a larger community that has family and people, so a structure that is that remotely located doesn't really speak to the needs that they have, the kind

of social services and health services that that population needs.” And when she spoke with Schnitzer, she said her bottom lines were that the building not be used as a jail.

Instead, individuals in addiction treatment would stay at the

“The public sector alone can't figure this out. The private sector can't do this without an aligned public sector

facility no more than six to eight months — not an uncommon length of stay for individuals with severe substance abuse issues.

Toran has also spoken with Providence Health and Services and the University of Portland School of Nursing to provide health care facilities, and they've expressed tentative interest. VOA Oregon, which currently runs a catering service called Catering for a Cause, has also considered expanding vocational training to the site.

Schnitzer told *The Skanner* he's pleased with Toran's proposal, and said the Schnitzer Family Foundation can probably commit

\$500,000 per year to help fund the facility “over a several-year period.”

But he and Toran are appealing to both the public and private sector for startup capital.

“The public sector alone can't figure this out. The private sector

can't do this without an aligned public sector,” Schnitzer said.

Toran's proposal estimates that the startup cost to repurpose the facility would be \$16,400,000 and the ongoing costs would be \$18,460,000 per year.

In March, she met with Multnomah County staff to request a total of \$6,292,000 for 100 residential addiction treatment beds, a figure based on the cost of VOA's current residential addiction facilities.

So far, she said, the county hasn't taken action one way or another on the request.

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Reform cont'd from pg 1

are unique, and we should consider this deeply when implementing clinical, educational and judicial policy.”

Each of the four bills challenged the idea that adolescents should ever be charged and sentenced as adults.

Senate Bill 966 would trigger an additional review before an inmate is transferred from the Oregon Youth Authority to an adult prison — which would allow a judge to decide whether that individual is eligible to serve out the rest of the sentence under community supervision, rather than behind bars. Currently, anyone who is sentenced for an offense committed before the age of 18 remains in OYA custody until the age of 25.

David Rogers, Executive Director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Oregon, argues that this opportunity can make all the difference between rehabilitation and recidivism.

“What we know is that the Oregon Youth Authority has actually done a

really good job of making a bunch of youth-appropriate programming education and treatment programs available for young people,” Rogers told *The Skanner*. “It's a place where young

“Adolescents are not big kids or small adults. Their neuropsychological functions are unique, and we should consider this deeply

people can actually really do the hard work to turn their lives around. All that work gets lost when we transfer them to adult prison — it's a fundamentally different environment, and at that point, young people lose a lot of the progress that has been made, and (the focus becomes) about survival.”

SB 968 would essentially limit life sentences without the possibility of parole for offenders convicted for crimes committed when they were under the age of 18. The bill would trigger a parole hearing when the individual has

served 15 years of the sentence.

SB 969 would eliminate the practice of mandatory adult prosecution for minors in a number of charges — and would require additional hearings to

allow adult prosecution of juveniles, on a by-case basis.

“This bill would say that the default placement for youth should always be the juvenile justice system,” Rogers said. “A study by the Centers for Disease Control found that youth who are put into the adult system are 34 percent more likely to commit crimes when they return to the community.”

SB 1008 would make anyone sentenced as a juvenile offender, and sentenced under Measure 11, eligible for for a “second look” hearing after at



PHOTO VIA FACEBOOK
Rep. Jackie Winters, R-Salem, is pushing for passage of a bill that would mitigate the effects of Measure 11 on juvenile offenders.

least a third of the sentence has been completed. This allows individuals to present evidence of positive transformation, and to argue that they can be rehabilitated.

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