



# STEFAN I. MYCHAJLIW

## ERIE COUNTY COMPTROLLER

Thursday, June 6, 2019 – For immediate release

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### **COMPTROLLER MYCHAJLIW COMPLETES REPORT ON NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES OF ILLEGAL ALIENS HAVING A DRIVER’S LICENSE**

*Report outlines negative consequences of illegal aliens having a valid NYS driver’s license, which includes risk of illegal aliens registering to vote and jeopardizing police safety during traffic stops*

**(ERIE COUNTY, NY)** – Erie County Comptroller Stefan I. Mychajliw Jr. released his report that outlines the negative consequences that will be caused by granting illegal aliens the right to obtain a valid New York State driver’s license. At the request of County Clerk Michael P. Kearns, Comptroller Mychajliw investigated the issue and found numerous negative consequences to law abiding taxpayers and law enforcement.

There were two major areas of concern about giving illegal immigrants a valid N.Y.S. driver’s license. One, it opens the door to potential voter fraud by allowing them to register to vote via New York State’s “Motor-Voter” law. Two, it stops police officers from protecting the public by blocking them from even being able to check the name of a suspected illegal immigrant in the N.Y.S. Department of Motor Vehicles database.

“If this law passes, it gives illegal immigrants more rights and protections than law abiding citizens. Our report raises serious issues that lawmakers either don’t care about or are choosing to ignore. Armed with the information in my report, lawmakers would be hard pressed to pass this ill-advised proposal that puts the public and police at risk,” said Comptroller Mychajliw. “This proposal is fundamentally unfair to law-abiding citizens.

“Police officers risk their lives protecting taxpayers. Their jobs are stressful and dangerous. Cops need the ability to obtain information about a driver they are pulling over. Police will have no idea whether or not a suspect is here illegally or is a dangerous criminal because they won’t be able to run a name through a computer without a warrant.

“My findings conclude that granting driver’s licenses for illegal immigrants jeopardizes public safety, disrupts the integrity of our electoral system and could cost taxpayers millions of dollars in implementation and legal costs.”

The report details multiple layers of concern. Referred to as a “gateway document,” a driver’s license for an illegal alien opens the doors to obtaining additional rights or privileges that had been reserved for legal residents. Comptroller Mychajliw’s report points out that with a N.Y.S. issued driver’s license, those who are here illegally will have the same access to register to vote as a citizen. It could also be used to obtain a hunting license, open a bank account or to verify an address on any form.

“What will happen to the integrity of our elections? With ‘Motor Voter’ laws in place, illegal aliens might be able to check a box and have the unfettered ability to register. My report finds that at this time, there isn’t enough guidance to know how that process will be safeguarded from non-citizens.

“American citizens voting in a free and open election is the backbone of our democracy. Illegal immigrants trying to infiltrate our elections by fraudulently registering to vote shatters this democratic process. The voter registration form simply requires a driver’s license number. This presents significant challenges for the integrity of our electoral system and democracy. Armed with a driver’s license or a phony Social Security number, it is possible an illegal alien could register to vote. Then, all that is left to do is swear citizenship to be allowed to vote. It is entirely plausible to anticipate that someone who has violated the citizenship laws of the United States would also perjure themselves by swearing citizenship to secure the ability to vote illegally,” noted Comptroller Mychajliw.

Prior to issuing his report, Comptroller Mychajliw sat down with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers and agents, as well as representatives from the County Clerk’s Office and Board of Elections, to discuss their concerns. He found that numerous safety issues were raised with little to no concern from state policymakers.

“Many state leaders clearly have no regard for the consequences they are creating. For example, the drafts of the law state that law enforcement will be denied the ability to pull data from the State DMV database on illegals. Through this process, the state will be providing illegal aliens greater privacy rights over U.S. citizens. That is unconscionable,” he added.

It is also expected that investigations into human trafficking could be compromised. One red flag has been the inability to produce identification. With a N.Y.S. license, victims may be harder to identify. Other impacts included in the report: concerns that illegal aliens from around the country and Canada will cross into the state to obtain a driver’s license; the law will provide privacy protection not granted to citizens by blocking access to illegal aliens’ information in the DMV database while still selling citizens’ information; and it will increase access to firearms as the requirement to obtain a rifle or shotgun outside of New York City is a driver’s license.

Cost is going to be a major factor; however the exact increased cost to the County of Erie can’t be forecasted due to many factors that have to be considered. Comptroller Mychajliw believes there will be increased operational costs for the County Clerk’s Office. Legal costs are expected to rise because of potential litigation over the fact that Erie County Clerk Kearns has said publicly he opposes giving illegal immigrants a valid N.Y.S. driver’s license. Potential litigation costs, especially if outside counsel is used, could exceed hundreds of thousands of dollars.

“This is yet another unfunded mandate from New York State. It will require additional staffing, security, training, and new equipment, and processes, at the very least.

“In addition, it forces county clerk employees in a situation to enforce state law and violate federal law. Or, violate state law and enforce federal law. As a result of state law, it will be crime to report a federal crime. My conclusion: the true intent of lawmakers is to illegally register illegal immigrants to vote and strip away tools police have to keep us safe,” added Comptroller Mychajliw.

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