

1. **The good news:** As of May 1st, undocumented immigrants in NJ are able to obtain a standard driver's license. Mission accomplished!?

The not so good news: if all driver age NJ citizens obtain the new federal high security license when renewing or obtaining for the 1st time then **only** our undocumented immigrants would have the standard license which sets them apart.

What are we doing about it? The op-ed. We are urging citizens whose drivers' licenses come up for renewal to renew with a standard license. They can use other ID such as passports for air travel.

And the side benefit: A list of contacts at NJ news media for future op-eds. We're learning how to give FaithAction greater ability to have our editorial views published in newspapers and blogs around the state.

2. **The good news:** On May 7, 2021, Gov. Murphy launched the Fund for Excluded New Jerseyans, to provide one time relief to low-income individuals excluded from federal relief programs. This Fund has been allocated \$40 million of the federal covid relief money.

The not so good news: While this fund is a welcome first step, the initial \$40 million allocated to the program will serve less than 10 percent of those individuals and families that are in need of aid. Furthermore, one-time payments of \$1,000 per individual are insufficient to make up for a year of COVID-19 related hardship.

What are we doing about it? We are supporting Make the Roads by signing on to their letter to our legislative leadership urging to fully fund a relief program costing about \$989 million (note there is an unexpected \$10 billion in reserves) to provide a one-time payment of \$2000 per individuals previously excluded from covid relief.

3. **The good news:** NJ Senate PL&S Committee passed S3361 prohibiting the renewal of contracts with ICE or the start of any new contracts with ICE. ICE is Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the federal enforcement arm of the country's immigration policies, and the contracts provide that ICE will pay counties and private prisons to house immigrant detainees whom ICE is holding prior to deportation. Currently, three counties – Essex, Hudson, and Bergen – as well as a private prison in Union County are holding detainees.

The not so good news: This is just one step in the process to get both the senate and the assembly to vote on the bill ... and the summer recess looms. Related efforts are urging the counties to end the detention of immigrants on their own, and Essex has already announced its intent to do so.

What are we doing about it? We continue to support the enactment of S3361/A7502 and the related campaigns. As detainees are released from New Jersey facilities, of course, we urge that they be returned home rather than be sent to other ICE facilities. Curfews and ankle bracelets are fully able to let ICE track them if they still want to deport them. Detention is almost never necessary or desirable; its main effect is to help coerce our neighbors to voluntarily agree to deportation.