

*“The stranger who resides with you shall be to you as one of your citizens; you shall love them as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt” (Leviticus 19:33-34)*

## Four Contemporary Questions around Green Light NY

### 1. What is Green Light NY?

Green Light NY refers to legislation to ensure that a “Standard Licenses” be accessible to all state residents, regardless of immigration status. Thirteen states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico have passed similar legislation, including Vermont and Connecticut. The Standard License is clearly marked “NOT FOR FEDERAL PURPOSES,” such as voting or air travel. Undocumented New Yorkers were able to obtain a driver’s license until 2002, when the law was changed to require a social security number in order to receive a license.

### 2. Why is this a Jewish issue?

Welcoming the stranger is a core part of Jewish tradition, mentioned at least 36 times in the Hebrew Bible and particularly relevant during Passover. While undocumented New Yorkers are not strangers, but rather us, our neighbors and members of our communities, we draw inspiration from the Torah’s attitude of welcome towards those originally from other places in our calls for equitable access to driver’s licenses. Our own people’s history as “strangers” reminds us of the many struggles faced by immigrants today, and we affirm our commitment to create the same opportunities for today’s immigrants that were so valuable to our own community not so many years ago.

### 3. Why does it matter?

Providing undocumented New Yorkers the opportunity to obtain driver’s licenses makes their lives easier, our communities safer, and increases the economic productivity of the entire state. Under the current law, a simple traffic stop could result in arrest and deportation, forcing hundreds of thousands of our neighbors to live in near-constant fear as they go about their daily lives, including driving to work, taking their kids to school, seeing a doctor or buying groceries. Access to driver’s licenses would reduce the number of uninsured and untrained drivers on the road, making it safer for all New Yorkers. Expanding access to driver’s licenses would result in \$57 million in additional revenue annually and \$26 million in onetime fees, according to the Fiscal Policy Institute.

### 4. How can I help?

- Thank local elected officials
  - Most of our local legislators are co-sponsors of Green Light NY (A3675/S1747). Find out who represents you in the Senate and Assembly and call them to say thank you.
  - State Senator: <https://www.nysenate.gov/find-my-senator>
  - Assembly member : <https://nyassembly.gov/mem/search/>
- Help the effort in Long Island, a key area to build support
  - Reach out to family and friends in Long Island and encourage them to call their elected officials and express their support of Green Light NY.

