



## **Support HB 372: Reduce the Burden on Jails from Unnecessary Arrests for Driving with an Invalid License**

**LICENSE SUSPENSIONS FOR UNPAID FINES & FEES ARE FILLING TEXAS JAILS AT GREAT COUNTY EXPENSE.**



**HB 372 (Allen) would reduce Driving While License Invalid (DWLI) from a jailable Class B misdemeanor to a fine-only Class C misdemeanor, except when the underlying suspension is for driving while intoxicated or the person caused a serious accident while driving with an invalid license.**

**At least 7 in 10 driver's license suspensions in Texas are due to not paying fines, fees, and surcharges—not dangerous driving.** More than 1.5 million people cannot drive legally due to Driver Responsibility Program surcharges. Another 320,000 cannot drive legally because of the Omnibase Program.



Yet, people who lack the money to pay fines, fees and surcharges must continue driving to work and for other essential tasks like medical appointments. In doing so, they risk arrest and jail time for DWLI, which carries a potential 6 month jail sentence. If DWLI were a Class C misdemeanor, it could be handled through citation not arrest in most cases.

**Thousands of Texans are arrested and jailed each year for DWLI, despite the fact that most are not dangerous drivers.** In just 9 large counties from which we were able to get data, at least 6,000 people were booked into jail on DWLI charges and no more serious charge in a single year. In 4 and 5 DWLI cases resulting in conviction, the person is sentenced to jail.



**HB 372 WILL HELP END THE CYCLE OF ARREST, JAIL, FINES, AND INCREASING DEBT BY MAKING DWLI A CLASS C MISDEMEANOR EXCEPT FOR DANGEROUS DRIVERS.**

**Send HB 372 to the House in time to be voted on by the members.**

For more information, contact:  
Mary Mergler, *Director, Criminal Justice Project*  
[mmergler@texasappleseed.net](mailto:mmergler@texasappleseed.net)  
703.919.3866