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RESOLUTION NO. 2020- \_\_\_\_\_

**A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 903 AND SENATE BILL 1328 IN THE 2020 FLORIDA LEGISLATIVE SESSION TO ELIMINATE DRIVER'S LICENSE SUSPENSIONS FOR UNPAID FINES AND FEES, AND TO ESTABLISH A UNIFORM REASONABLE PAYMENT PLAN PROCESS STATEWIDE; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

**WHEREAS**, Florida presently suspends driver's licenses for nonpayment of fines and fees unrelated to dangerous driving, with no assessment of a person's ability to pay. As of April, 2019, almost 2,000,000 individuals could not legally drive in Florida because of a suspended license; and

**WHEREAS**, in Hillsborough County, 73.91% of all driver's license suspensions in 2018 were for failure to pay; and

**WHEREAS**, a change in the Florida Constitution in 1998 required that clerk's offices for county and circuit courts be funded by court fees. Since 1996, Florida has created more than twenty new types of fees, and at the same time eliminated most exemptions for those who cannot afford to pay; and

**WHEREAS**, this legislation would exempt individuals whose licenses are suspended due to nonpayment of child support; and

**WHEREAS**, Florida's suspension policies are counterproductive to the ostensible purpose of ensuring payment. Once a person's license is suspended, employment opportunities are harder to access, making it harder to pay off the fines and fees that triggered suspension in the first place. Businesses suffer when workers cannot reliably get to their jobs or are forced to quit because they cannot do their job without a license; and

**WHEREAS**, suspending driver's licenses for unpaid fines and fees does not increase traffic safety or public safety. To the contrary, resources must be allocated to arresting and prosecuting people who drive while their license is suspended for non-payment of fines or fees. Reforms to driver's license suspension policies in other states have resulted in significant savings for such costs; and

**WHEREAS**, analysis of data demonstrates that low income individuals and minorities are most affected by driver's license suspensions; and

**WHEREAS**, people returning to their communities from incarceration must pay off what can be thousands of dollars in fines, fees and costs before they can obtain their driver's license, and often leave custody with their license already suspended; and

**WHEREAS**, House Bill 903 and its companion in the Senate, SB 1328, introduced this legislative session seek to eliminate driver's license suspensions for unpaid fines and fees, and to establish a uniform reasonable payment plan process statewide; and

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**WHEREAS**, eliminating suspensions for non-highway safety violations will significantly reduce the burden on state and local agencies, law enforcement, the courts, and lessen the unintended harmful impact on our communities; and

**WHEREAS**, this is a bipartisan endeavor which would enhance justice in our state and end a counterproductive and often cruel policy; and

**WHEREAS**, systems of justice should not be funded by counterproductive fees and fines that undermine justice, fairness and equity.

**NOW, THEREFORE,**

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL  
OF THE CITY OF TAMPA, FLORIDA:**

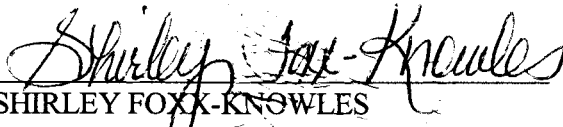
Section 1. That the City Council of the City of Tampa hereby expresses support for House Bill 903 and the companion Senate Bill 1328 in the 2020 Florida legislative session to eliminate driver's license suspensions for unpaid fines and fees, and to establish a uniform reasonable payment plan process statewide.

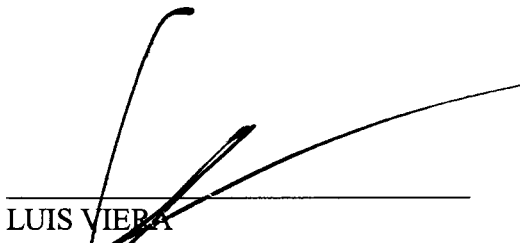
Section 2. That the proper officers of the City of Tampa are hereby authorized to do all things necessary and proper in order to carry out and make effective the provisions of this resolution.

Section 3. That this resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TAMPA,  
FLORIDA, ON JANUARY 9, 2020.**

ATTEST:

  
SHIRLEY FOX-KNOWLES  
CITY CLERK

  
LUIS VIERA  
CHAIRMAN, TAMPA CITY COUNCIL

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

  
MARTIN SHELBY  
CITY COUNCIL ATTORNEY