Repeal Texas' OmniBase Program

Policy Background

The OmniBase "Failure to Pay / Failure to Appear Program" places a hold on a person's driver's license or renewal if that person fails to pay fines and fees or fails to appear in court, usually for traffic offenses. To date, roughly 400,000 Texans are unable to legally drive due to the program,[1] hampering their ability to get to work, school, or medical appointments.

While OmniBase's goal is to increase court compliance and collections, there is no evidence of these outcomes – with no correlation between use of OmniBase and revenue collection – while courts' resources are being wasted.[2]

Proposed Solution

Texas leaders should repeal the OmniBase program and allow people to renew licenses lost under OmniBase.

Relevant Legislation

- **Bill Number**: **SB 1281** [Hughes]
  Bill Caption: Relating to prohibiting the denial of a driver's license renewal for failure to appear in court, failure to pay a fine or cost, or failure to satisfy a judgment.

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1 Texas Appleseed and Texas Fair Defense Project, *Driven By Debt: The Failure of the OmniBase Program*, August 2021.

2 Ibid.