



## Washington State Legislature

December 24, 2025

The Honorable Bob Ferguson  
Office of the Governor  
PO Box 40002  
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Dear Governor Ferguson,

On December 17, 2025, the Department of Licensing (DOL) closed the Kelso driver's licensing office due to unsafe facility conditions. As a result, residents of Cowlitz and Wahkiakum Counties must now travel an additional 30 to 40 miles to licensing offices in Centralia or Vancouver.

This closure has significantly increased demand at the Centralia and Vancouver locations, creating longer wait times not only for displaced residents of Cowlitz and Wahkiakum Counties, but also for drivers from surrounding counties who already rely on those offices. In effect, this single closure is now impacting drivers across four or more counties in Southwest Washington.

The sudden nature of the closure has left DOL with little opportunity to secure an alternative location. While we understand that identifying, contracting for, and preparing a suitable facility takes time, the interim burden on drivers is substantial – particularly for seniors renewing driver's licenses or state ID cards, and for new drivers who must complete required testing to obtain their first license.

To reduce these burdens, we respectfully request that you issue a proclamation extending driver's license expiration dates by up to 180 days for residents of Cowlitz and Wahkiakum Counties. This extension could be terminated 30 days after a full-time licensing office reopens in Cowlitz County.

In addition, we ask that DOL work to identify a safe, temporary location in Cowlitz County where drivers may complete required road tests and receive temporary licenses upon successful completion, to be converted to photo licenses once a permanent office is operational.

We respectfully urge you to take immediate action and to continue working with DOL and area legislators to minimize the negative impact of this closure on drivers throughout Southwest Washington.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ed Orcutt".

Representative Ed Orcutt  
20<sup>th</sup> Legislative District

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Abbarno".

Representative Peter Abbarno  
20<sup>th</sup> Legislative District

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Braun".

Senator John Braun  
20<sup>th</sup> Legislative District

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Walsh".

Representative Jim Walsh  
19<sup>th</sup> Legislative District

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joel McEntire".

Representative Joel McEntire  
19<sup>th</sup> Legislative District

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff Wilson".

Senator Jeff Wilson  
19<sup>th</sup> Legislative District