

Giannoulas Advocates to Make Digital Driver's Licenses & IDs Available in Illinois Bill Would Allow Illinoisans to Securely Store License/ID Information

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SPRINGFIELD - Continuing his commitment to modernize the Secretary of State's office, Secretary Alexi Giannoulas is championing legislation to allow Illinois residents to start using digital driver's licenses and state IDs.

Giannoulas' backing marks the first time the Illinois Secretary of State's office has supported such a measure, which now includes digital IDs as well as digital driver's licenses. HB 4592 is sponsored by State Representative Kam Buckner (26th District)

and State Senator Michael Hastings (19th District). If the bipartisan legislation passes, implementation could occur as early as next year.

“Smartphones have become convenient places to store everything from movie tickets, boarding passes and credit cards,” Giannoulis said. “With technological advancements and additional safeguards to make it the most secure and state-of-the-art system in the nation, we’re confident Illinoisans will soon have the option to ‘carry’ a digital version of their driver’s license or state ID.”

If approved in the General Assembly, Illinois would join 12 other states that already offer digital forms of identification (including bordering states – Iowa and Missouri) while at least 18 other states are currently working toward the implementation. The legislation would not eliminate physical driver’s licenses, but instead digital IDs would act as a companion to a physical card.

“Innovation serves as the underpinning of our work to make lives better through better technology. A digital ID is a logical next step when it comes to providing proof that you’re qualified to drive and identifying yourself at stores, banks and doctor’s offices,” Buckner said. “I’m confident this legislation will ensure that the implementation of digital IDs is done in the right way to protect the privacy of all Illinoisans.”

“This initiative marks a major milestone, providing Illinois residents with touchless convenience, and businesses and law enforcement with the tools and information they require,” Hastings said. “The move to digital IDs represents a growing trend across the country as the technology has become even more fraud-resistant than physical cards. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic sped up the widespread adoption of contactless identification methods significantly – including digital IDs.”

New technology allows for more privacy by allowing individuals to decide what personal information they share via a contactless encrypted data exchange between their device and the reader. Digital IDs offer privacy control options that allow people to verify their age when legally purchasing alcohol, cannabis or renting a car, while hiding other personal information – like their address.

Giannoulis added that the initiative will also help reduce in-office wait times and lines at DMVs because the digital platform will allow users to make changes to their licenses and IDs remotely without having to make an in-person visit.

The proposed legislation would give the Secretary of State’s office the authority to begin the process of providing digital IDs. The office would issue an RFP and then

select the vendor that is most capable of producing digital IDs in the safest way possible, ensuring that the final product meets testing requirements and the highest standards of security for Illinoisans.