



MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0003

September 8, 2025

Senator Craig Hickman
Representative Anne-Marie Mastraccio
Government Oversight Committee
c/o Office of Program Evaluation and Government Accountability
82 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0082

Dear Senator Hickman, Representative Mastraccio, and members of the Government Oversight Committee,

We respectfully request an investigation by the Office of Program Evaluation and Government Accountability (OPEGA) into the issuance of drivers' licenses by the Maine Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) to ineligible individuals. Specifically, we ask that OPEGA review BMV records to determine whether non-citizens who may be in the United States unlawfully, or who are in Maine on a temporary basis, have been improperly issued credentials to operate motor vehicles.

This request is prompted by two recent tragic incidents involving the deaths of pedestrians Elizabeth Camacho in Lewiston and Stacy Strattard in New Gloucester, both of whom were struck by vehicles operated by individuals who may be ineligible to drive in Maine yet possessed such credentials to do so.

According to police, a vehicle driven by Lionel Francisco of Angola on Aug. 15 was traveling on Park Street, jumped the curb and veered into Kennedy Park before stopping. Elizabeth Camacho, who was walking on Park Street, was directly in the vehicle's path and was subsequently killed. Francisco was taken into Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) custody shortly thereafter.

According to the *Portland Press Herald*, Francisco was operating the vehicle under the authority of a Maine learner's permit. However, Francisco was present on a B-2 tourist visa, which required him to leave the country by July 30, 2025.

Similarly, Stacy Strattard of Gray was crossing Lewiston Road in New Gloucester on Aug. 16 when she was struck by a vehicle driven by Mukendi Mbiya of Angola. She also died from injuries sustained in the crash. The Sheriff's Office investigation remains open. According to the Department of Homeland Security, Mbiya entered the U.S. on a B-2 tourist visa on Dec. 23, 2018. The visa required him to leave the country by June 22, 2019, but he remained. He was arrested by ICE on Aug. 18, 2025.

The cases raise urgent public safety and policy questions:

1. How were these individuals able to obtain Maine driving credentials if they were only permitted to be in the U.S. temporarily, or if they were unlawfully present?
2. Does the BMV verify legal presence and permanent residency for non-U.S. citizens applying for licenses, as required by Maine law?
3. What safeguards exist to prevent individuals on temporary visas from falsely claiming permanent Maine residency?
4. What processes are in place to ensure that only eligible individuals are granted driving privileges?

A thorough investigation by OPEGA will provide clarity and the potential extent of this issue. If the review determines that licensing procedures are being followed appropriately, this will reassure the public and lawmakers alike. If problems are identified, it will prompt necessary legislative action to close any gaps and ensure Maine's roads are safe for all. Either outcome of the investigation will be beneficial.

OPEGA is the proper venue for this review, given its mission and statutory authority to access confidential records as well as its exemption from the Freedom of Access Act. Its independence and expertise make it uniquely qualified to evaluate this sensitive matter.

The Maine Legislature has a fundamental duty to safeguard public safety and uphold the integrity of state processes. We look forward to further discussion of this request at the next meeting of the Government Oversight Committee.

Respectfully,



Bruce Bickford
Senate District 20



Amy Arata
House District 104

Cc: Members, Government Oversight Committee
Peter Schleck, Director, Office of Program Evaluation and Government Accountability